

Why does my horse drag his hind hooves?

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Dragging of the hind limb in horses can be due to a number of factors, which may have a muscular or structural basis. Some common issues I find that contribute to or cause the problem are below

1. Problems in the biceps femoris muscle, this hindquarter muscle exerts its effect on both the hip and stifle. With problems here the horse will tend to scuff the hind limb during forward movement and the stride may be shortened.
2. Lumbo- sacral issues: Should the horse have a muscular problem in the area of the croup the action of tucking the hind quarter may be reduced which in turn will reduce the horse's ability to lift and place the hind feet in all gaits.
3. Primary back problems, especially those that affect the lumbar region. If the horse has back pain it will attempt to protect its back – just like you do when you have back pain, the effect of this on the hind limb can result in dragging of the hind limbs. Here checking the saddle, and the rider balance is of great importance.
4. Primary forelimb problems: in the presence of pain during forelimb stance phase the horse will avoid transferring the weight forward during movement – which in turn increases the weight on the hindquarter and reduces the ability to pick up the hind feet.
5. 5. Hoof balance is also a major factor – so ensure your horse's feet are balanced prior to assuming you have other problems

To ascertain the primary cause it is important to gain the help of a physical (massage) therapist to ascertain the basis of the issue and then have it effectively treated. Contact the ACATT Administration to access professional highly qualified practitioners in your area.

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<http://www.acatt.net/ACATT-Equine-Therapists.html>