1st Check the Feet

* Lameness mainly originates in the foot therefore eliminate the most obvious cause first.
* Stand horse on a level surface, pick the limb out and check for stones or sharp objects lodged in the sole, frog, heat in the hoof wall or underneath the shoe
* If there is suspicion of lameness in a limb, remove the shoe so it can be investigated further.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Hv7TXPXJug>

2nd Move upward on the limb

-Move hands upwards on the limb, feeling for heat around the heels and the coronary band.

- Ensure to check for signs of swelling and heat between the fetlock and the knee or hock to rule out problems in the tendon or ligament area.

-The knee, elbow and shoulder in the forelimb should be checked

- The hock, stifle and hip in the hindlimb should be examined

* Observe the horse from the side moving and observe for variations in its length of stride.
* If lameness is subtle, observe the horse walking in a circle, preferably on the lunge.
* Stand behind the horse and watch the point of the hip rise and fall.
* The hip and the hock of the lame limb may be carried higher or increased vertical displacement.
* Watch for nodding of the horse’s head.
* When the sound leg bears weight, the horse’s head will go down
* When the sore leg bears weight, the head will go up.

Forelimb

Hind limb

How to identify lameness