

When he takes off, he brings both hind feet together and pushes off while raising his head and neck; this puts weight back on his hind end and lightens his forehead so he can get his front legs tucked up.



As he pushes up and over the jump he is in balance and powered from behind.



In mid-air he has to get his head down to take the weight off his hindquarters to flick his back feet over the jump. As he lands he raises his



head again to take some of the weight off his front legs and stop himself pitching forward onto his nose.

As his hindlegs come down he shifts his weight forward again to take some of the strain off his hindquarters.

Then he gets himself balanced to canter on to the next jump.

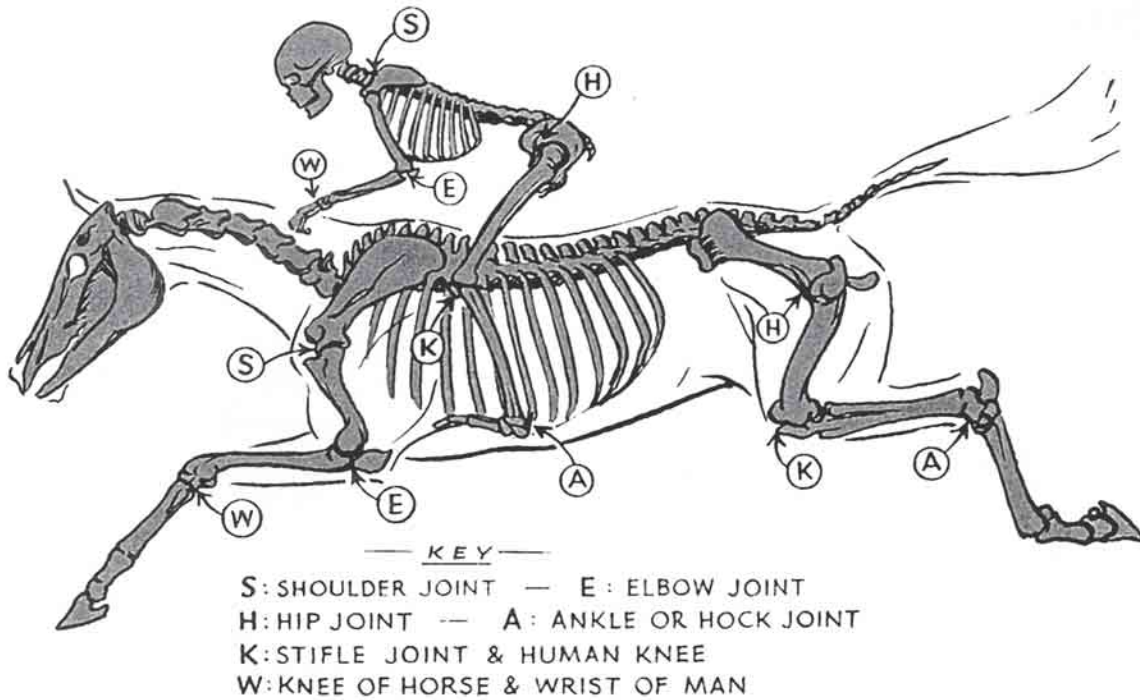
Essentially, what happens, is that the horse incorporates the jump into his stride, but with a lot of "air time". So you see, your horse moves very

athletically as he jumps and you must remain in quiet balance with him. You need to have an independent seat, legs and hands. That means lotsof



ractice for you in the jumping position - in the arena, in fields, up and down hill, until you are rock solid and won't interfere with your horse. While you are practicing remember to keep looking ahead and up, your horse will follow where you are looking.

