



Version: 11/1/2000



PNH Levels Program

LEVEL 2 LIBERTY PHASE

Tools: Round Corral, Carrot Stick, Horseman's String

L1. "Win" the Friendly Game with Carrot Stick & Savvy String

LEVEL 2

• Horse stands calmly while student "flogs" the ground vigorously

PRE LEVEL 2

- Horse is acting scared (head up, moving feet)
- Horse runs away
- Student is not winning the game, "flogging" is soft and sneaky

L2. Drive the hindquarters 360 degrees, both ways

LEVEL 2

- Horse keeps front end relatively still, front feet would stay inside a hula hoop, for example.
- 360 degrees completed
- Both sides are equally good
- Smooth and confident use of Carrot Stick

PRE LEVEL 2

- · Horse runs backwards, or escapes sideways
- One side is obviously worse than the other
- Student has to use phase 4 more than once
- 360 degrees not completed
- Horse runs away
- Clumsy use of Carrot Stick

Note: If horse escapes and student shows savvy in retrieving the horse and then completing the task correctly, this would demonstrate LEVEL 2 savvy.

L3. Drive the front end 360 degrees, both ways

LEVEL 2

- Horse keeps hind end relatively still, hind feet would stay inside a hula hoop, for example.
- 360 degrees completed
- Both sides are equally good
- Smooth and confident use of Carrot Stick

- · Horse runs backwards, or escapes sideways
- One side is obviously worse than the other
- Student has to use phase 4 more than once

- 360 degrees not completed
- Horse runs away
- Clumsy use of Carrot Stick

Note: if horse escapes and student shows savvy in retrieving the horse and then completing the task correctly, this would demonstrate LEVEL 2 savvy. It cannot happen more than one time.

L4. Get your horse to follow you for one circuit

LEVEL 2

- Horse follows willingly and is within 3 ft of the student
- Student is walking with back turned to the horse

PRE LEVEL 2

- Horse does not follow
- Horse turns and runs away
- Student is facing the horse, walking backwards
- Horse escapes

Note: If horse escapes and student shows enough savvy to play catching game and reinstate following impulse, this would demonstration LEVEL 2 savvy. It cannot happen more than one time.

L5. Play the Circling Game to the right & left, ask your horse to face you

LEVEL 2

- Student sends the horse correctly: zone 1 / 2
- Horse maintains gait at the trot for two laps
- Student brings back the horse and at least gets it to face up by drawing zone 1 and driving zone 4

(If the horse draws in this is desirable, but does not affect grade)

- Student keeps feet still and is neutral during the Allow
- Student uses correct hand for direct and support
- Student uses equipment confidently

- Send is incorrect: wrong zone or ineffective, horse drifts by student rather than shifting weight back and out onto the circle
- Horse cannot maintain gait, takes more than one correction
- Student cannot disengage and have horse face up or draw in
- Carrot Stick is in the wrong hand (that is the 'directing' hand)
- Student does not stand neutral during Allow
- Use of equipment is clumsy and unconfident

L6. Sideways in both directions along a fence

LEVEL 2

- Horse stays fairly straight
- Student knows how to correct straightness by isolating Zone 1 or Zone 4

PRE LEVEL 2

- · Horse turns away into kicking position or pulls away
- Horse is scared and reactive rather than responsive

L7. Finish with the Friendly Game

LEVEL 2

- Student shows good rhythm and is not sneaky about it
- Horse is confident and stands still

PRE LEVEL 2

- Student being careful not to disturb horse, faltering, no rhythm
- Horse is scared, cannot stand still

L8. Cause your horse to "smell his tail" for 10 seconds each side

LEVEL 2

- Task is achieved without opposition reflex
- Horse yields head willingly and stands still

PRE LEVEL 2

- Horse is resistant
- Cannot stand still, keeps moving feet
- Student is forcing the horse
- Both sides are not equally good

L9. Hold your horse's tongue

LEVEL 2

- Student can reach in and grasp tongue without any problems
- Horse is calm and responsive

- Student has trouble getting tongue
- Forces horse to keep his head still
- Horse is resistant and fights it, trying to get tongue back
- Student shows lack of "feel"

