



## How do I sit deeper and relax?

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[Back to Articles...](#)

How do I 'sit deeper' and 'relax'?

With the cold weather it is easy to get tense and stay that way. Once on your horse there may be a low level of tension that you aren't even aware of... but your horse is!

If you want to check for tension, or you may know that you are because your coach keeps telling you to relax your arm/leg/pelvis/back, there are a couple very simple exercises you can do. First sit tall, but with no tension in your back. Then shrug your shoulders right up to your ears and hold briefly to ensure that you are working equally hard on each side. Very SLOWLY, SMOOTHLY and EVENLY begin to lower your shoulders.

Notice if one shoulder is harder to lower smoothly or if it can only let go quickly. Completely let go and have the feeling that your shoulders are just hanging freely. Timing this with a breath out will make it easier. The tricky part is staying tall and avoiding slouching as you 'let go'. Repeat 3 or 4 times to improve the quality of the 'letting go'. Now keep that free, hanging feeling in your shoulders as you ride/work/drive.

The next 2 exercises are exactly the same except with one you squeeze your butt cheeks as tight as you can and the other you squeeze your inner thighs together. Pay careful attention to the letting go phase of these exercises as that is when your brain is learning the feeling. Repeat these 3 simple exercises 4 or 5 times a day and intermittently while you ride.

Soon you will find yourself sitting deeper and more quietly (as depicted in the picture) and your horse will breathe a sigh of relief!