

Lil Folk Farm



Beginner Horsemanship Skills

Beginner Horsemanship Skills

1. Basic safety rules
2. Haltering and leading
 - a. Approach a horse safely and put on halter
 - b. Walk, stop and back a horse in hand
 - c. Lead into and out of a stall
 - d. Cross tie properly
3. Grooming
 - a. Identify brushes
 - b. Simple grooming
 - c. Pick up and clean hooves
4. Parts of the horse
 - a. Name parts
 - b. Identify where parts are on the horse
5. Colors and markings
 - a. Basic coat colors
 - b. Face markings
 - c. Leg markings
6. Basic parts of tack
 - a. English saddle
 - b. English bridle
 - c. Western saddle
 - d. Western bridle
7. Tacking and untacking
 - a. Saddle and make basic adjustments
 - b. Bridle and make basic adjustments
8. General horse terms
9. Measuring horses
 - a. Description of measuring (hands) and what makes a horse/pony
 - b. Measure horse
 - c. Weigh horse
10. Basic stable management
 - a. Cleaning stalls
 - b. Feeding schedule
11. Basic gaits of the horse
12. Basic history of the horse
 - a. Evolutionary stages
 - b. Uses of the horse

The Beginner level emphasizes basic, correct and safe principles of handling a horse

To pass this level, youth must have mastered each skill

Beginner Horsemanship Skills	Started	Achieved
Discuss basic barn safety		
Discuss basic safety for riding in a group		
Identify the horse's blind spots		
Approach a horse safely		
Demonstrate how to properly feed a horse a treat		
Demonstrate safety around the horse while handling		
Properly halter a horse		
Lead, turn and back a horse safely and correctly		
Lead a horse into and out of a stall		
Name and identify the 5 basic brushes used in grooming a horse		
Discuss 3 reasons for grooming a horse		
Demonstrate simple grooming of the horse		
Pick up and clean hooves properly		
Name and identify at least 10 parts of the horse		
Name and identify at least 5 different face markings		
Name and identify at least 3 different leg markings		
Name and identify at least 7 different colors of horses		
Name and identify at least 7 parts of the English saddle		
Name and identify at least 7 parts of the Western Saddle		
Name and identify at least 5 parts of the English bridle		
Name and identify the 4 basic parts of a Western bridle		
Saddle a horse, check the position and make basic adjustments		
Bridle a horse and make basic adjustments		
Describe at least 20 general horse terms		
Give a basic description of measuring horses (hands) and height requirements for horses/ponies		
Demonstrate how to measure and weigh a horse		
demonstrate how to clean a stall		
Identify 3 different types of feed for horses		
Name 5 gaits of the horse and how many beats are in each gait		
Discuss a brief history of the horse including 3 different stages and uses		
Name at least 5 different uses of horses		

SAFETY

GENERAL BARN SAFETY

- Don't run, yell, or scream around horses because it could scare them.
- Don't approach horses that you don't know unless someone has said it is okay.
- Never open doors or gates unless someone says it's ok.
- When walking through doorways, always say "door" so people on the other side know you are coming in.
- Always talk to the horse when approaching it so it isn't startled when it sees you.
- The horse can't see directly behind them, under them or above their neck without turning their head. These are their "blind spots". Use extra caution when you are in a horse's blind spots so you don't startle the horse.
- Never stand directly in front of or behind the horse. When walking in front of or behind the horse, always leave enough space between you and the horse in case they toss their head or kick.
- Always walk around a horse and never under them.
- If your horse is cross tied and you need to walk around, gently lift the cross tie to walk under it and set it back down gently. Don't forget, your horse is attached.
- A red ribbon in a horse's tail means that it may kick if you get too close.
- Make sure there are no sharp objects or clutter in the area where your horse is.
- Make sure stalls and riding rings are clear of rocks, protruding nails and other items that could injure a horse.
- When feeding your horse a treat, hold your hand flat with your fingers tightly together and the treat in the middle of your hand. Protruding fingers might be mistaken for treats. Bring your hand to the horse's mouth and let them eat the treat out of your hand. Be careful not to tease the horse with treats(showing the treat, then taking it away, holding it too far away so they can't reach it, etc) because they might get mad.

SAFETY WHEN LEADING THE HORSE

- Stand on the left side of the horse and by its shoulder when you lead.
- Use both hands on the lead rope or reins when leading the horse. Ideally your right hand should be 6 to 12 inches away from the halter or bit and your left hand 12 to 24 inches from your right hand.
- Keep leads and long reins off the ground. Fold the end of the lead or reins and hold them with your left hand. Never wrap the lead around your hand or body. If the horse gets scared and starts running you could get dragged.
- Always turn to the horse to the right so that it can't step on your feet.
- When going into stalls or through doorways the person always goes before the horse. This will show the horse where it is supposed to go and it will prevent you from being squished in the doorway.
- Tie horses to an object that is strong and secure and at the horse's shoulder level or higher with a rope length that will allow for comfortable movement, but short enough to avoid becoming tangled.
- Always tie a horse with a lead rope using a quick release or safety knot. Never tie your horse with the reins.

SAFETY WHEN RIDING

- Always wear a helmet when mounted on the horse.
- Check all of your equipment for wear and tear while tacking up.
- When riding with a saddle, always make sure your girth is tight before you mount so your saddle doesn't slip when you mount.
- Mount in an area that has enough overhead clearance so you don't hit your head while getting on or walking forward with your horse.
- If you need help mounting, make sure the item you use is sturdy and will not tip over or pose a danger to the horse. A mounting block is a great tool to use.
- Always be aware of your surroundings. Horses may get frightened at unusual objects and noises. If your horse tries to run away from something, turn it in a circle and talk calmly to it to settle it.
- It is best to keep at least 1 horse's length between each horse. That way if a horse kicks out, your horse won't get kicked.
- When passing a horse, make sure you leave enough space on the side and in front of the horse you are passing.

HALTERING AND LEADING

When it's time to get your horse, make sure you are prepared before you start. Have your halter and lead rope with you before going into a stall or pasture to get your horse and know how the halter goes on. Some horses are more tricky than others to catch. You may need a treat to help catch your horse if they are in a pasture.

HALTERING:

- Stand on the left side of your horse.
- Slip the noseband part of the halter up and over the nose. Then slip the crown piece of the halter up and over the horse's ears.
- Be sure the halter is securely clipped or buckled.
- Clip the lead rope to the halter.
- When taking off the halter, unclip the halter and slide the crownpiece over the horse's ears, then let the noseband gently slide off the horse's nose.