L10. Simulate paste-worming your horse

LEVEL 2

- Horse accepts tube willingly
- Student shows tact and assertiveness

- Horse is resistant
- Student forces horse to hold head still
- Horse does not accept procedure

LEVEL 2 ON LINE PHASE

Halter & 22' Line, Carrot Stick & Savvy String

OL1. Play the Friendly Game in all Zones with a plastic bag tied to a Carrot Stick

LEVEL 2

- Student can rub horse all over with the bag including the head, under the horse's belly and on legs
- The horse can stay relaxed the entire time and doesn't move around
- The Rope is held loose with plenty of slack in it

PRE LEVEL 2

- Student sneaks around with the bag instead of moving freely
- Horse is visibly upset with head up, tense or scared
- Horse can't keep his feet still
- Rope has very little or no slack most of the time

OL2. With plastic bag, drive horse backwards, yield hindquarters and forehand a full circle on each side LEVEL 2

- Horse yields without fear
- Rope has plenty of slack and the horse is moving from the pressure of the bag
- Student uses the bag to drive the horse and doesn't sneak around with it
- Student shows good use of phases

PRE LEVEL 2

- Horse moves with fear, has more of a reaction rather than a response
- Student has to go to Phase 4 to get horse to move
- Rope is held short and tight to prevent horse from escaping
- Horse drifts to get away from the bag instead of trying to pivot

OL3. Play the Yo-Yo Game to back your horse over a pole and return

LEVEL 2

- Horse backs up with phase 2
- Back up is straight
- · Horse crosses pole with little or no hesitation
- Student allows horse to stop before asking him back in
- Student keeps feet still
- Student shows good use of phases

PRE LEVEL 2

• Phase 3 and 4 required more than once

- Crooked back up
- Horse gets stuck at pole, resists going over it (therefore is not a positive reflex)
- Student moves feet
- Poor use of phases, not distinct, not quick enough, phase 1 not long enough

OL4. Play the Circling Game in both directions showing transitions from the trot to the walk and back to the trot.

LEVEL 2

- Correct Send: zone 1 / 2
- Horse maintains gait as asked
- Downward transition is made with rope wiggling in zone 1, using phases; student is pivoting to face horse
- Upward transition is made by leading zone 1 and spanking zone 5 (starting 180 degrees from the horse)
- Transitions occur within half a circle
- Phase 4 is used only once if necessary

PRE LEVEL 2

- Incorrect send: zone 3 or 4
- Horse cannot maintain gait
- Incorrect technique for downward transition, example: pulling zone 1 inward
- (Use of Carrot Stick is okay in zone 1 area)
- Incorrect technique for upward transition: not leading zone 1 first, spanking toward zone 4
- Phase 4 is used more than once

OL5. Change directions at the trot, maintaining gait

LEVEL 2

- Horse comes in willingly and goes out smoothly, maintains trot
- Student runs backwards as necessary but returns to original spot

PRE LEVEL 2

- Horse resists coming in
- Horse changes gait to walk or stop
- Student loses awareness of center position and does not return there
- Student gets tangled or clumsy with equipment

OL6. Go sideways without a fence for at least 20 feet, both ways

- Horse goes sideways willingly
- If horse tries to go forward, appropriate correction is made with rope, but no more than twice
- At least 3/4 length of the 22' line is used
- Ideally, belly of rope should be touching the ground showing horse is not trying to escape
- Student shows awareness of correct zones to use (1 & 4, 3)

PRE LEVEL 2

- Horse keeps trying to go forward, has to be corrected more than twice
- Rope is stretched taut, horse trying to get away
- Only 12' of rope is given to the horse

OL7. Send your horse into a trailer while sitting on the fender. Count to ten and then bring him back to you, without getting off the fender.

