



# TOP 10 TIPS

## FROM OUR BEST BOOKS

### 10 SUPER SIMPLE WAYS TO RIDE A BETTER REINING PATTERN

- 1**     **Circles:** Bend your horse's body in a slight arc so you can see just a little bit of his inside eye.
- 2**     **Transitions:** To speed up, lean your torso forward and lift your seat slightly out of the saddle (DON'T flap your arms!) To slow down, sit up straight and deeper into your "pockets"—the area of your behind near the back pockets of your jeans.
- 3**     **Rundowns and Sliding Stops:** Time your "Whoa," so it is when your horse reaches his peak speed in the rundown, and ask for the stop as the hind leg opposing the leading front leg is just leaving the ground.
- 4**     **Rollbacks:** Use only the cueing leg, keeping your other leg completely off the horse to avoid confusing him. Lean forward slightly to avoid getting behind the motion and left in the dust—literally!
- 5**     **Spins:** Look out over the tip of your horse's outside ear—do not focus on it. And don't look down! This will make you feel like the entire world is moving. Don't rely on the hollers of the crowd to count your spins—watch the judge and use him as your point of reference as you keep track in your head.
- 6**     **Back-Ups:** Stay out of your horse's way. Don't lean back or pull on your horse, or he'll just pull right back. Come to a complete stop, lift your rein hand slightly and make contact with the bit, push your feet forward, and cluck. Bump the horse softly with your heels if necessary.
- 7**     **Hesitations:** When a pattern calls for a hesitation between maneuvers, complete the first maneuver then effectively "pause": keep your body still and take a deep breath or two before asking for the next. This demonstrates that your horse is waiting for your cue rather than anticipating.
- 8**     **Be Aware of Your Free Hand:** Do not tense, curl, or flap your free arm during your pattern. Every movement in that limb can affect movement in the rest of your body. It also detracts from the overall picture you and your horse present.



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**Horse and Rider Books.com**

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## 10 SUPER SIMPLE WAYS TO RIDE A BETTER REINING PATTERN continued

- 9 **Memorizing Patterns:** Break the pattern into sections, rather than individual maneuvers. Write the summaries on index cards to keep in your pocket, and “ride the sections in your mind,” then double-check your accuracy on your flash cards.
- 10 **Don't Overpractice!** It can be tempting to practice your pattern over and over, but this teaches your horse to anticipate the next maneuver before the one he is doing is complete. Practice one or two maneuvers during a practice session, and trust that when you do link them all together in competition, your hard work will pay off.

\*Find more great reining tips in

**ROOKIE REINER: HOW TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE IN THE SHOW PEN**

by Heather Cook