



Jumping corners with Harry Meade

HOW TO CRACK CORNERS

Corners can be a cause of worry on the cross-country course, but Harry Meade tells you how to get them right in three easy steps

With corners it's all about accuracy, so it's important to take into consideration your speed on approach, the angle on which you approach and the exact point at which you jump the fence. The principles are really quite similar to jumping an arrowhead fence and once you know them, putting it all into practice is easy.

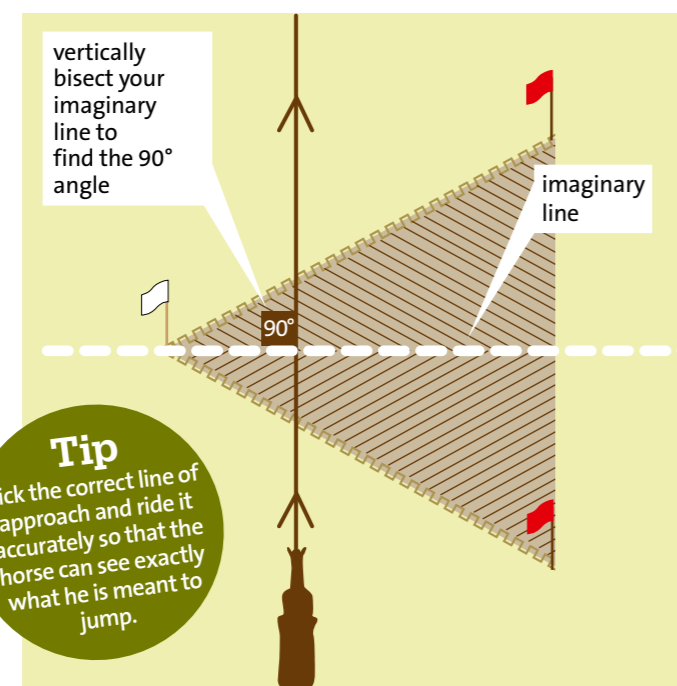
1. CONTROL YOUR SPEED

First and foremost make sure you don't approach the corner too fast. Corners require accurate riding so it's important to have a balanced active canter that enables the horse to jump with ease. Corners are fairly unforgiving fences as they're often upright, and because the front edge is at an angle, a horse who hits a corner is likely to hit it with one knee and twist, often resulting in a fall or the unseating of the rider. So keep it controlled and show the corner respect.

2. HIT YOUR POINT

Unlike some fences, corners leave little room for error, so you need to pick the exact point at which you'll jump the fence and stick with it. Your point will obviously depend on how wide the corner is – the wider the angle is the nearer to the flag you'll need to jump. If you jump too far from the flag, you make it a very wide fence, but too near and your horse will run out. Whatever the width, stick to your point and don't allow your horse to drift.

3. PLAN YOUR ANGLE



Getting your line of approach right is essential. To do this, work out your line when walking the course in the following way:

Remembering that your corner has two arms and a corner point, you need to visualise an imaginary line from the middle of the corner point (the white flag) to the middle point between the ends of the two arms (the red flags).

Bisect this central line by 90 degrees. This is the line on which you should approach.

Stand at the point at which you'll jump the corner and use your eyes to follow this imaginary line into the distance until it passes through a permanent object, like a tree or a building. Remember that object as that's what you will be lining up for as you approach the fence on your horse.

TOP TIP

When approaching corners, it is often not clear to the horse where you intend to go or what they're expected to jump. By approaching at the correct speed, on the correct line,

aiming at the optimum point on the corner, you give your horse the clearest indication what he is supposed to jump. Even genuine horses will run out if they can't see the 'way through'.



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Headshot pic: Mountain Horse

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