COMPARATIVE SKELETONS OF MAN & HORSE IN ACTION

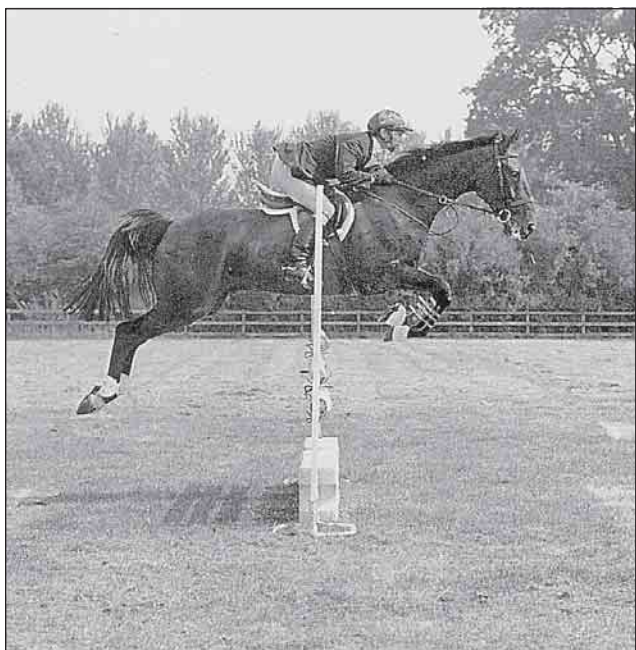


To understand correct take-off and landing spots, imagine the view of the fence from the side. The obstacle being jumped is going to be incorporated in the horse's 11 or 12 foot stride. And the highest point of the fence will be at the centre of the arch over the obstacle.



Take off

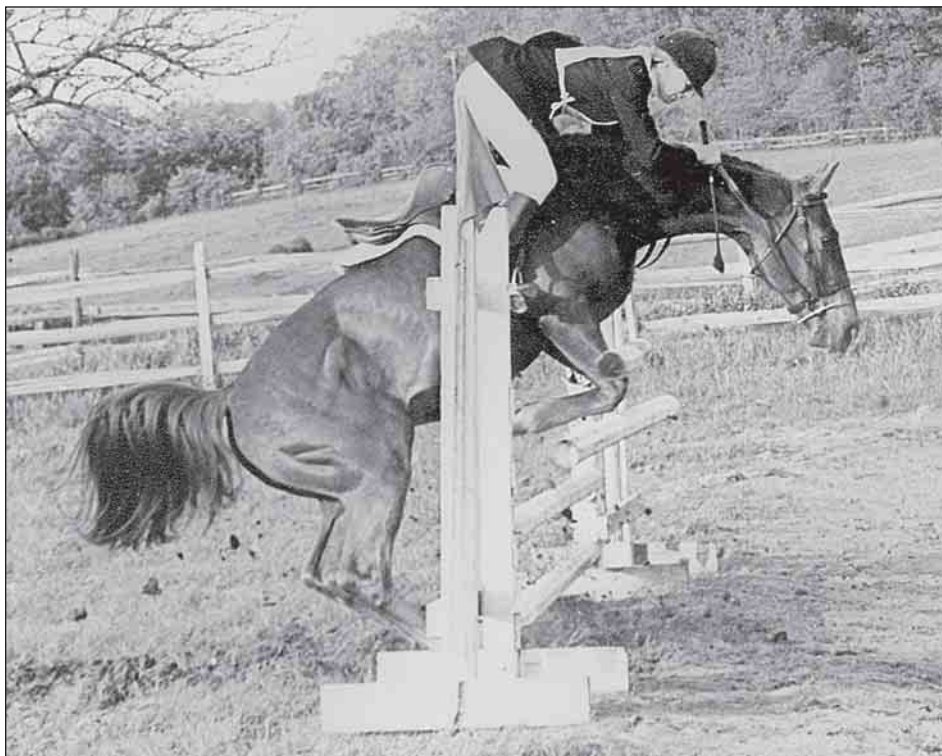
In most cases, the horse takes off in front of an upright fence half of his canter stride and lands half of his stride beyond.



Top of jumping arc



Landing



Taking off closer to the fence is called “getting under” the fence, and may result in the horse hitting a rail with his front legs.

“Chipping” is the habit some horses have of putting in an extra step immediately in front of the fence before takeoff and is rather uncomfortable. Usually, increasing the horse’s impulsion into the fence will eliminate this problem. Taking off further back is called “early”, or “taking a long one”, and may result in the horse bringing down a rail with his back legs.