

Are You Making This Deadly Mistake To Get Your Dressage Horse On the Bit?

Do you saw left and right on your dressage horse's mouth to get him "on the bit"?

If you "saw" on your horse's mouth by alternating squeezing and releasing with your hands, you're riding your horse from front to back. He might look like he's "on the bit" because his head is down and his nose is on the vertical, but you don't have an honest connection from back to front.

The only part of your horse's body that you can affect is his jaw. Moving the bit in his mouth encourages him to chew. When he chews, he flexes in the jaw.

So, if all you do is saw on the bit, all you have control over is a flexed jaw. You can't control the rest of your horse's body.

Also, if you just flex his jaw, your horse will "come off the bit" when you ask him to do something like a transition.

The reality is that he was never on the bit to begin with. All you had was a flexed jaw.

To put your dressage horse honestly on the bit, close both legs to add power from behind as if you're doing a lengthening. When your horse "arrives" at your outside hand, close that hand in a fist to capture, contain, and recycle the power back to the hind legs. Do this for 3 full seconds.

THEN, lastly you can vibrate or squeeze on the inside rein for two reasons:

1. To keep his neck straight (so it doesn't bend to the outside).
2. To move the bit, and ask him to flex in the jaw.

So to get your dressage horse on the bit, never do with two hands what you can do with one hand (move the bit).

And you have the other hand left over for the more important job of recycling power back to the hind legs.

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