

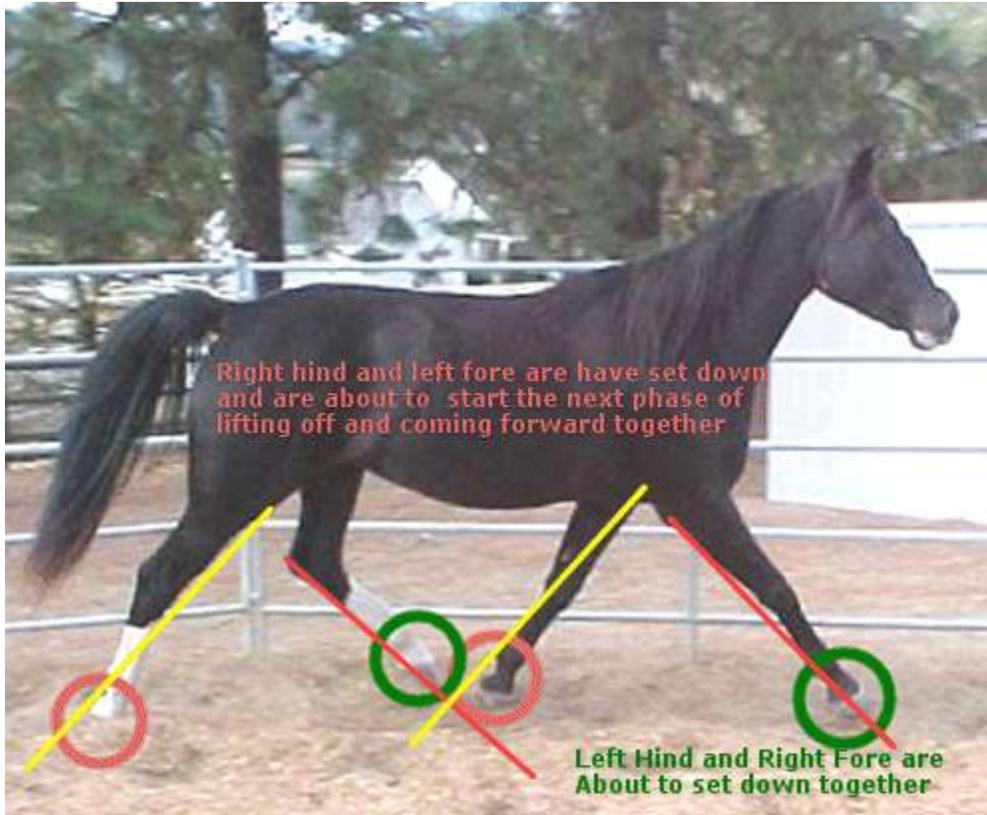
[By Elizabeth Graves©2001](#)

## **What Gait is this horse performing?**



When analyzing gait it can be rather confusing and sometimes difficult to pick up at first with the eye until one has spent a lot of time simply looking at lots of horses. It will help a lot to know what the far ends of the gait spectrum are.

By developing an eye for these first will help to be able to decipher where in between the other gaits lay.



The maximum end of the lateral gaits is the pace; the maximum end of the diagonal gaits is the trot. The even gaits of the running walk and Paso llano fall in the middle.

The trot and pace are the easiest to see because they are both 2 beat gaits but the lift off and set down are very different.

This picture is a wonderful example of the trot.

You can clearly see the diagonal pairs working together. Notice the left hind and right fore are about to set down together. The right hind and left fore have set down and are about to start the next phase of lifting off and coming forward together. This happens as the left hind and right fore will go back together (note the lines on each leg to see this). In between this lift off and set down will be a fraction of time when the gait of the trot will be totally suspended. In the trot you will see the hind hoof set down in the same track as the front hoof on the same side.

This picture is a lovely example of an extended, forward and free trot. This horse shows no restriction of the head, neck and body. This is a very common sight to see on many of our gaited horses when out in the pasture.

Also knowing if they have trot and using the trot in some of our gaited horses that tend to be toward lateral can be a great tool to build strength in the back to carry a gait better and break up a strong to the lateral horse.

Don't be afraid to find that horse that has trot but also know if the horse has the structure and genes to support your desired smooth gait

***By Liz Graves***