

Table II: A diagnostic checklist of behavioral and physical signs caused by tack.

The article to which this table belongs, "Prevention of Riding Accidents Caused by Tack: Feel it, Log it, Fix it." is available online at www.bitlessbridle.com. Click on 'Articles' for 2009 and scroll down

Many of the signs are known to cause accidents and several others may cause accidents. Behavioral signs for the bit and saddle are comprehensively listed at the present state of knowledge (undoubtedly, additional items will be confirmed by further research). Behavioral signs for the shoe are numerically underestimated, as they have been grouped under the the umbrella line item of 'lameness,' there being too many signs to list separately. Physical signs (defects and diseases) caused by the bit are, again, thought to be fairly complete on the basis of current research. Diseases caused by the saddle and shoe have been partially summarized.

KEY

yellow = physical defects and diseases;

blue = behavioral problems that may be tack-induced but for which, at present, there is no evidence;

x = suspected as a cause but evidence yet to be collected

x = has been documented as responsible for the problem and the problem has been solved by removing or changing the tack

xx = the more common cause when more than one item of tack can cause the same problem;.

xxxxxx = a summary for a group of problems

SIGNS OF TACK-INDUCED PROBLEMS: A diagnostic checklist

SIGNS OF PROBLEMS PRIOR TO RIDING	BIT	SADDLE	SHOE
Difficult to catch in field or paddock: Agitation at even the sight of a person, a bitted bridle or a saddle	xx	x	
Difficult to bridle: Holds head high; clenches teeth, pulls away. May or may not be difficult to unbridle	x		
Difficult to saddle: Cold-backed, resents girth being cinched-up, kicks at the girth, attempts to bite handler		x	
Difficult to shoe: For example, unable to stand on three legs		x	x
Difficult to load in a trailer: Possibly a general sign of reluctance to work, poor attitude to exercise	x	x	
Rearranging the stall bedding constantly:		x	x
Unfriendly in stable: Pins ears, threatens to bite, swings quarters towards handler	xx	x	x
Head shy: Difficult to handle around the head, to open mouth or touch ears, to clip or hose	x		
Lip sores: Chafes, cuts, and loss of pigment, especially at the corner of the mouth (see also 'Sarcoids')	x		
Pressure sores under a badly fitted saddle: The result of a restricted blood supply		x	
Quidding (dropping food from the mouth): Sequel to a sore mouth	x		
Weight-shifting between limbs: Reluctance to stand comfortably on all four limbs			x

Paddling: Frequent shifting of weight between feet in the standing horse			x
Limb guarding: Attempting to stabilise limb to modify pain			x
Abnormal weight distribution: Various postural alterations, e.g., classic stance associated with laminitis			x
Pointing a forelimb:			x
Hanging a limb: Completely non-weight-bearing			x
Deformity of one or more hooves:			x
Rolling excessively in the field:		x	
Rope-walking or plaiting:		x	x
Saddle sores, galls under saddle or girth, creased skin, white hairs, scars, hard spots in saddle area:		x	
Sarcoids and cutaneous habronemiasis around the lips: Predisposed to by bit-induced skin abrasion	x		
Scabbard trachea: Deformity & narrowing of the windpipe caused by obstruction of throat/voicebox at exercise	x		
SIGNS OF PROBLEMS DURING OR AFTER RIDING (listed alphabetically)	BIT	SADDLE	SHOE
Above the bit: Head high, nose poked	xx	x	
Abnormal posture at rest: Laminitis causes major abnormalities but more subtle changes also occur			x
Acceptance of the bit - lack of: Resistance, evasion	x		
Activity - lack of: No enthusiasm for work, dull, listless	xx	x	
"Advanced rider" - lack of: Problems and risk escalate in absence of "an independent seat & soft hands"	x		
Against the bit: Leaning on the bit, heavy on the forehand	x		
Alignment - lack of: Failure of the body parts to line-up from poll to tail	x	x	
Allodynia: Pain response elicited by what is normally a non-noxious stimulus, e.g., touching ears or forelock	x		
Amputation of the tongue, partial amputation or deep wound: See also 'Fracture of lower jaw'	x		
Anxiety: Nervous, spooky, 'hot,' highly-strung, frisky, apprehensive, suspicious (see also 'wind-up')	xx	x	
Asphyxia-induced pulmonary edema (AIPE): See EIPH, DDSP, negative pressure pulmonary edema	x		
Attitude': Calm in the stable but fretful & poor attitude to work, incorrectly assumed to be an inherited fault	x	x	
Backing-up: Running back, 'sucking-back', going into reverse in response to a forward cue	xx	x	
Bad-tempered: Sour, irritable, unfriendly, angry, resentful, cranky, argumentative	xx	x	
Balance - loss of: Sudden increase of weight onto the forehand &/or to one side	x	x	x
Balky: See 'napping'	xx	x	
Behind the bit: Shrinking back from bit contact, may or may not be behind the vertical	x		
Behind the leg: Unwilling to move forward and at same time accept contact, slow to react to leg aid	x	x	
Behind the vertical: The horse may or not be 'behind the bit'	x		
Bend - faultiness of: For example, bending only in the neck, base of neck or counterbent in body	x	x	