LEADING:

- Stand on the left side of the horse and by its shoulder when you lead.
- Use both hands on the lead rope or reins when leading the horse. Ideally your right hand should be 6 to 12 inches away from the halter or bit and your left hand 12 to 24 inches from your right hand. If your horse needs more control, you can move your right hand up closer to the halter or bit.
- Keep leads and long reins off the ground. Fold the end of the lead or reins and hold them with your left hand. Never wrap the lead around your hand or body. If the horse gets scared and starts running you could get dragged.
- To get the horse to walk, gently push forward with your right hand and say "walk". Some horses may need a bit more of a push, or several push and release motions to start walking forward.
- Your hands will control where the horse goes. If you want to go towards the right, push with your right hand towards the right. If you want to go towards the left, pull with your right hand towards the left.
- To stop your horse, pull back towards their chest until they stop.
- To slow your horse down, gently pull back with your right hand and then move your right hand forward. You may need to pull back several times or a little harder depending on how fast your horse is going or how much you want them to slow down. Be careful not to pull too hard or too much because your horse will stop.
- If you want to walk faster or trot, push forward with your right hand and say trot and start jogging with your horse.
- If you need to turn the horse around or in a circle while leading it, always turn the horse to the right so that it can't step on your feet.
- When going into stalls or through doorways the person always goes before the horse. This will show the horse where it is supposed to go and it will prevent you from being squished in the doorway.
- Always turn your horse around in the stall or pasture and close the door or gate before taking off the halter or bridle.

GROOMING

The following are items that should be located in a grooming kit:

- Curry Comb - used in a circular motion on the neck and body to free dirt from the skin
- Hard (Dandy) Brush - used in short strokes in the same direction the hair lays on the neck and body to flick off dirt brought up by the curry comb
- Soft (Body) Brush - used in long gentle strokes in the same direction that the hair lays on the face, body, and legs to eliminate dirt
- Hoof Pick - used from heel to toe on the bottom of the foot to remove dirt and debris from the hooves
- Mane and Tail Comb or brush - used to brush out the mane and tail to remove tangles
- Grooming Cloth – used to remove remaining particles of dirt and gives the body an extra shine
- Body Sponge – used wet to wipe off sweaty areas of the horse
- Sweat Scraper - used on the neck and body in the same direction the hair lays to scrape off excess sweat or water after a hard workout or bath
- Shedding Blade – used to remove excess hair in the spring when the horse sheds its winter coat.

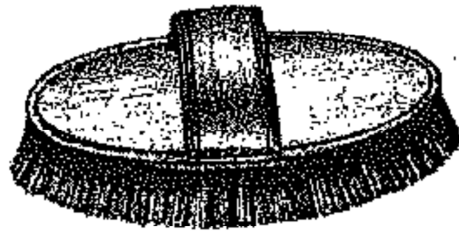
Tips and things to know about grooming:

- Try to get into a routine when you brush. That way your horse will know what to expect next. For example, you may use all of the brushes (curry comb, hard brush, etc) on one side of your horse, then move to the other side, or you may choose to use one brush on both sides before moving on to the next brush.
- Always stand when brushing the horse in case you need to move quickly.
- The horse's lower legs and face are bony and do not have a lot of protection. Avoid grooming these areas with hard metal brushes because it can hurt the horse.
- Some horses have sensitive areas on their body that they don't like being touched. The most common areas are the face, belly and inside the back legs by the flank. Take extra care and go slowly in these areas.
- When picking up the horse's hooves to clean them out, stand facing the horse's hind end with your shoulder next to the horse. Put your hand closest to the horse on the inside of their leg and gently run your hand down their leg. As you get to the lower part of the cannon gently squeeze the leg and pull upwards. You can then hold the hoof in one hand while using the other hand with a hoof pick to pick out the hoof.
- Always groom your horse before riding. Dirt and excess hairs under a saddle can rub on the horse and give it a sore.
- Make sure to pick out the horse's feet before riding because a rock or pebble can cause sores on your horse's feet if they are not cleaned out.
- Grooming the horse is a great opportunity to look for cuts or scrapes that the horse might have gotten overnight or in the pasture.
- Grooming is a great time to bond with your horse. You can get to know their personality better and they can get to know you better too.

Grooming Tools



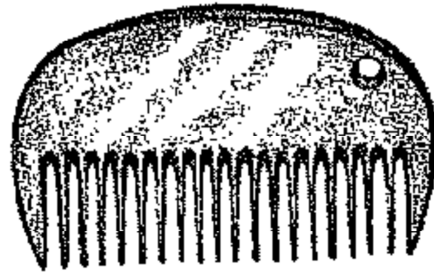
Curry Comb



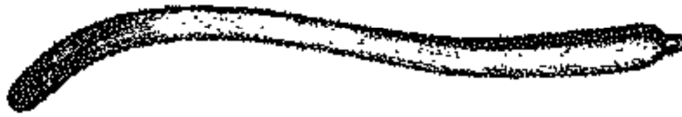
Body Brush



Dandy Brush



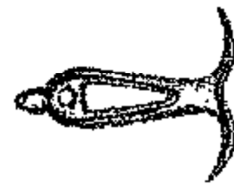
Mane & Tail Comb



Sweat Scraper



Grooming Cloth

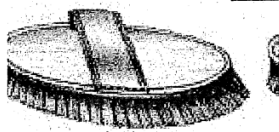


Hoof Pick or Hook

GROOMING TOOLS

Identify where to use the following grooming equipment on the horse by drawing a line to the area.

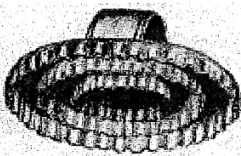
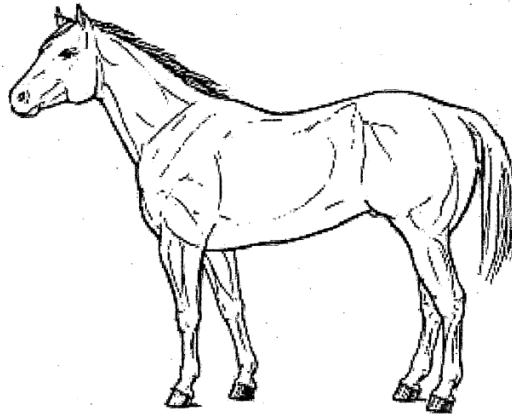
Finishing brush- is soft & used to remove dirt the hair



Grooming cloth- is used to wipe the horse



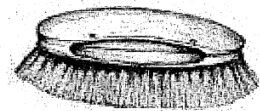
Hoofpick- used to remove dirt from the hoof