LEVEL 2

- Student sits on the fender and does not move from that spot
- Sends horse from fender position
- · Horse goes into trailer with little or no hesitation
- Horse stands in trailer until asked to come out (minimum 10 seconds)
- Student brings horse back to their position at fender without resistance

PRE LEVEL 2

- Student is unable to complete task without getting up from their position
- · Horse does not go into trailer on first attempt
- Horse cannot stay in trailer, comes out before asked and before time is up
- · Horse rushes out of trailer when asked to come out
- · Horse tries to run away instead of drawing back to student

Game #2

OL8. With your hand on zone 1, back your horse 20 feet

LEVEL 2

- Horse backs up willingly, moderate speed
- Positive reflex
- · Back up is straight
- Takes no more than phase 2, occasional use of phase 4

PRE LEVEL 2

- Horse resists back up, tosses head, braces, very slow to move back, stops.
- Back up is crooked
- Student not effective in phases, consistently too strong or not effective at phase 4 so phase 1 means something

OL9. "Push" your horse sideways for at least 20 feet

LEVEL 2

- Uses Porcupine Game with finger tips to yield horse sideways
- Horse goes directly sideways, no opposition reflex, positive reflex
- Student has good focus (is not looking down to the ground this does not make it pre-LEVEL 2)

- Horse resists sideways, cannot manage more than a few steps
- Horse tries to go forwards
- Student unaware of logical zones to place hands (zone 2 / 3 / 4 as necessary)

OL10. Place the 22' Line around a front leg; Play the Yo-Yo Game then lead your horse by the front leg

LEVEL 2

- Student places 22' line in loop around horse's ankle
- Horse backs up willingly when rope is wiggled
- Horse comes forward without resistance when asked
- Student pulls leg forward (with feel) and to the side in arcs to show horse follows the feel
- Student releases when horse responds

- No tension on rope, especially in the beginning, therefore unclear as to whether horse is responding to feel or is following the student.
- Horse resists / fights the feel
- Student does not release when horse responds

LEVEL 2 FREESTYLE RIDING PHASE

Bareback (PNH Bareback Pad allowed), Cherokee Bridle

FS1. Mount your horse

LEVEL 2

- Student is able to get on the horse without a struggle
- Student rocks the horse first to make sure the horse is balanced
- Holds rein and mane in one hand
- Horse stands still allowing rider to get on
- Using help or an aid is allowed: another person, a fence or putting the horse in a ditch, downhill or using a low stump. PRE-LEVEL
- Horse won't stand still for mounting
- Rider has trouble getting on, pulling horse off balance
- Student holds the rein tightly not trusting the horse

FS2. Trot a figure of 8

LEVEL 2

- Horse maintains trot
- No or little difference between turns and counter turns
- Very little tension on Cherokee Bridles
- Horse's mouth is quiet, little or no chewing, doesn't open due to pressure
- Rider is focusing ahead

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Horse keeps breaking gait
- Resists turns or counter turns, head turned to the outside
- Mouth is open, pulling against String, chomping (emotional resistance evident)
- Rider's focus is poor, looking down
- Rider's hands are rough, too much tension on Cherokee Bridle, horse fighting or resisting the pressure
- Horse will not carry Cherokee Bridle, spits it out

FS3. Stop straight and back up for 10 feet

- Horse slows and stops easily and smoothly
- Student's focus is up and straight ahead
- Student lifts the Cherokee bridle upwards for the downward transitions and back up
- · Horse offers a positive reflex, backing straight and without hesitation

PRE LEVEL 2

- Horse is difficult to stop
- Student has to go to phase 3 or 4 to get horse to back up
- · Horse throws his head up and fights going backwards
- Student's focus is down at the horse
- · Student pulls back on the Cherokee bridle instead of lifting
- · Horse turns his head or opens his mouth when backing

FS4. Canter for 60 seconds

LEVEL 2

- Horse maintains canter, doesn't break gait
- Rider asks for the correct lead and horse gives it
- Rider "cruises", is not continually coaxing horse or preventing him from breaking gait
- Rider is in harmony with the horse, not bouncing or out of balance
- Casual rein, does not take up any contact

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Horse cannot maintain canter as a responsibility
- · Horse is on the wrong lead, rider does not correct it
- Horse zigs and zags, cannot maintain direction as a responsibility
- Rider is working too hard, keeping horse going
- No harmony, bouncing, out of balance, hanging on to rein or Bareback Pad

FS5. Bend your horse to a stop and make an emergency dismount

LEVEL 2

- Rider asks for bend gracefully, closing fingers with feel
- Jumps off to inside of bend once horse slows down or stops
- Horse does not fight the bend, bends willingly