Biting: Attempts to bite at the shank of the hackamore, curb bit, reins, rider's boots or a horse alongside	x		
"Bleeding": See EIPH. Cause analogous to negative pressure pulmonary edema in man	xx		x
Bleeding from the mouth: Generally seen immediately after exercise	x		
Blepharospasm (a noisy spasm of the eyelids): Rare symptom of trigeminal neuralgia	x		
Blinking excessively in bright light: Part of the trigeminal neuralgia syndrome (headshaking')	x		
Blocked: Impaired connection due to sustained muscular contraction, creating rigidity	x	x	
Bolting: Can occur during saddling but more commonly during course of work, at transitions and after spooking	x	x	
Bone spurs on the bars of the mouth: A common sequel to use of the bit	x		
Bossy: See 'resistant' etc	x	x	
Breakdowns on the racetrack: Strained tendons, ligaments, long bone fractures, shattered pasterns etc.,	x		x
Broken neckline: Excessive longitudinal flexion one third of the way down the neck e.g. Rollkur	x		
Broke gait: Failure to maintain canter; reverted to trot (see also 'Freezing"	x	x	
Bucked shins: A combination of immaturity, heaviness on the forehand and ground concussion	x		x
Bucking: Can occur at any time but especially at transition from trot to canter or when first mounted	xx	x	
Burping or belching during exercise: A sequel to open mouth and wind-sucking or yawning at exercise	x		
Cadence - lack of: Unsteady tempo, loss of rhythm and 'beat'	x	x	
Camped-out legs: Abnormal posture in the standing horse, as in lamnitis			x
Carriage - lack of: Loss of self carriage (judged by viewing the horse's profile or outline)	x	x	
Catastrophic injuries (severe musculoskeletal injury, condylar, sesamoid, slab, pastern fractures etc.,)	x		x
Chewing the bit: "Gently and softly mouthing the bit," a "wet" mouth, with relaxation of jaw" FEI ???	x		
Choking-down: Usually in a racehorse, especially a Standardbred. Sudden asphyxia, 'gurgling'	x		
Choppy gait: Stiff, proppy and tense. Short steps	xx	x	x
Clarity - loss of: Absence of a clear beat to the gait	x	x	
Clarity -loss of: Poor or absent transition between paces e.g. between working and lengthened canter	x	x	
Clean flying change - loss of: The presence of trot steps or disunited steps when lead changed	x	x	
Closed halt - lack of: Unbalanced posture at halt - not 'four square' - hindlegs not under body	x	x	
"Cold-backed" during mounting:		x	
Collection - lack of: No 'engagement' and no lifting of forehand when gait shortened	xx	x	
Confidence - lack of: Absence of trust, boldness and self-assurance	x	x	
Connection - lack of: Absence of a unity between horse and rider. A prerequisite for 'Throughness'	x	x	
Constrained: Forced or compelled against the horse's will lack of compliance and harmony	x	x	
Constricted: Held together, forcefully shortened or physically tight, limited by constraint	x		
Contact - loss of: Reins looped, lack of connection or 'elasticity' between horse and rider	x	x	