Currycomb-
used in a circular motion
to lift dirt from the skin



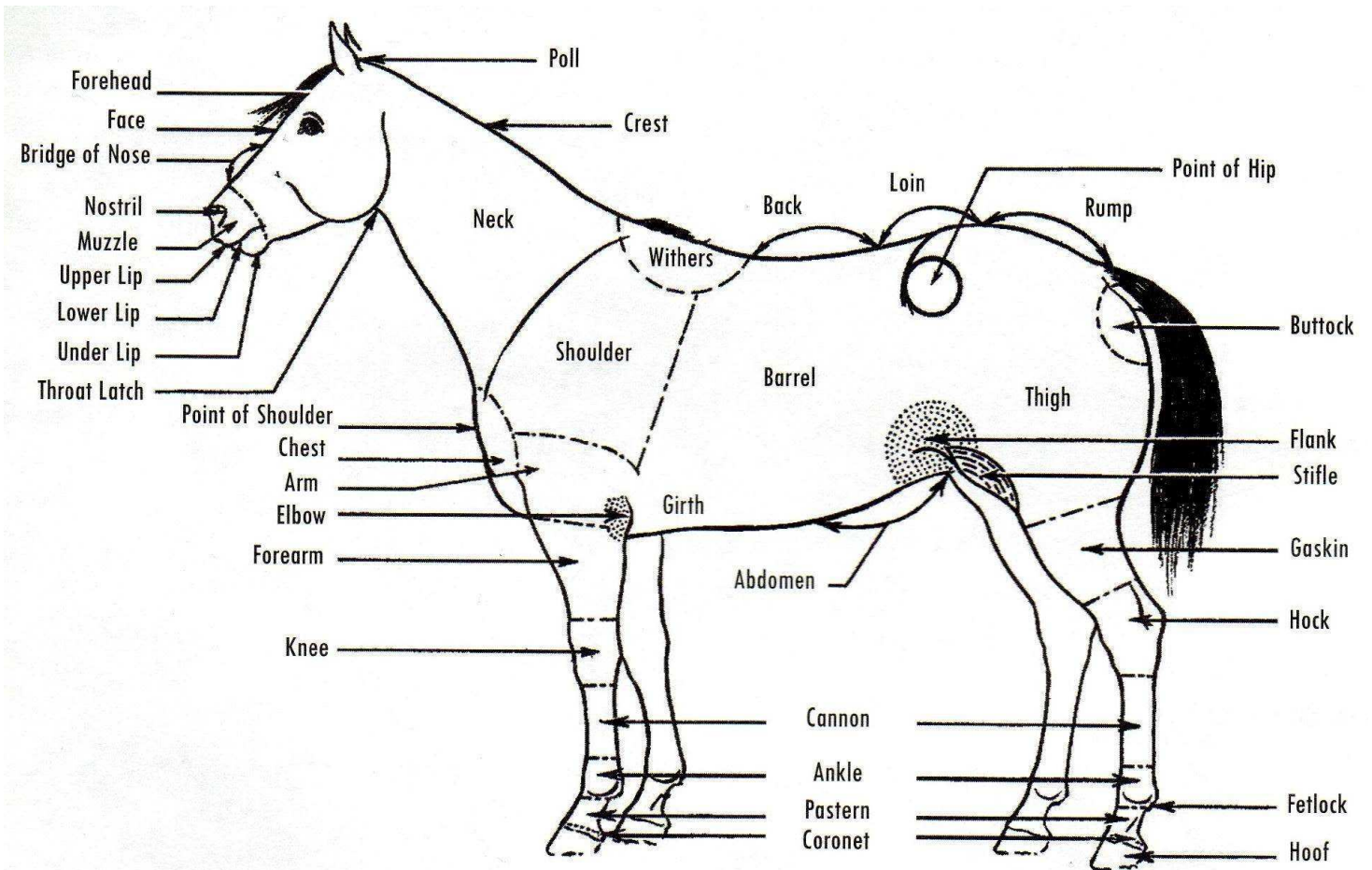
Comb- use to remove
tangles



Dandy brush-
Used to remove
caked-on mud

PARTS OF THE HORSE

Like people, horses have a lot of parts. Knowing the parts of the horse helps you to talk about the horse with other people.



Parts of a Horse

PARTS OF THE HORSE

- Abdomen – area between the ribs and the stifle, contains the digestive system
- Back – upper portion of the barrel, between the withers and the loins
- Barrel – trunk of the horse
- Bridge of Nose – bony portion of the face between the forehead and the muzzle
- Cannon – bone that lies between the knee and the fetlock on the front leg, and the hock and fetlock on the hind leg
- Chest – front portion of the body between the shoulders
- Chestnut – horny growth located about the knees and below the hocks on the inside of the legs
- Coronet – lower part of the pastern immediately above the hoof
- Crest – top part of the neck from the ears to the withers, where the mane grows out of
- Croup – upper part of the hindquarters between the loin and the tail
- Elbow – projected joint above the forearm and in front of the girth
- Face – part of the head from the forehead to the muzzle
- Fetlock – joint where the cannon bone meets the pastern
- Flank – thick folds of skin on the sides of the horse between the abdomen and stifle
- Forearm – area between the elbow and the knee
- Forehead – upper part of the face that extends down from the forehead to the top of each eye
- Gaskin – muscle above the hock
- Girth – just behind the front leg where the girth of the saddle goes
- Hock – joint between the gaskin and the cannon bone
- Hoof – horny growth that protects the foot
- Jaw – large rounded area under the eye
- Knee – joint located between the forearm and cannon bone
- Loin – portion of the spinal column after the ribs, between the back and croup
- Neck – area between the head and the shoulder
- Nostril – external opening of the nose
- Muzzle – includes the nostrils, and upper and lower lips
- Pastern – located between the fetlock and hoof
- Point of Hip – bone projecting on both sides of the hindquarters between the loin and the croup
- Point of Shoulder – bone protruding from the shoulder toward the chest
- Poll – part of the head, at the top of the neck between the ears
- Shoulder – area below the withers and above the front legs
- Stifle – joint of the hind leg located at the lower part of the flank
- Throat Latch – behind the jaw where the head attaches to the neck
- Withers – a bony ridge that begins at the crest of the neck and runs into the back in a gradual manner

BASIC COLORS

Horses come in a variety of colors. Knowing the different colors can help you to identify a horse.

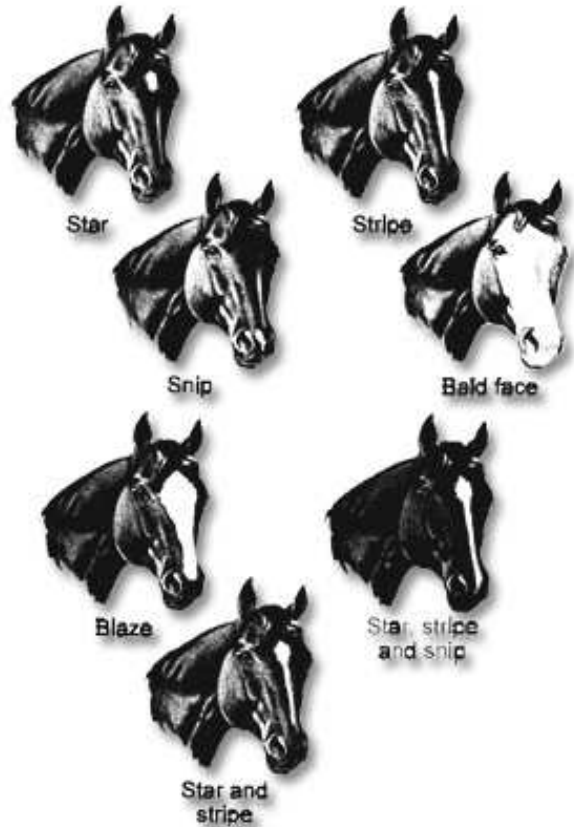
- Bay - body is brown, red, or yellow in color and mane, tail, and legs are black or dark colored
- Black - entire horse is black with the exception of white face or leg markings
- Brown - range from light to dark brown in color with dark mane and tail
- Buckskin (Dun) - yellowish color with black mane and tail (some have stripes down their back)
- Chestnut - reddish color with mane and tail the same color as the body
- Gray - white or grayish colored horse with black skin (most gray horses are born dark and get lighter as they age)
- Paint/Pinto - large or irregular shaped splotches of color on a white background
- Palomino - golden yellow color with white mane and tail
- Roan - white hairs intermingled with black or red hairs (same color throughout their life)
- White - pure white coat and pink skin

BASIC MARKINGS

Markings are white hairs on the face and legs of the horse. Markings can help to identify one horse from another.