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Rider pulls horse to bend, no feel
- Horse resists bend
- Jumps off wrong side, outside of bend

Saddle, Snaffle Bridle, Carrot Stick

FS6. Send your horse to the saddle and pad and allow him to sniff them (using halter and 12' line) LEVEL 2

- Student sends the horse out and around and allows the horse to find the saddle with a minimal amount of direction
- The horse finds the saddle and pad easily and relaxes next to them
- The horse puts his head down and sniffs the saddle and pad, even paws at or plays with them

PRE-LEVEL 2

- The horse goes past the saddle and pad more than a couple of times before finding it
- The student wiggles the rope or causes the horse to stop at the saddle or pad instead of letting the horse find it
- The horse doesn't relax at the saddle has a high head and won't look at or sniff the saddle and blanket

FS7. Saddle your horse without touching the line

LEVEL 2

- Horse is loose or rope is lying on the ground
- Saddling procedure is correct: allow horse to smell the saddle, swing onto horse's back like a hug, change sides with permission, cinch in 3 stages, moving horse in between. Cinches should be hung up so as not to drag or get tangled during saddling process.
- Horse stands still, respectfully

PRE-LEVEL 2

• Horse cannot stand still, needs to be held

• Saddling procedure is incorrect: doesn't offer saddle to smell, lifts saddle up high and plonks down on horse's back, doesn't ask permission to change sides, cinches too hard to fast, doesn't move horse in between. Cinches tangled and hanging down does not warrant a resubmit in itself but does warrant education / advice from you.

FS8. Bridle your horse from your knees

LEVEL 2

- Student maintains kneeling position
- Student brings head down to them, manages to teach the horse to keep it there (as opposed to physically holding it down)
- Horse accepts bit willingly
- Student lifts headpiece and pushes ears through politely and considerate of the horse's experience

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Student does not stay on knees
- · Holds horse's head down physically
- · Horse resists bit, turns head, lifts head, won't open mouth
- Student pulls ears through roughly, inconsiderate of the horse's comfort

FS9. Mount your horse from the ground, then from a fence

- Student mounts athletically and correctly from the Indian side.
- Student dismounts quickly, easily and correctly
- Student starts the fence mounting by sitting on the fence and brings horse up to him
- · Horse stands still allowing rider to get on
- Student knows how to move the horse back and forth to line up correctly

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Student mounts incorrectly with hands in the wrong position or has to try several times to get on
- Student dismounts incorrectly with hands and focus in wrong place
- Horse won't stand still for mounting and student gets on anyway.
- · Horse resists coming to the fence, and won't stand still by the fence for mounting
- Rider has trouble getting on, uncoordinated or clumsy and rough

With Carrot Stick, leave reins on horse's neck or over saddle horn

FS10. Trot a figure 8

LEVEL 2

- Student pushes horse with Carrot Stick (one or two hands on stick optional) from the outside
- Focus with eyes and belly button
- Uses outside leg to push (Stick supports)
- Holds Carrot Stick on the handle
- · Horse turns without resisting, does not break gait

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Student leans into turn
- Does not focus or use leg (leg is hanging down limp or sticking out away from horse's side)
- Holds Carrot Stick in front of handle (not a resubmit if by itself, but needs to be corrected)
- Horse is scared or emotional when Stick comes into play, speeds up
- Horse resists, does not turn, pushes into Stick and student has to use phase 4 to correct

FS11. Canter along arena fence, use Carrot Stick to make downward transitions: trot, walk, back-up.

