

Quality Circles & Quick Turns Checklist



- 1. Connection** – My horse is completely connected and paying attention. He’s calm, responsive and not distracted, tense or spooky. I’ve met my horse’s greatest need by providing quality leadership, he’s happy and content.
What I Feel _____
What Needs Work _____
- 2. Freedom** – I am certain I’m not bracing or leaning to one side or the other. I can trot a small circle without stirrups and still keep my upper body in good position without leaning. I know my saddle fits perfectly and is not inhibiting my horse’s movement.
What I Feel _____
What Needs Work _____
- 3. Education** - I REALLY CAN position any part of my horse’s body (head, neck, shoulder, rib cage, hip) anywhere, at any time. My horse stays between my reins and legs, and if he gets off track I can correct him quickly and easily without resistance.
What I Feel _____
What Needs Work _____
- 4. Footfall** – When I start a circle and suggest to my horse that he stay on that circle with my body language, he stays perfectly on track. He knows his job and will go the direction I ask with minimal guidance, until I ask him to do something different.
What I Feel _____
What Needs Work _____
- 5. Impulsion** – My horse’s stride isn’t short or choppy and it’s not slow and lethargic. I don’t have to kick repetitively but I don’t have to keep checking either. My horse moves around a barrel in a forward, dynamic way with lots of reach in his stride.
What I Feel _____
What Needs Work _____
- 6. Flexion** – My horse is not only educated to shape his body in a full body arc around a barrel, but he will actually maintain that perfect gentle arc based on my body language and very subtle guidance with my leg and/or reins. I don’t have to “hold” him to have bend.
What I Feel _____
What Needs Work _____
- 7. Collection** – When I ask, my horse will shift his weight to the hind quarters, lift his back, round his top line and flex softly at the poll while moving forward to be ready for any quick athletic maneuver. He is flexible vertically through his body and will extend or collect his stride quickly.
What I Feel _____
What Needs Work _____
- 8. Balance** – When traveling on a circle, my horse and I feel centered and balanced. He doesn’t lean to the inside or drop down on his front end. He elevates his shoulders slightly so he can position the inside hind leg under his body for a quick turn.
What I Feel _____
What Needs Work _____
- 9. Independence** – My horse is confident and understands his responsibilities. I trust him and I don’t have to micromanage. If he makes a mistake, he’s willing to accept my guidance and receive help if needed, without delays or resistance.
What I Feel _____
What Needs Work _____

Courtesy of BarrelRacingTips.com