FACE MARKINGS

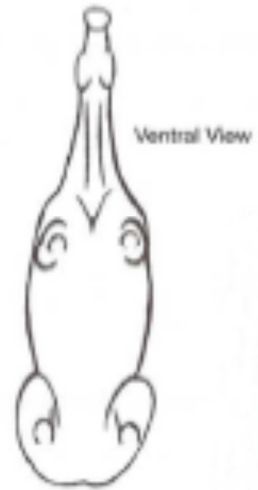
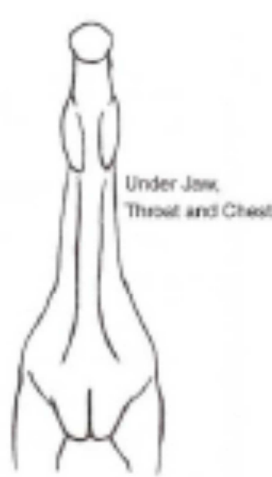
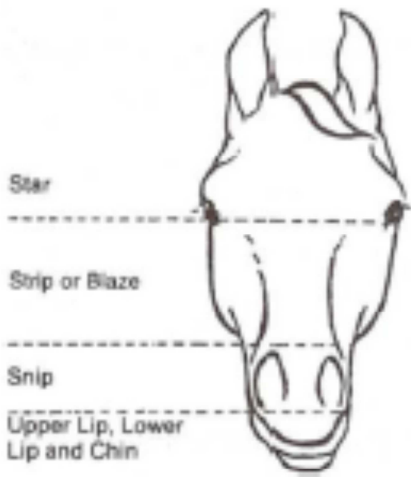
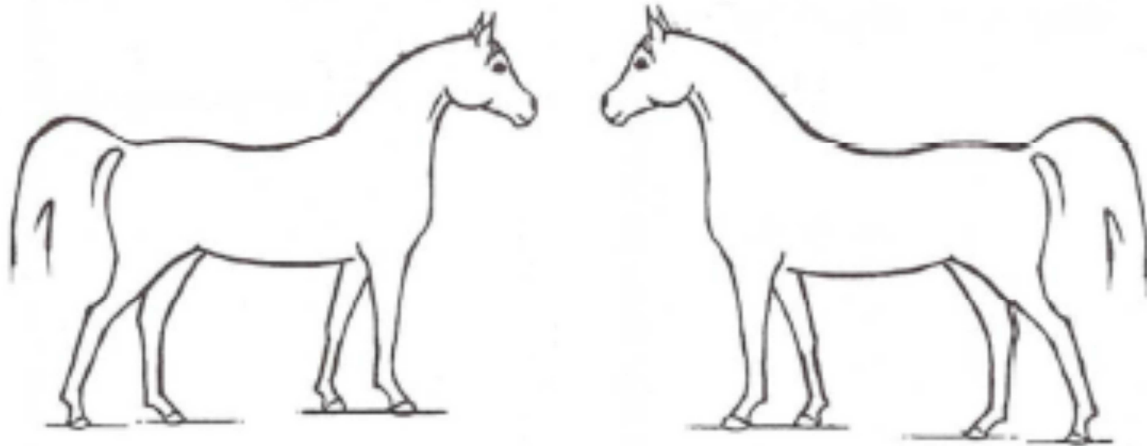
- Star - small area of white hairs on the forehead
- Stripe - long narrow band of white from the forehead down towards the muzzle
- Snip - small patch of white on the muzzle
- Star and Stripe – both star and strip markings
- Star, Stripe, Snip – both star, stripe and snip markings
- Star and Snip – both star and snip markings
- Blaze - wide white stripe down the middle of the face
- Bald Face - large white face with white extending over the eye



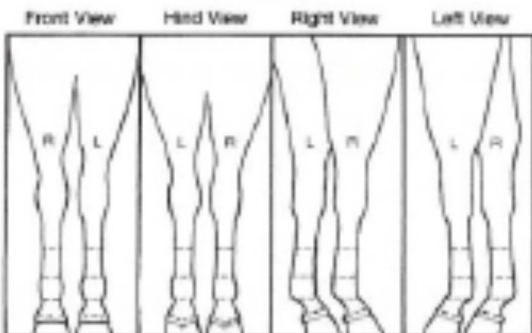
LEG MARKINGS

- Coronet - white strip covering the coronary band
- Pastern - white from the coronet up to and including the pastern
- Ankle/Sock - white from the coronet up to and including the fetlock and ankle
- Half Stocking - white from the coronet to the middle of the cannon
- Full Stocking - white from the coronet to the knee or hock
- Outside Heel – white on just the outside portion of the heel
- Inside Heel – white on just the inside portion of the heel on

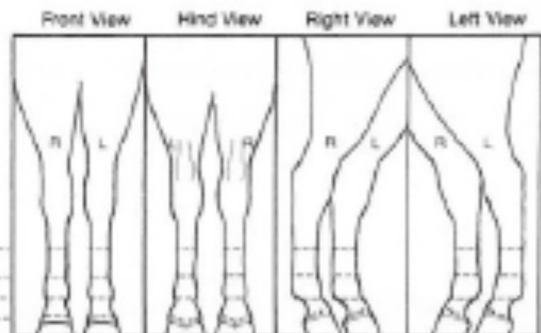
Find your favorite horse and draw their markings



