

## Bounce with Dowel

**Refine your ability to keep your hands steady when you are moving up and down, a skill needed for trot work.**

**1** Sit on an exercise ball in neutral spine alignment.

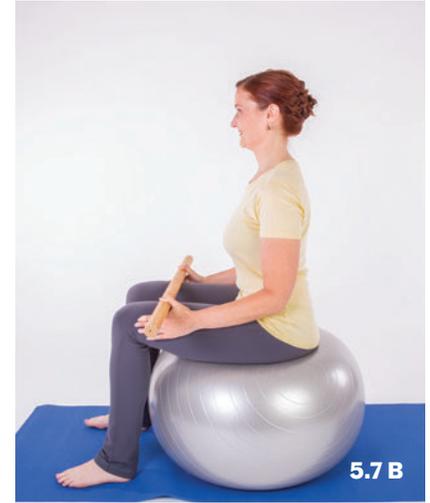
**2** Hold a 3-foot dowel or stick (a riding crop or whip will do) in your hands out in front of you, elbows bent by your sides (fig. 5.7 A).

3 Start bouncing on the ball. You will see that the dowel bounces up and down with you.

4 Now rest your hands and dowel on your knees. Bounce again (figs. 5.7 B & C). You will notice that since your knees are not going up and down, the dowel's position stays stable, and your elbow joints move as you bounce. This is the feeling you are after when riding either the posting or sitting trot. Your hands stay still while your body goes up and down.

5 Lift your hands off your legs so they are again in the air holding the dowel.

6 Now, as you bounce, try to keep your hands and the dowel still in space (fig. 5.7 D).



Keeping your hands and the dowel still in space while your body bounces up and down requires awareness and movement at the elbow joints. If this is too hard, have someone hold the dowel still to help you feel the subtle movement at your elbow joints. Alternately tighten your arm muscles so the dowel (and your hands) bounce with you, then release these muscles so the dowel stays still while you bounce; your elbow joints move to allow stillness of your hands and the dowel.