

*Q: I'm having trouble with haunches-in, or as you dressage geeks like to call it, travers. I tried introducing the movement by first sharpening him up on turn-on-the-forehand. With my horse reliably moving his haunches away from my leg, I tried framing the question in terms he is familiar with. I rode a 10 meter circle to shoulder-in, then a 10 meter circle to haunches-in. Rather than elucidating what I wanted, ordering the exercise in that way seemed to confuse him. Can you suggest another exercise?*

**BILL:** The exercise is a decent one, but the underlying problems are twofold.

Travers is mainly complicated because after all that time of teaching the horse to move away from the leg he's bent around, now all of a sudden he has to move *into* that leg.

Suggestions:

1. Be sure he's good at turn on the haunches with a correct bend from your leg. This will let you "push and catch," alternating your individual aids in the sequence that will help each part of him go where it's supposed to with the correct shaping. It also let's you catch him immediately every time he begins to go wrong.
2. Apply that very same "shape-yield-reshape-yield" idea in super slo-motion at the walk. Do it out in the open away from the wall, more like a half pass idea. Each time he collapses onto his inside shoulder, reshape, go forward in a touch of shoulder in, and then move over again.
3. Tiny bites at a time. Even at the Spanish Riding School, you would see them teaching the horses with the circle, a step or two of travers, a new circle, another step, a circle and so on.