LEVEL 2

- Student uses phases well: phase 1 quit riding; phase 2 stretch Carrot Stick forward to zone 1; phase 3 driving rhythm with Carrot Stick; phase 4 tapping zone 1
- Horse is responsive, yields from the pressure
- Horse backs up willingly
- Student focusing ahead, using feel and not looking at the horse

- No use of phases, goes straight to phase 3
- Horse pushes through pressure, disrespects Carrot Stick, impulsive / emotional
- Student looking at horse
- Back up is difficult / reluctant, horse wants to turn and go cooked (lack of positive reflex)
- Head is way up in the air, evading, phases consistently too high but not effective in the teaching stages

With snaffle bridle

FS12. Back up in a straight line for at least 20 feet (9 Step Back-Up)

LEVEL 2

- 9 Step Back Up procedure is used
- Good feel by closing fingers one at a time (does not need to be very slow anymore)
- Horse yields backwards willingly
- Back up is straight
- Focus is straight ahead

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Not using 9 Steps, closes fingers quickly and without feel for the horse
- Horse resistant about going backwards: open mouth, high head
- Crooked back up that is not corrected by student
- Student looking at horse

FS13. Trot a figure of 8 showing two changes of diagonal

LEVEL 2

- Casual rein or concentrated is fine (Casual preferred)
- Student uses correct diagonals, rising with the inside hind leg
- Focus is straight ahead, not looking down

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Diagonals are incorrect for more than four strides (student therefore unaware and does not correct it showing savvy)
- Looking down at horse or at front leg to check diagonal (they need to be able to feel it by now)

FS14. Using a Casual Rein at the canter, show three simple (drop to the trot) lead changes

LEVEL 2

- Casual rein position is maintained (one hand on center of reins)
- Student reaches down rein gracefully to "take away" the lead they are on
- Student holds bend until horse is soft and has made the transition, then releases. Shows good timing and feel.
- Correct lead is taken up
- Horse has impulsion, is not difficult to disengage or to re-engage

- Casual rein is not maintained, two hands are on the reins when not required
- Student grabs rein to disengage, no feel
- Student is unaware of lead they are on, reaches down "wrong" rein
- Student releases before trot is gained
- Student releases while horse is bracing and impulsive
- Lead change is not effected
- Horse is impulsive or non-responsive (takes more than phase 2 or 3 to slow or go)

FS15. Ease your horse into a gallop for at least 30 seconds

LEVEL 2

- Horse speeds up willingly
- Student is confident and in harmony with the horse, leans forward for center of balance
- Maintains gallop without being continually coaxed

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Horse unwilling to speed up, swishing tail vigorously, bucking, etc.
- Horse bolts
- Student not in harmony, bouncing, unsteady, scared
- Horse cannot maintain gallop
- · Horse does not gallop

FS16. Come back to the canter to prove your horse is settled

LEVEL 2

- Horse takes no more than phase 1 or 2 to come back to canter
- Canter is on a loose rein

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Student has trouble getting horse back to canter, impulsive
- Student has to hold horse to maintain canter

FS17. Still in canter, place your wrists under your reins and show four flying changes through a series of S bends

LEVEL 2

- Flying changes are executed, horse not later than one stride in changing behind
- Wrists are under reins
- Horse has impulsion

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Horse does not make changes, changes only the front, hind end takes two or more strides to change
- Student leaning into changes rather than pushing
- Student does not use legs to push, only upper body
- · Horse is impulsive or breaks down to the trot
- Rider grips reins with fingers

FS18. Slow down to a back-up by lifting your wrists into the air

- Horse slows down without resistance
- Rider's focus is ahead, not looking down

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Rider pulls backwards on reins rather than lifting
- Horse needs more than phase 2 to stop
- Back up is unwilling, difficult
- Rider looking down
- Rider grips reins with fingers

Using any equipment or none at all

FS19. Imagination task: show something imaginative you can do with your horse

LEVEL 2

- Horse responds with respect and relazation
- It is clear what the student is trying to accomplish and is able to do it
- Everything is accomplished at Phase 1 or 2 if Phases are used

- Horse shows fear or opposition
- What the student is trying to show is really unclear making it difficult to tell if the task was accomplished
- Student has to go to Phase 4 more than once
- The task was outlined in Level 1 (Partnership) or Level 2 (Harmony) as something they were already taught

LEVEL 2 FINESSE RIDING PHASE

Tools: Snaffle Bridle, Saddle, Savvy String

F1. While mounted, unbridle you horse (leaving bridle on fence)

LEVEL 2

- Student brings horse's head to them
- Horse is helpful, keeps head in lateral flexion
- Accepts bit willingly
- Student pushes ears through while lifting head piece

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Student bridles horse while neck is straight (awkward and difficult, horse not cooperating)
- Horse will not maintain lateral flexion
- Does not accept bit
- Student is inconsiderate or clumsy with horse's ears

F2. Place the Savvy String around your horse's neck and ride backwards, forwards to the right and left and return to your bridle

LEVEL 2

- Student uses good rein positions (direct and supporting especially)
- Horse backs up, turns, willingly

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Student cannot control horse
- Horse reluctant to back up, no positive reflex
- Incorrect rein positions: direct rein hand is "upside down" and / or is lower than supporting hand; supporting rein crosses neck and become indirect rein.