Correctness - lack of: Absence of straightness of limb action, e.g. winging, paddling, twisting of hocks	x	x	x
Coughing at start of exercise or in association with head tossing: Part of Headshaking syndrome	x		
Counterbent: See 'bend'	x	x	
Counter cantering: On the wrong lead. Refusal or reluctance to change leads	x	x	
Cringing on palpation of the back: A horse that drops its back on palpation of the saddle area		x	
Crookedness: Lack of parallelism to line of travel (e.g haunches not in line with long axis of travel)	x	x	
Crookedness: Misalignment of body parts from tail to poll (e.g. popped shoulder or twisted neck)	x	x	
Crookedness: Lack of straightness when going forward (e.g. weaving) or at halt or rein back	x	x	
Cross-canter: Cantering on one lead in front and the other lead behind. Same as 'disunited'	x	x	
Crossing the jaw:	x		
Cyanosis of the apex of the tongue: The tourniquet effect of a double bridle or tongue-tie	x		
Dangerous - behavior regarded as: For example, bolting, rearing, bucking, fatigue, poor jumping, spooky	xx	x	
Death: Sudden death or need for euthanasia following a fall, breakdown, broken back, broken neck etc.,	x	x	x
Death-grip on the reins: Rider fear begets excess rein tension begets horse pain, bolting, bucking and rearing	x		
Definition - lack of: Poor distinction at transitions within or between gaits. See also 'Clarity'	x	x	
Dental erosion: Premature wear and sometimes complete shedding of the lower first cheek tooth	x		
Diagonal Pairs - lack of: Failure during rein back for legs to move in symmetric, diagonal synchrony	x	x	
Difficult to mount: Fidgety, moves off before rider is in the saddle, may buck	xx	x	
Disobedience: Determination to avoid doing what is asked, or to do what is not asked. Willfulness	x	x	
Disassociation: Hooves of a diagonal pair of limbs (in trot or canter) do not contact the ground together	x	x	
Disengaged haunches: Lack of collection during transition from trot to walk. On the forehand	x	x	
Distinction lack of: Used in reference to transitions (see also 'definition')	x	x	
Distress: An extreme form of stress (e.g., pain) that negatively affects an animal's physiology and behavior	x	x	x
Disunited (canter): Same as 'cross-canter'	x	x	
Dorsal displacement of soft palate: Airway obstruction at the level of the throat, 'choking-down, etc.,	x		
"Double handful" sudden loss of: Jockeys description of the moment in a race when a horse stops trying	x		
Dragging: Scuffing of the toes of the hind hooves or inactivity of the hind legs)	x	x	
Dragging: Dragging of the feet in reinback	x	x	
Drifting: Taking unnecessary steps after halt cue (see also 'Running')	x	x	
Dropping inside shoulder on the turn: Leaning on the turn, cutting the corners	x	x	
Ducking out of turns: Turning wide	x	x	
Dull and dispirited: Often a sign of chronic pain and learned hopelessness	x	x	
Dynamic collapse of the throat (nasopharyngeal airway): Sequel to 'elevation' of the soft palate'	x		