FORE LEGS

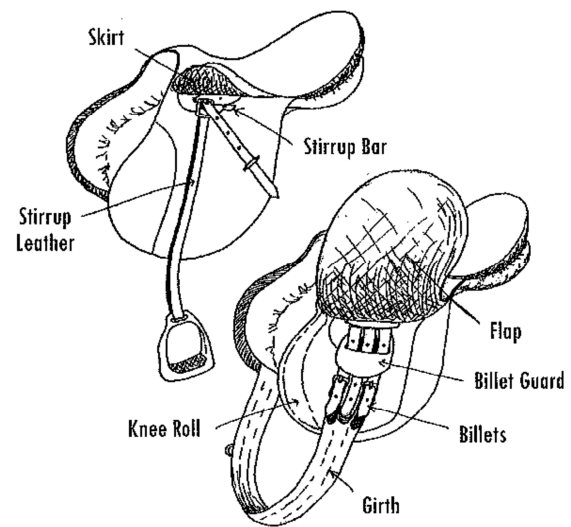
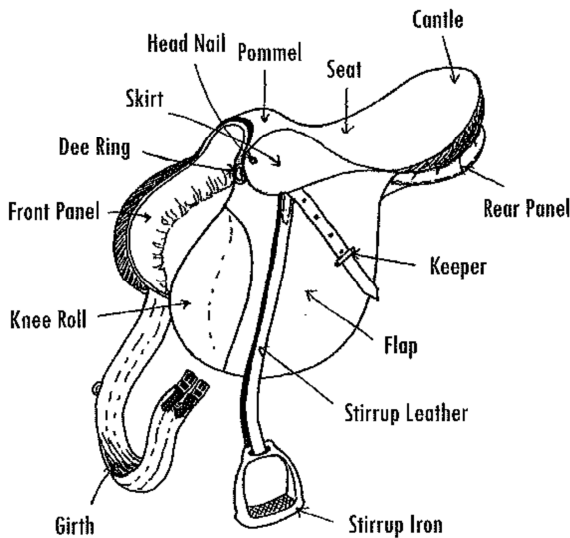


HIND LEGS



PARTS OF THE ENGLISH SADDLE

- Pommel - small bump in front of where you sit
- Seat - the part you sit on
- Cantle - back of the seat, helps to keep you in the right position
- Flap - protects your leg from the horse's side
- Skirt - small leather piece covering the stirrup bar
- Panel - padded lining underneath the saddle
- Stirrup Bar - metal bar that holds the stirrup leather in place
- Stirrup Leather - long piece of leather that attaches the stirrup iron to the saddle
- Stirrup Iron - metal piece that the rider's foot goes in
- Billets – under the flap - attaches the girth to the saddle
- Girth - strap that holds the saddle onto the horse

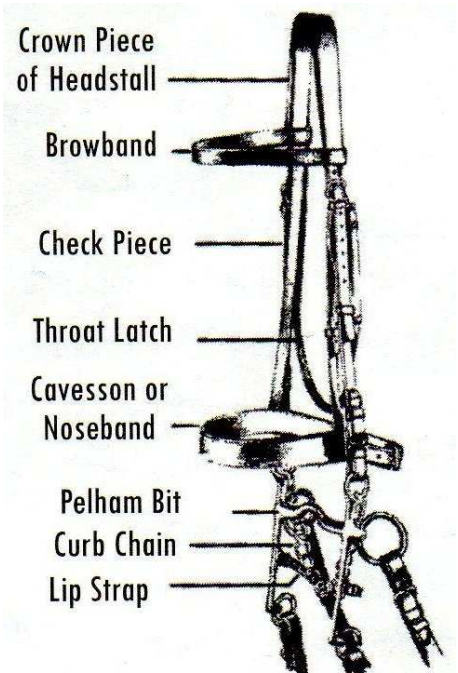


PARTS OF THE ENGLISH BRIDLE

- Crown Piece - goes over the horses head behind the ears
- Brow Band - goes in front of the forehead over the eye brow
- Cheek Piece - one on each side, attaches crown piece to bit
- Throat Latch - goes under the throat and attaches to the crown piece
- Cavesson/Noseband - leather strap that goes around the nose. There is also a small piece that goes over the head behind the ears to hold it in place
- Bit - goes in the mouth to help control and steer the horse
- Reins - pieces of leather that attach to the bit and aid in steering

Depending on the bit used on the English Bridle, the bridle may also have a curb chain or curb strap

- Curb Chain/Curb Strap - piece of leather or chain connecting one side of the bit to the other behind the horses chin to prevent the bit from flipping up inside the horse's mouth



TACKING AND UNTACKING

Most of the tacking and untacking is done from the left side of the horse.

Putting on the Saddle

- When putting on the saddle and bridle, be sure that your horse is tied securely so it can not walk away while you are tacking it up.
- Make sure you have all of your tack items before you begin. This includes the saddle, saddle pad, girth, and bridle.
- On the left side of the horse, put the saddle pad on the horse's back so that it is just behind the withers. Most saddle pads will have billet and girth loops to help the saddle pad stay in place.
- Next, from the left side of the horse, put the saddle on top of the saddle pad with the pommel at the back of the withers.
- Attach the girth to the billets on one side of the saddle, then attach the girth to the billets on the other side of the saddle. If your saddle pad has loops, be sure to put the billets and girth in the loops before buckling on the girth. The girth should sit just behind the front legs and in front of the belly of the horse. Make sure the girth is snug so the saddle will not slip.

Taking off the Saddle

- Make sure your horse is tied securely or that someone is holding your horse.
- When you take off the saddle, first make sure that the stirrups are not dangling. They should be run up (tucked under the stirrup leathers to keep them in place).
- Next, undo the girth on the left side of the saddle and gently let it slide down. If you just drop the girth it will hit the horse's legs which could hurt them. Walk to the right side of the horse and undo the girth from the right side of the saddle. You can then rest the girth on top of the saddle.
- You can take off the saddle from the right side, or go back to the left side of the horse to take off the saddle. Taking of the saddle and pad can be done at the same time. Put your left hand under the pommel and your right hand under the cantle and pull the saddle towards you so you can take it off the horse.



Run up your stirrups



Undo the girth



Pull the saddle and pad off

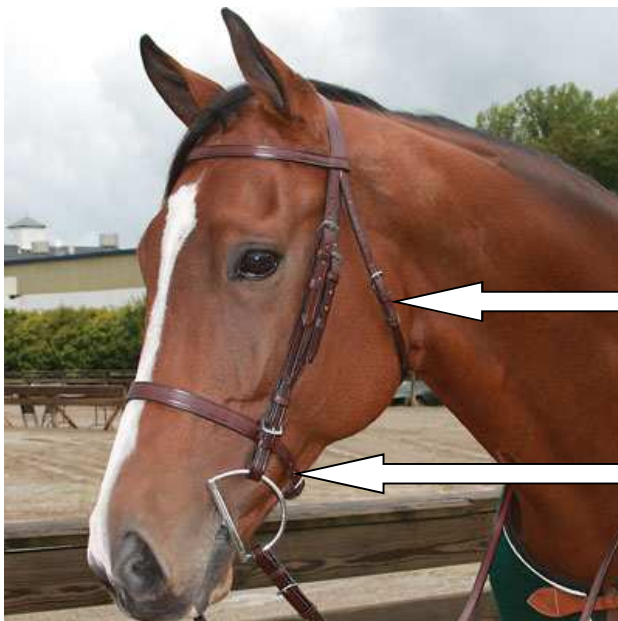
Putting on the Bridle

- When bridling a horse, first put the reins over the horse's head and neck. This will give you a way to control your horse if it starts to walk away. Stand on the left side of your horse facing their head.
- Next, put cheek pieces of the bridle in your right hand and the bit in your left hand. Take your left hand with the bit and set it just below your horse's mouth. Rest your right hand with the cheek pieces on your horse's face a few inches above their nose.
- Let your thumb or finger of your left hand slide into the horse's mouth behind the incisors and in front of the molars and gently push to help open the horse's mouth. As the mouth is opening gently slide the bit in while pulling up the cheek pieces with your right hand. This will help keep the bit in the horse's mouth. Let go of the bit once it slides into your horse's mouth and then use your left hand to bring the crown piece over the horse's ears. Let go of the cheek pieces with your right hand to help put the crown piece over both ears.
- Then buckle the throat latch and noseband to keep the bridle in place.



