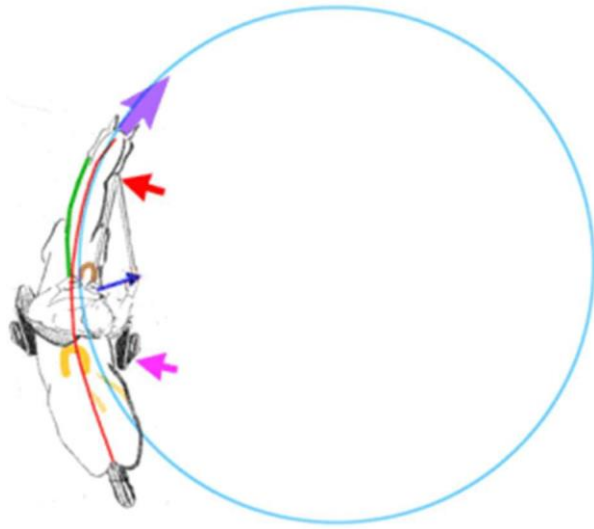


Snippet 3: Correct Bend on the Circle

This drawing which illustrates how a horse's spine should follow the line of a circle opens the discussion on Bending.



In this drawing, the red line along the horse's spine shows a problem. The rider's inside leg is too far back and is pushing the hindquarters to the outside of the desired line of travel. Note the bright pink arrow. Additionally, the rider's outside leg no doubt is not back far enough to support the Turning of the horse's outside hind leg.

As an overview, a horse can shift laterally at 4 major places front to back. These are at the junctions of the 5 major bony masses: head, base of neck, between the back of the scapula and the front of the rib cage, and between the back of the rib cage and the front of the pelvis.

Major Anders Lindgren pointed out to me that the "Hinge" of the body is in the girth groove at the back of the rib cage and the front of the pelvis. Visualize a door hung on a frame and the metal pieces holding them together. The hinge pin holding the two together is like the rider's inside leg. Therefore, the horse's body parts in front of the hinge pin and behind it should arc equally for a smooth, continuous, harmonious and correct Bend.

An application of this for test riding is that an intro, training and first level horse should be able to arc through the corners of the ring following a quarter of the shape of a 10-meter circle. A second, third and fourth level horse should follow an 8-meter arc, and a FEI horse should have enough lateral suppleness to match a 6-meter arc.