Dynamic collapse of the voice box: Sequel to 'elevation' & DDSP, 'tracheal collapse' & 'scabbard trachea'	x		
Ear movement - rapid & erratic: A sign of fear and anxiety	x	x	
Ear pinning, habitual: In the stable or at work, a sign of irritability, aggression or pain	x	x	
Edema (swelling) of the apex of the tongue: Venous congestion from bit pressure or tongue-tie (see 'lolling')	x		
Elasticity - lack of: Inability to stretch and contract musculature smoothly, loss of 'springiness':	x	x	
Elevation loss of: Failure to raise the forehand	x	x	
Elevation loss of: Failure in piaffe and passage to raise the legs	x	x	
Elevation of the soft palate: Step #1 in a cascade of airway constrictions caused by 'tongue retraction' qv	x		
Elevation of the upper lip, as in the Flehmen response: Baring the teeth can be a sign of pain	x	x	
Emotional stress: Any pain that has a negative impact on a horse's normal physiology or pattern of behavior	x	x	x
Engagement - lack of: Failure to flex the lumbosacral joint, lower the croup and lighten the forehand. Lack of engagement means lack of 'carrying power': a prerequisite for upward thrust/'impulsion'	x	x	
Epiglottal entrapment: Generally a sequel to exercising with a broken lip seal (due to bit)	x		
Evasion: Avoidance of the difficulty, correctness, or purpose of the movement e.g. tilting head, gaping	x		
Evasion of the bit: "Avoiding 'correct' contact with the bit" - an FEI oxymoron	x		
Excitement: Pre-race arousal in the parade ring, lack of calmness, may be associated with increased risk	x		
Expression - lack of: Absence of increased impulsion, with no harmony, balance, cadence or "feeling"	x	x	
Exercise-induced acute cardiovascular failure: Possibly triggered by asphyxia and congestion of the lungs	x		x
Exercise-induced pulmonary edema (EIPH): Preferred name AIPE or NPPE (see above)	xx		x
Exercise intolerance: Decreased speed on the racetrack or in other timed sports. Unwilling = poor neck oscillation and failure of hind hooves to overlap the front	x	x	x
Eye -showing white of: Anxious expression, a restless or staring eye	x	x	
Falling In, Falling on inside Shoulder: Lateral deviation of forehand, caused by or causing loss of balance	x	x	
False collection: A passing semblance of true collection but brought about by bit-induced poll flexion	x		
Fatigue: Triggered by shortage of oxygen at speed events or metabolic failure/dehydration in endurance	xx	x	x
Fatigue fractures: Limb bone fractures and falls may be triggered by bit-induced fatigue, shortage of breath etc.	x		
Fear: Pain or the anticipation of pain triggers flight, fight and freeze responses	x	x	x
Flapping of lower lip: Source of a readily audible noise	x		
Flexibility - lack of: Poor range of motion of joints. No suppleness or pliability	x	x	
Flicking of the skin, excessively, over the withers and saddle region: Twitching of the panniculus muscle		x	
Flipping over backwards (somersaulting): Sequel to a rear. See also 'rotational falls'	x		
Flipping palate: See DDSP	x		
Fidgety: Unnecessary movement of head, body or legs at any time, including halt	x	x	

Finesse - lack of: Rider unable to persuade the horse to carry out fine movements	xx	x	
Focus - lack of: No ability to concentrate on aids - varies from mild to unrideable	xx	x	
Forwardness - lack of: 'Freezing' 'on strike.' Incorrectly used when applied to impulsion, energy, reach.	xx	x	
Fracture of the lower jaw: Sequel to a loose horse treading on the rein or a sharp tug from a fallen rider	x		
Frame - lack of: Absence of a shortening or lengthening of the outline in collection or extension	x	x	
Freedom - loss of: Constriction, loss of reach and scope	x	x	
"Freezing": Sudden stops from the canter or trot (see also 'Broke gait'), refusing to move	x	x	
Frisky: Friskiness can be a version of fear, so 'frisky may be risky' (see 'excitement' and 'jigging')	xx	x	
Gastric ulcers: Possible sequel to any form of stress	x	x	x
Going into rider's outside leg during walk/halt:	x	x	
Goose-stepping: An exaggerated action of the forelegs at the walk	x	x	
Grabbing the bit: The horse defends itself from the bit by immobilising it between his first cheek teeth	x		
Grazing on the fly (snatching at tree leaves in passing): Part of headshaking syndrome	x		
Grinding of teeth: Most commonly a sign of head pain but has been reported during saddling	x	x	
Grunting when being girthed or being ridden, especially when going down hill:		x	
Half-Halt - lack of: Absence of a momentary increase of collection in response to the aids, to re-balance	x	x	
Hair-trigger responses to the rein aids: Hypersensitivity in the mouth as a result of previous injuries	x		
Hasty or hurried tempo:	x	x	
Head carriage high: Accompanies 'hollow back.'	x	x	
Head rubbing: See 'head shaking.' Muzzle rubbed on foreleg during or after work, and handler	x		
Head tilting: Tipping or cocking the head (lowering one ear) - an evasion of the bit or a sign of saddle pain	x	x	
Head tossing: Sudden, spasmodic and involuntary, upward and downward movement of the head	x		
Head shaking syndrome: See 'Head Tossing' 'head rubbing', 'head shyness' etc	x		
Herd Bound: Refuses or shows reluctance to leave the stable &/or its companions	x	x	
Hiccups (synchronous diaphragmatic flutter or 'thumps'): Sequel to stress and possibly dehydration	x		
High-blowing: A trumpeting noise on expiration caused by poll flexion and made with the false nostril	x		
Hollow Back (passive): A slackness of the back and belly muscles	x	x	
Hollow Back (active): Sustained contraction of the back muscles, impeding swing and elasticity	x	x	
Hoof defects: An infinite variety of physical defects, deformities and degenerations, too many to specify. If one were to list every disease and defect of the horse's hoof as a problem this would be correct and it would be close to correct to suspect that most of these diseases were caused wholly or partly by shoeing.			xxxxxx
Hurrying when turned for home: See also 'runaway' and 'bolting.' Opposite of 'herd bound'	x	x	
Hyperalgesia: An excessive response to a painful stimulus, e.g. bit pain triggering headshaking (see 'Wind-up')	x		