Taking off the Bridle

- When taking off the bridle, be sure to unbuckle the noseband and throat latch. If your bit has a curb strap or curb chain on it you will need to undo that as well. If these are still buckled you will not be able to take the bridle off.



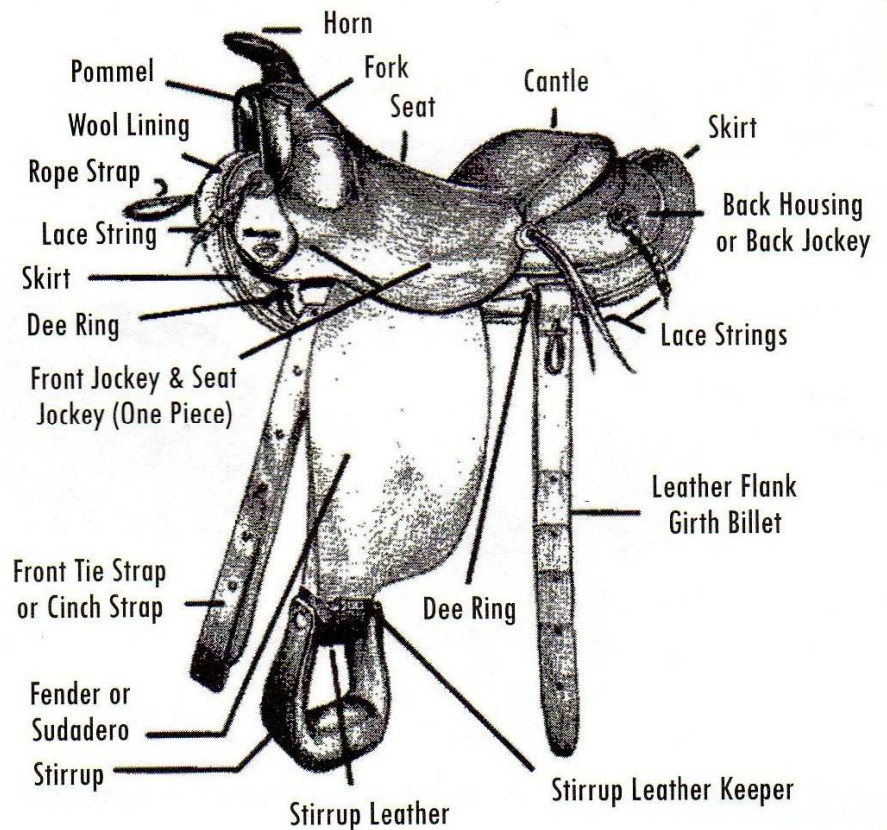
THROAT LATCH

NOSEBAND

- Pull the crown piece gently over your horse's ears and let the bridle gently slide down out of your horse's mouth. If you let the bit fall too quickly out of your horse's mouth it may bang against the horse's teeth and hurt them.
- Pull the reins over your horse's neck and head and you have successfully unbridled!

PARTS OF THE WESTERN SADDLE

- Pommel - small bump that goes over the horse's withers
- Horn – projection from the pommel of the western saddle used to hold a lasso or lariat
- Fork – section where the saddle branches from the seat to the horn in front of where you sit
- Seat - the part you sit on
- Cantle - back of the seat, helps to keep you in the right position
- Skirt - leather piece around the base of the saddle
- Front Jockey – the leather flap on the front part of the saddle
- Back Jockey – the leather flap on the back part of the saddle
- Wool Lining - padded lining underneath the saddle
- Fender - protects your leg from the horse's side
- Stirrup - piece that the rider's foot goes in
- Stirrup Leather – small piece of leather that holds the fender around the stirrup
- Dee Ring – metal ring that holds the cinch strap
- Cinch Strap – attaches the girth to the saddle
- Girth - strap that holds the saddle onto the horse
- Lace Strings – used to tie on supplies such as lasso's, lariats, coats, etc



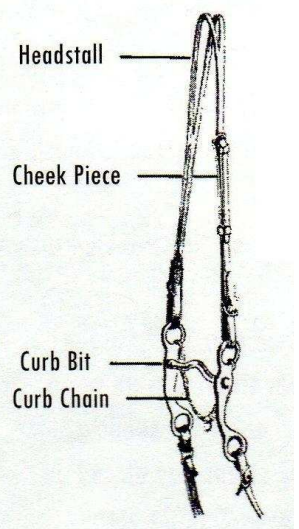
PARTS OF THE WESTERN BRIDLE

- Headstall - goes over the horses head behind the ears
 - Cheek Piece - one on each side, attaches crown piece to bit
 - Bit - goes in the mouth to help control and steer the horse
 - Reins - pieces of leather that attach to the bit and aid in steering
- Western bridles may also have the following parts, but these parts are not required:

- Throat Latch - goes under the throat and attaches to the crown piece to help keep the bridle on the horse's head
- Brow Band - goes in front of the forehead over the eye brow

Depending on the bit used on the Western Bridle, the bridle may also have a curb chain or curb strap

- Curb Chain/Strap - piece of leather or chain connecting one side of the bit to the other behind the horses chin to prevent the bit from flipping inside the horse's mouth



GENERAL HORSEY TERMS

The following terms are common terms that you might hear while visiting a stable:

