

**Key Concepts:**

- This restraint technique generally requires 3 people.
- Protect your back by standing with your legs and back straight once you get hold of the foot.
- When you want to immobilize a front limb for a procedure, you need to lift the other front limb for restraint. Likewise, when you want to a horse to stand still for a procedure on a hind limb, you need to life the other hind limb for restraint (i.e. you can't lift a front leg for restraint to immobilize a horse when doing a procedure on a hind limb! Or vice versa!)

**Lifting a Limb for Restraint Purposes:**

Lifting a limb may be done to clean the horse's feet, to examine the bottom surface of the hoof, or \*as a method of restraint when working with another limb\*...

When you are trying to accomplish a task involving a limb, sometimes the horse will repeatedly lift that limb and make it difficult to get the job done. In such instances, you may choose to lift the contralateral (opposite/other) limb so that the horse is forced to stay standing on the limb you want to work with. An example of this would be when you try to inject local anesthetic under the skin to localize the source of a horse's lameness, but every time you try to stick the needle into the leg, the horse jerks its leg away and the needle goes flying!

This restraint technique requires 3 people – the handler holding the horse, the person performing the desired procedure, and you as the person lifting the contralateral limb for restraint purposes. The handler stays on the same side of the horse as the person performing the actual veterinary procedure (so you will need to fend for yourself in terms of personal protection if the horse acts up while you are holding the contralateral limb!).

Lift the contralateral forelimb as described previously. Hold the leg with it bent to a right angle at the knee (carpus). If you need to maintain this restraint method for a prolonged period of time, reposition your hand to span across the bottom (sole) of the hoof (as shown in the video), allowing you to straighten you back (work smartly!).

[Troubleshooting](#): Avoid providing too much support for the lifted limb – then the horse will lean on that leg despite you holding it up so that they are able to lift their other leg anyway!!!

Make sure the procedure is done and everyone is out of the way before you let go of the lifted contralateral limb.