Hyperflexion (Rollkur): A cause of mental and physical damage, airway obstruction, premature fatigue	x		
Hypersensitivity to rain or wind at exercise: Trigger for head tossing	x		
Hypersensitivity to being brushed around head or back: See also 'allodynia' & 'pain - pathological'	x	x	
Impulsion - lack of: No thrust because no energy to release from engagement.	x	x	
Incoordination of the gait: Signs similar to EPM but distinguishable by a simple test - remove the bit	x	x	
Independent seat - lack of: Absence of this quality results in riders yanking on the reins & escalating a crisis	x		
Innappetence for a day or two after racing: Associated with a sore mouth, bone spurs etc.,	x		
Interference (striking front hoof or foreleg with hind hoof): Part of gait incoordination	x	x	x
Inverted: Hollow back, high head carriage. Leads to 'ewe-neck' and inappropriate muscling	xx	x	
Irregular: Impure, unlevel or uneven. Momentary or pervasive.	x	x	
Jerky: Uneven transition from walk to trot	x	x	
Jigging, prancing and rushing when required to walk: A sign of nervousness from fear or pain	xx	x	
Lameness: An infinite variety of lamenesses in their location, distribution, degree and duration	x	x	xxxxxx
Late: A delay in execution after administration of an aid. Usually applied to flying changes and transitions	x	x	
Late behind: In flying changes, when the hind legs change after the forelegs	x	x	
Lateral: An impurity in walk (e.g. ambling or pacing) or canter, rarely at trot	x	x	
Lazy -apparent: Loss of interest in work, loss of interest in life, learned hopelessness	x	x	
Lengthening of stride - lack of: A fault in trot or canter	x	x	
Lengthen the top line - inability to:	x	x	
Lift - lack of: Applies to piaffe and passage and refers to the height to which the legs are raised	x	x	
Lightness - lack of: Can refer to the heaviness of a horse on its feet:	x	x	
Lightness - lack of: Also used to refer to a heaviness in the reins:	x	x	
Lip slapping: Noisy flapping of lower lip at work	x		
Lolling: Tongue flaccid, elongated and protruding. See also 'Edema (swelling)' of the apex of the tongue	x		
Long and low - absence of: Reluctance of horse to lower and stretch its neck when given the office	x	x	
Looseness - lack of: Physical or mental tension	x	x	
Lowering head close to the ground and even rubbing muzzle on the ground at exercise": Rare	x		
Lugging: Failure of a harness horse, especially, to steer straight, 'on a line.' 'Pulling' in or out, 'bearing'	x		
Lying down when first saddled or during work: The ultimate refusal. 'on strike'	x	x	
Making a noise: An abnormal respiratory noise during inspiration ('roaring,' 'whistling,' or 'thick in wind')	x		
Marching - absence of: Laxadaisical in manner of walk. Lacking in purposefulness	x	x	
Mobility - lack of: Poor maneuverability/nimbleness of the shoulders/forehand/forelegs.	x	x	
Mouth ulcers: Incidence increases with use of a bitted bridle	x		