- Barn – the building that houses horses and horse equipment
- Bit – the metal part of the bridle that goes in the horse's mouth
- Blemish – a mark or deformity that diminishes the beauty of a horse but not its usefulness
- Breed – a group of horses having common origin and certain distinguishable characteristics that are passed on to their offspring
- Bridle – leather equipment that goes on the horse's head to help control the horse when riding
- Chestnuts – the growth on the inside of a horse's legs
- Colic – abdominal pain in horses
- Colt – a male foal under 3 years old (some say under 2 years old)
- Dam – the female parent of a horse
- Equitation – the art of riding horses correctly
- Farrier – a person who trims the horse's feet
- Filly – a female foal under 3 years old (some say under 2 years old)
- Foal – a baby horse less than 1 year old
- Gait – a way of going characterized by distinctive movements of the feet and legs
- Gelding – a male horse that has been castrated, can not reproduce
- Girth – leather strap that goes around the horse's belly to hold the saddle on
- Grain – harvested oats, corn, barley and cereals that are fed to horses
- Green Horse – a horse with little training that is still a beginner
- Groom – cleaning the dirt of horses with brushes
- Halter – item that goes around the horse's head to lead them from place to place
- Hand – a measurement for horses – 4 inches equals 1 hand
- Hay – dried grasses or legumes that are fed to horses
- Horse – an equine over 14.2 hands
- Hoof – the outside of the foot of the horse
- Mare – a female horse
- Paddock – a fenced in area where horses are turned out to get exercise
- Parasite – an animal living on or in another animal such as ticks, lice, flies, etc
- Pony – an equine under 14.2 hands tall
- Posting – the rising and descending of the rider's body with the rhythm of the trot
- Reins – the leather straps that are attached to the bit that allow you to steer the horse
- Ring – a fenced in area where you can ride
- Saddle – leather equipment that goes on the horse's back to help the rider ride
- Sire – the male parent of a horse
- Stall – a room that the horse stays in at night or when it's raining
- Stallion – a male horse that can reproduce
- Stirrup – part of the saddle that the rider's foot goes in
- Tack – equipment (bridles, saddles, etc) that is used on horses
- Unsoundness – a structural defect that interferes with the usefulness of a horse
- Vet – a doctor who specializes in animals
- Vice – an acquired habit that is annoying
- Weanling – a foal that is no longer suckling from its mother
- Yearling – a horse between 1 and 2 years old

MEASURING HORSES

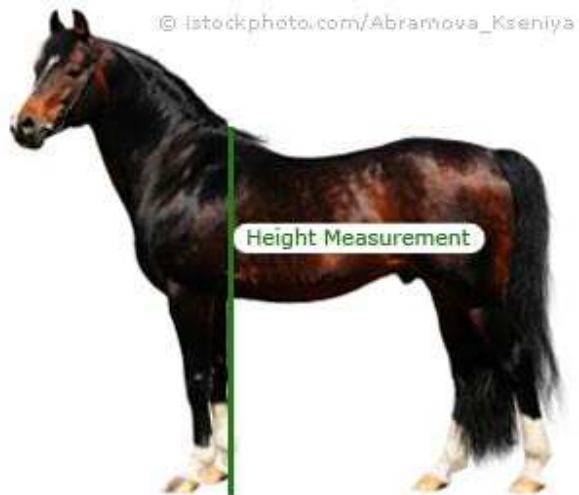
Horses are measured in hands. There are 4 inches in a hand. 1 inch = .1 hand, 2 inches equals .2 hands, 3 inches equals .3 hands and 4 inches equals 1 hand. A horse under 14.2 hands tall (58 inches) is a pony.

To measure a horse:

- first make sure the horse is on a flat surface
- With the front legs of the horse under its shoulder, measure from where the front hoof touches the ground to the top of the withers (where the neck meets the back)
- Be careful to bring your measuring tape up in a straight line. You may want to use a stick on top of your horse's withers to measure accurately. If you run the tape along the horse's body to the withers it will say your horse is taller than they actually are.
- To determine how many hands tall your horse is, divide the height in inches by 4

Common Horse Breeds and their Heights:

Miniature Horse	7 to 8.5 hands
Shetland Pony	9 to 11.2 hands
Pony of the Americas-POA	11 to 13 hands
Icelandic Horse	13 to 14 hands
Haflinger	13 to 15 hands
Appaloosa	14 to 16 hands
Quarter Horse	14 to 16 hands
Standardbred	14 to 16 hands
Arabian	14.1 to 15.2 hands
Morgan	14.1 to 15.2 hands
Tennessee Walker	14.3 to 17 hands
Thoroughbred	15 to 17 hands tall
Friesian	15 to 17 hands
Percheron	15 to 19 hands
Belgian	16 to 18 hands
Clydesdale	16 to 19 hands
Shire	16.2 to 19 hands



WEIGHING HORSES

Some horse measuring tapes have a weight mark on the back. To weigh your horse using a weight tape, wrap the tape around your horse's back just behind their withers and around their girth area. Pull the end of the tape gently and place it back on the measuring tape. This will tell you the approximate weight of your horse.



BASIC STABLE MANAGEMENT

Basic stable management will keep a farm running smoothly. Everyone wants their horse to be happy and healthy, and the following areas can help:

FEEDING SCHEDULE

Horses require nutrition to stay healthy, just like people. The 2 basic types of nutrients that horses require are water, and food (energy, protein, vitamins and minerals).

Water

Between 65 – 75% of a horse's body is made up of water, so it is important that they drink plenty of fresh, clean water each day. An average horse will drink about 8 to 12 gallons of water a day. It is important to make sure your horse has plenty of water available throughout the day, not just at one time during the day.

Food

Most of the horse's daily food comes from grass, hay and/or grain. The combination of grass, hay and grain can provide the horse with all of the energy, protein, vitamins and minerals that it needs to be healthy.

Horses are natural grazers, which means they like to eat several times a day. For convenience purposes, most people will feed their horse 2 to 3 times a day. The height, weight, and amount of work your horse does will determine how much you feed it, but a general rule of thumb is that a horse should be fed approximately 2 pounds of food for every 100 pounds of body weight split up into several feedings during the day.

CLEANING STALLS

A variety of items can be used for bedding in horse stalls. Sawdust, shavings, straw, newspaper, sand and other items can be used. The type of item you use will depend on the availability and the purpose of the bedding. Sawdust and shavings are common because they are the most absorbent. Straw is common for foaling stalls and for injured horses because it doesn't stick when it's wet, but it is less absorbent.

Horses need their stalls cleaned to prevent them from getting sick. To clean a stall you will need a pitchfork and a wheelbarrow or bucket. Use the pitchfork to scoop up the manure and the wet sawdust and put it in the wheelbarrow. When all of the manure and wet spots are removed you can spread the clean sawdust around to make a nice, comfortable bed for your horse. Add more sawdust if needed. Then dump the manure and wet sawdust in the manure pile.

Pastures, paddocks and riding rings should be cleaned on a regular basis too.

EXERCISE

Horses should get exercise every day. Exercise can be in the form of running around in a pasture, or being ridden.

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

Every farm should have a veterinarian come out yearly to give vaccinations to horses to prevent them from getting sick. Farms should develop a regular deworming schedule to decrease parasites. A farrier should come out every 6 to 8 weeks to help maintain a horse's hooves.

GAITS OF THE HORSE

WALK

The walk is a four-beat gait that averages about 4 miles per hour. At the walk, the horse will always have one foot raised and the other three feet on the ground. A horse moves its head and neck in a slight up and down motion that helps maintain balance.

TROT

The trot is a two-beat gait that has a wide variation in possible speeds, but averages about 8 miles per hour. The trot is the working gait for a horse. Horses can only canter and gallop for short periods at a time, after which they need time to rest and recover. Horses in good condition can maintain a working trot for hours. The trot is the main way horses travel quickly from one place to the next

Depending on the horse and its speed, a trot can be difficult for a rider to sit because the body of the horse actually drops a bit between beats and bounces up again when the next set of legs strike the ground. At most speeds above a jog, most riders *post* to the trot, rising up and down in rhythm with the horse to avoid being bounced.