F3. Go from Casual to Concentrated and obtain a soft feel

LEVEL 2

- Focus is straight ahead
- Uses 7 Steps to get to concentrated position
- Elbows are bent, back erect, tight fists that are sure and steady for the horse
- · Holds until soft feel is obtained, then releases

- Looking down at horse
- Does not use clear steps
- Releases before horse gives soft feel
- Reins are too long, therefore horse's neck is straight rather than arched

- Straight elbows, back not straight (not enough difference from zero position)
- Horse fights bit, does not give soft feel, emotional chomping (still impulsive)

F4. Starting on a Casual Rein, show three Yo-Yo's from trot to back-up using the 9 Step Back-Up technique LEVEL 2

- Casual to concentrated reins are used each time
- Graceful use of the reins, smooth to watch and for the horse to feel
- · Horse backs up willingly, goes forward willingly
- Student focuses straight ahead
- Straight lines

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Only concentrated reins used
- Rough or jerky use of the reins in transition
- Horse unwilling to back up, resistant, opens mouth, raises head, etc.
- Student looking down
- Crooked lines

F5. Back your horse through an L pattern (you can use logs or cones, etc.)

LEVEL 2

- Horse backs up willingly
- Student focuses ahead
- Best rein position is direct rein on outside to shift front end over when making the turn

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Horse reluctant to back up, scared or claustrophobic
- Horse cannot make the turn, is not straight, steps out of boundaries
- Outside, indirect rein used to make the turn

F6. With Concentrared reins, Indirect rein to Direct and Supporting reins moving the hindquarter then the forehand in a continuous flow

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LEVEL 2

- Student demonstrates correct rein positions for all three rein postions
- Rider focuses with eyes, bellybutton and legs correctly
- Horse can make the transiton from one rein position to the next smoothly
- Riders shows at least a 180 degree turn of the hindquarter and 180 degrees turn of the forehand
- Both sides are equal
- Horse maintains the pivoting feet inside the size of a hula hoop

PRE-LEVEL 2

• Incorrect rein positions, direct rein is lower than supporting rein

- Student looks down at the horse or saddle instead of showing the correct focus
- Student uses legs incorrectly or not at all
- Horse shows so much oppositon that the rider has to go to Phase 4 or loses a Concentrated rein positon
- Can't isolate movement so just the hindquarter or forehand are moving
- Horse travels and can't stay in an area the size of a hula hoop with his front or back feet.

F7. Show a full rotation on the hindquarters using the Direct and Supporting Rein, one to the right, one to the left

LEVEL 2

- Correct rein positions
- Rider focuses with eyes and belly button
- Uses outside leg to push horse
- Horse is pivoting, could maintain hind legs within a hula hoop
- Both sides are equal

PRE-LEVEL 2

- Incorrect rein positions, direct rein is lower than supporting rein
- Horse resistant
- No use of outside leg
- Horse turns front end and back end, does not pivot
- Both sides are not equal

F8. Ride sideways in both directions for at least 20 feet without using a fence

LEVEL 2

- Correct rein and body positions without losing the Concentrated postion
- Rider focuses with eyes and belly button
- Uses outside leg to push horse
- · Horse is moving fairly straight sideways without the hind end or front end leading
- Both sides are equal
- Horses legs are crossing over each other

- Incorrect rein positions, direct rein is lower than supporting rein
- Horse resistant or moving more forward than sideways
- No use of outside leg or keeps inside leg active
- Horse turns front end and goes forward so the legs don't cross
- Both sides are not equal
- Rider looses the Concentrated positon or has to go to Phase 4 more than once