

Basic Balanced Position (BBP) Checklists

Use these checklists to evaluate and improve rider alignment, function, and effectiveness in the saddle.

Rider Self-Assessment Checklist

Use this before, during, or after your ride to assess your alignment and feel:

- ☐ Are my ear, shoulder, hip, and heel in alignment when viewed from the side?
- ☐ Is my weight balanced evenly across both seat bones—not tipped forward or back?
- ☐ Is my pelvis neutral—not tucked under or tilted forward?
- ☐ Am I upright through the upper body without slouching or leaning?
- ☐ Do my legs hang naturally under me (appropriate to my saddle), with quiet contact?
- ☐ Are my hands steady, connected through soft elbows—not bouncing or fixed?
- ☐ Can I move my legs, hands, and seat independently?
- ☐ Am I following the horse's motion—not driving or resisting it?
- ☐ Am I breathing and staying soft through my joints?
- ☐ When something unexpected happens, do I stay centered—or collapse/grab?
- ☐ If I reach my left hand to my left toe, does my right leg move? And vice versa.
- ☐ If I reach my left hand to my right toe, does my left leg move? And vice versa.

Instructor Observation Checklist

Use this while teaching to evaluate your students' position and effectiveness:

- ☐ Is the rider's alignment (ear-shoulder-hip-heel) maintained in motion?
- ☐ Does the rider sit on—not into—the horse's back?
- ☐ Is the rider avoiding the 'sit on your pockets' or behind-the-motion posture?
- ☐ Can the rider maintain balance without gripping with hands, knees, or reins?
- ☐ Is the rider's pelvis neutral, allowing for absorption of motion?
- ☐ Do the legs hang correctly for the seat (not floating forward or back)?
- ☐ Can the rider make positional corrections without losing balance?
- ☐ Are the rider's aids quiet, consistent, and effective?
- ☐ Do the hands move up and down while posting?
- ☐ Do the hands follow the horse's mouth at the walk and canter?
- ☐ Do the rider's legs stay still while performing both kinds of toe touches?
- ☐ Does the rider return to BBP naturally after transitions or surprises?
- ☐ Is the horse moving more freely and responsively under this rider?

This checklist from TheRidingInstructor.net may be shared for teaching if attribute is given.