

Trigger Stacking? Hacking?

Your guide to happier riding by Jenni Nellist MSc

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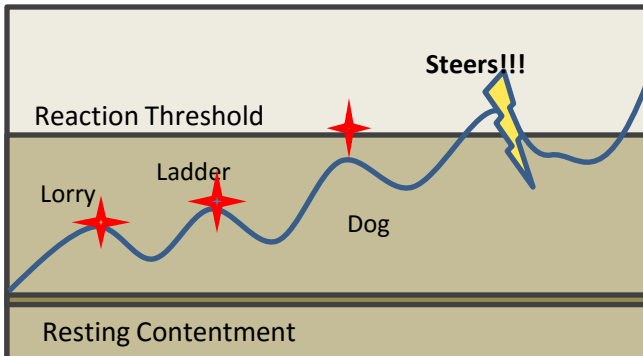
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Sunny day, keen horse, lorry swooshes by out of nowhere, everyman and his dog is outside DIYing, and the farmer just turned his steers out! What's the worst that could happen?



Trigger Stacking?



Reactive behaviour depends on your horse:

Fidget, Freeze, Flight, Fight
Or:

Jog, Plant, Shy, Hit reverse,
Spin, Bolt...

What goes up must come down! How do you get your horse to stay close to resting contentment? On a ride out?

1. Begin calm - if you can't, is it wise to go? Groom your horse, walk him where he can enjoy a good time with you.
2. Pick your route: Bad day? Go somewhere reassuringly familiar. Good day? Go explore!
3. Exploring is natural for horses. But! It can't be forced. Enable your horse time to examine the world, and associate it with good things.
4. Be responsive to your horse. Use your aids wisely: Signal pressures with light aids, release them reliably, when your horse gets the right answer.
5. Horse won't respond? He's too scared or excited to think straight! Remove him to a situation where he can.
6. Getting off and letting a sacrificial human go first is not a failing! Exploring can be scary, and sometimes horses need their hand held. Be sure you can handle your horse safely from the ground.
7. Need to up-skill? Horses are lifelong learning for all of us 😊