Muscle atrophy in the back or wither region: Sequel to excess or badly distributed pressure from saddle		x	
Musculoskeletal defects and deformities: An infinite variety - too many to specify	x		xxxxxx
Nappy/Napping: Stopping dead in tracks during walk/trot or canter. Freezing. Rooted to the ground. In the arena or home paddock, tries to return to the stable at every circuit.	x	x	
Nasal discharge (bilateral and watery) after exercise: Sequel to 'Weeping.' Part of Headshaking	x		
Neck and cervical spine injuries: Probably many unrecognized injuries.	x		
Negative pressure pulmonary edema: Medical literature term for "bleeding," EIPH and AIPE in veterinary literature	x		x
Nodding/Bobbing: Abnormal up-and-down or backward and forward action of the horse's head and neck	x		x
Nodding inadequately: Loss of the head/neck pendulum at walk or canter (an energy-saving device)	x	x	
Obedience - lack of: Not submissive or supple. Unwilling to perform the task, resistant and evasive	x	x	
Obscure hind limb lameness:		x	x
On the aids' - lacking: Not connected and not 'on the bit' Not obedient, calm or responsive	x	x	
On the Bit' - lacking: Non-acceptance of contact. Above or behind the bit. No stretched topline	x	x	
On the Forehand: Poor longitudinal balance, in which the forelegs push the horse forward not upward	x	x	
Out Behind: Hind legs placed, or act, behind the horse's body	x	x	
Open mouth: Gaping. Evidence of oral pain; masked by use of tight nosebands (see 'tongue retraction')	x		
Overbent: Excessive lateral displacement of the neck, spoiling the lateral curve of whole body	x	x	
Overflexed: Behind the vertical. Excessive longitudinal flexion in the poll and or upper joints of neck	x		
Overstep - lack of: Hind foot fails to be placed in front of the fore foot imprint	x	x	
Over-turned: Turning more than 180 degrees in a half-pirouette or more than 360 degrees in a full pirouette	x	x	
Pace - lack of: Absence of variation within a gait (e.g. at walk: collected, medium, extended and free)	x	x	
Pain - acute: Normally serves a biological function but tack-induced pain does not permit a protective response	x	x	x
Pain - chronic (maladaptive): Pain that serves no useful biological function (e.g. protection from further injury)	x	x	x
Pain - inflammatory: As opposed to neuropathic (see 'trigeminal neuralgia') or visceral (e.g. colic) pain	x	x	x
Pain - pathological: As opposed to physiological pain, to which a normal response protects from further injury	x	x	x
Panic: A tipping point at which pain, fear and emotional stress combine to precipitate loss of all control	x	x	
Performance - poor: No athlete in pain will or can perform well	x	x	x
Photophobia: Hypersensitivity to bright light - trigger for head tossing. (photic headshaking)	x		
Pig-rooting: Can be a sign of bit or girth pain	xx	x	
Pivoting: Turning around a grounded (or "stuck") foot in reference to a pirouette or turn on the haunches	x	x	
Poll flexion and asphyxia: In the wild, a running horse extends its poll in order to breathe; denied in racing	x		
Pollen allergy' (hypersensitivity): Onset of head tossing when close to a bank of trees	x		
Ponying - inability to: Incapable of being led by a bridle when riding another horse on the racetrack	x		

