Skin Preparation

* Cleaning the coat and skin with surgical scrub and then alcohol is sufficient in most instances
* Clip and clean skin of hairy (ask the owner’s permission first) or mud-caked horses with surgical scrub
* Perform aseptic preparation if there is a risk of inadvertently penetrating a synovial cavity, e.g., local analgesia of the palmar metacarpal nerves just distal to the carpus (part of high 4-point nerve block)

Technique

* Work in a distal to proximal sequence to localize the source of pain most accurately
* Not well tolerated by all horses
* A twitch or holding up the ipsilateral forelimb (when appropriate) may be helpful.
* In some horses it is necessary to use chemical restraint, e.g., a low dose of an alpha-2 agonist (0.2mg/kg xylazine), acepromazine (10-15mg total dose), combination of alpha-2 agonist and butorphanol.
* You can’t sedate heavily, because you have to observe them trotting in between blocks to actually assess the lameness