Power - lack of: Pain has a limiting effect on muscle contractility in man and the horse is no different	xx	x	x
Premature fatigue: Lack of stamina from shortage of oxygen &/or pain from bit, tight girth A282	xx	x	x
Puller/pulling: A so-called 'hard-mouthed' horse with the bit between his teeth or under his tongue	x		
Pulling uphill with the front end: Unable to use the back or hind legs properly		x	
Purity - lack of: Incorrect order and timing of the footfalls and phases of a gait	x	x	
Pushing Out: Hind legs operating too far behind the horse. Pushing backwards, not carrying	x	x	
Quality - lack of: No freedom/amplitude of gait, elasticity, fluency etc. Differs from purity & correctness	x	x	
Rapid tempo:	x	x	
Reach - lack of: Insufficient forward extension of the fore limbs, hind limbs, or neck of the horse	x	x	
Reaching forward at the halt: Snatching, rooting, yanking	x		
Rearing: Sudden death if somersault causes fractured skull or need for euthanasia from broken back	xx	x	
Refusing at jumps: An aspect of fear, memory of pain, inability to extend head and neck because of short rein	xx	x	
Regularity - lack of: No purity of gait, uneven stride lengths, uneven levelness of leg pairs	x	x	
Rein back - reluctant or refused:	x	x	
Relative elevation - lack of: No lowering of the hindquarters and elevation of the forehead. Imbalance	x	x	
Relax/Relaxation - lack of: Anxious, nervous	x	x	
Relax/Relaxation - lack of: Physical tension in musculature, often accompanies the above anxiety	x	x	
Release - lack of: Failure to maintain self-carriage, balance, pace and tempo when contact deliberately released	x	x	
Reluctant to eat and drink: Sore mouth after racing, dehydration on endurance rides	x		
Reluctance or refusal to go downhill:		x	x
Reluctance to rein-back:	x	x	
Resistance: Active, rigid opposition to the aids. Not the same as disobedience or evasion	x	x	
Resistance to having a saddle placed on back: 'Cold-backed'		x	
Resistance to being girthed-up:		x	
Rocking/Rocking Horse canter: Excessive swing of the head/neck pendulum. Due to lack of sufficient ground coverage, lack of sufficient engagement, or interference by the rider	x	x	
Rotational falls: A horse that flips over backwards (somersaults) after hitting a jump. See also 'Fatigue'	x	x	
Roundness - lack of: Absence of a convexity to the topline and concavity of the underline of the neck	x	x	
Rubbing-off the rider: Running close to standing objects (poles, tree-trunks etc) to dislodge the rider	x		
Runaway: See 'bolting' and 'napping'	x	x	
Running: Excess speed &/or quickness of tempo relative to the engagement and balance expected of the pace or movement. Used in reference to lengthened, medium or extended trot or canter, or canter departs	x	x	
Running through the bit: Failure to slow or stop. A horse that has the bit between its teeth	x		

Rushed Tempo:	x	x	
Rushind downhill:		x	
Rushing the jumps: Another sign of nervousness and apprehension. Bolting on the approach or after the jump	x	x	
Saintly behavior': Too quiet	x		
Salivation at exercise - abnormal and excessive: Drooling, slobbering, foaming at the mouth	x		
Scope: Amplitude (reach and roundness) of movement	x	x	
Schooling stagnation: Horse is slow to learn or fails to learn. Slow progress with training	x	x	
Self-Carriage - lack of: Unable to balance withut taking support, i.e. balancing on the rider's hand	x	x	
Shying excessively: see also 'spookiness"	xx	x	
Slack: In reference to the reins - lacking contact	x		
Slack: In reference to the poor condition of the musculature (e.g. "slack loin")	x	x	
Slipping: Absence of proper (i.e.barefoot) traction on every surface & under all conditions leads to falls & injuries			x
Slowing down - lack of: Failure to respond to the aids:	xx	x	
Slow out of the staring gate:	x	x	
Slow to warm up or relax	x	x	
Snatching: Attempting to jerk the reins through the rider's hands ("rooting" 'gagging" "yawing" "diving")	xx	x	
Snatching: In reference to a stringhalt like action of the hind legs			x
Sneezing and snorting: Part of the headshaking syndrome	x		
Soften at poll - failure to: Resistance an head extension during during transition from walk to halt	x		
Sore mouth: From bruised gums, bone spurs, buccal ulcers, lacerated tongue	x		
Spookiness: Part of (bit-induced) nervousness but - as a common source of accidents - deserves a line to itself	xx	x	
Spring in step - lack of:	xx	x	
Starts ride well but gets more resistant later	x	x	
Star fracture of the bars of the mouth: A sinus on the gum caused by a piece of dead bone	x		
Stiff neck	x		
Stiff/stiffness: Inability (as opposed to unwillingness) to flex the limb joints/musculature..	x	x	
Stopping - failure to respond or slow response to the aids: See 'behind the leg'	x	x	
Straightness: Parallelism to line of travel (haunches neither left or right of centre) or to line of reference.	x	x	
Straightness - lack of: Failure to follow line of travel (e.g., weaving)	x	x	
Strained tendons, ligaments: Sequel to premature fatigue, concussion etc	x		x
Stressed: Fidgety, fizzy and rushing or lazy and awkward, 'hot,' nervous, spooky	xx	x	
Strung out: Too elongated, lacking good carriage, longitudinal balance and connection	x	x	
Stuck: See pivoting	x	x	

Stumbling: Often accompanied by sluggishness and loss of interest in work	x	x	x
Submission - lack of: Absence of compliance, thoroughness, attention, confidence, harmony, willingness	x	x	
Suffering:	x	x	x
Suffocation: See DDSP, hyperflexion etc.,	x		
Suppleness - lack of: Absence of pliability, flexibility. Stiffness.	x	x	
Swallowing the tongue: See 'Choking down,' elevation and dorsal displacement of soft palate	x		
Sweating excessively: A sign of pain. Hot and restless at exercise, lathering-up	x	x	
Sweating - absence of: On removal of the saddle, dry areas of skin under the saddle (areas of excess pressure)		x	
Swinging - lack of: The alternating displacement of shoulder or haunches during flying changes, piaffe etc	x	x	
Swinging Back - lack of: the springy motion that occurs in the back musculature to hind leg thrust	x	x	
Swinging head: Muzzle moved left-and-right (in trot and canter) or in circles; non-acceptance of contact	x	x	
Talent - lack of: Many a tack-handicapped horse is assumed to have inherent character deficiencies	xx	x	
Tail clamping: Sign of a rigid spine from pain in mouth or back	x	x	
Tail flashing: Sign of pain, particularly when asked to canter or rein back	x	x	
Taking-off after a jump: A horse that has experienced pain or fear during the jump. See 'bolting,' 'rushing'	x	x	
Tense/tension: Referring to horse's mental &/or physical state. Anxious, nervous, fearful, muscular rigidity	x	x	
Thoracic and lumbar spine defects: Soft and hard tissue injuries (e.g kissing spines, muscle damage). As with the hoof, it would be appropriate to list every known disease of the back as a problem in riding and to consider the evidence for which of these are caused, either partly or wholly by tack		xxxxxx	
Thoroughness/Through - lack of: Failure of aids to go through the whole horse from front to back etc	x	x	
Toe Flicking: An exaggerated or artificial action of the forelegs, usually at the trot	x	x	
Tongue retraction: Withdrawal behind the bit causes obstruction of the airway in the throat (see DDSP etc.,)	x		
Tongue-over-the-bit: Defence against the bit. Rider loses control; horse labelled 'hard-mouthed' & a 'puller'	x		
Tossing: See 'Head tossing' and 'trigeminal neuralgia'	xx	x	
Tracheal collapse (dynamic): Caused by any obstruction of the airway between it and the nostril at exercise	x		
Tracheal collapse (permanent): Sequel to the above, most commonly caused by elevation of soft palate	x		
Tracks straight - lack of: The line of path of a foot or feet (e.g. as horse approaches judge on center line)	x	x	
Trailing haunches: Lack of parallelism during half-pass and leg yielding	x	x	
Trailing hind legs: Hind legs too far behind the horse	x	x	
Trigeminal neuralgia (the headshaking syndrome): Referred (neuropathic) pain in the sensory nerve	x		
Twisting back over jumps:		x	
Twitching of cheek muscle on one or both sides: Sequel (?) to 'grabbing the bit'	x		
Tying-up (muscle cramps, rhabdomyolysis, azoturia): Possible sequel to any form of stress	x	x	

Uncooperative: Cranky. Regards rider as a nag and an adversary rather than a partner	x	x	
Unable to stand still;	x	x	
Uneven: Failure of each leg to take the same length of stride as its pair.	x	x	
Unhappiness at work: Persistent evasions, resistance, rarely pricks ears, bites rider's boots etc.,	x	x	
Unlevel: Failure of symmetry in relation to the height of travel in a pair of legs	x	x	
Uphill - lack of: On the forehand	x	x	
Unfocussed: Unable to concentrate on the job in hand, too worried about pain etc	xx	x	
Weeping: Watery eyes associated with head tossing. Part of the headshaking syndrome	x		
Wide behind: Hind feet wider apart than front feet, during piaffe, lengthening of trot or halt	x	x	
Wind-up': 'Wind' rhymes with rind.Sensitisation of pain receptors to repeated stimulation (see 'pain - chronic')	x		
Wrinkled nostril and lips: Multiple stress lines around nostrils and lips during work and at rest	x		
Yawning: Especially during bridling and during or immediately after exercise (see Headshaking syndrome)	x		