JOG

The jog is the Western version of the English trot. It is a slower gait than the trot and usually easy to sit to

CANTER

The canter is a controlled, three-beat gait that is a bit faster than the average trot, but slower than the gallop. The average speed of a canter is 10–17 mph, depending on the length of the stride of the horse. A slow canter in western disciplines is called a lope.

The more extended foreleg is matched by a slightly more extended hind leg on the same side. This is called a "lead". When riding in a smaller area, the correct lead provides the horse with better balance. A horse should lead with its inside leg when in a circle.

LOPE

The lope is the Western version of the English Canter. It is typically a slower gait than the canter but Western horses may speed up or slow down the lope depending on what work they are doing.

GALLOP

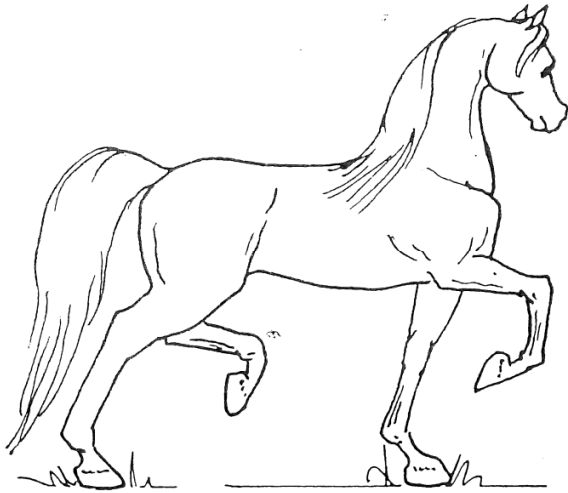
The gallop is similar to the canter, except that it is faster, more ground-covering, and becomes a four-beat gait. It is the fastest gait of the horse, averaging about 25 to 30 miles per hour. In the wild, horses use the gallop when they need to flee from predators or cover short distances quickly. Horses can usually only gallop for 1 or 2 miles before they need to rest, although they can maintain a moderately paced gallop for longer distances.

BACK

The back is backward movement of the horse. A back is usually slow, but sometimes when horses are startled or trying to get away from something they may back up quickly.

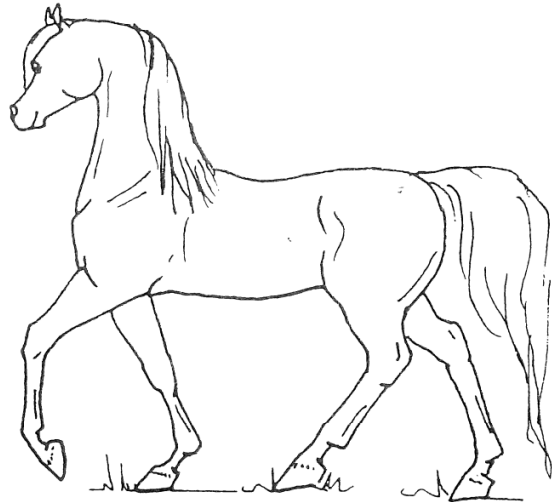
GAITS

Color these horses in motion. Learn their gaits.



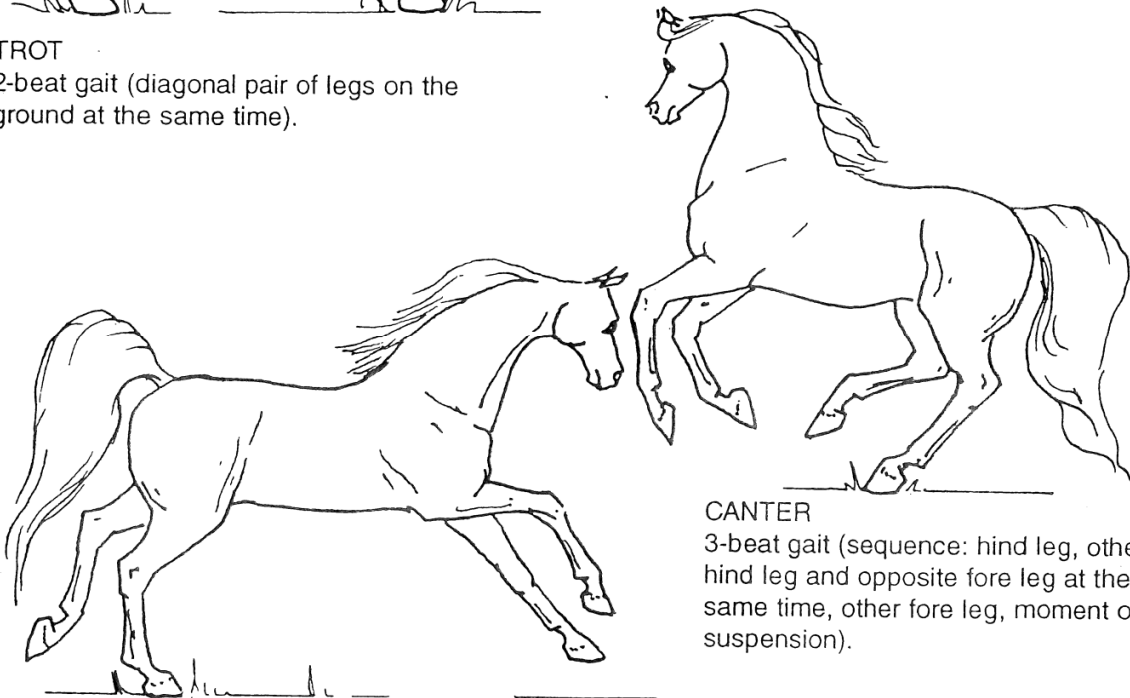
TROT

2-beat gait (diagonal pair of legs on the ground at the same time).



WALK

4-beat gait (3 feet on the ground at the same time).



CANTER

3-beat gait (sequence: hind leg, other hind leg and opposite fore leg at the same time, other fore leg, moment of suspension).

GALLOP

4-beat gait (sequence: hind leg, other hind leg, opposite fore leg, other fore leg).

BASIC HISTORY OF THE HORSE

The horse had its beginning about 58 million years ago. Over time, the horse grew and evolved into what it currently is today. The horse evolved in 3 basic stages. Those 3 stages include Eohippus, Merychippus, and Equus.

EOHIPPIUS

- Evolved about 58 million years ago
- Had 4 toes on the front leg and 3 toes on the hind leg
- Stood about 12 inches tall
- Lived mostly in swamplands



MERYCHIPPUS

- Evolved about 28 million years ago
- Had 3 toes on each foot, but the middle toe was the largest and was the only one to touch the ground
- Stood about 36 inches tall
- Grass eater
- Lived mostly in the forest and on prairie land



EQUUS

- Evolved about 1 million years ago
- Had 1 central toe or hoof, and side toes evolved into splint bones
- Full sized horse
- Grazing animal



The modern day horse originated in North America but disappeared during the ice age. It is thought to have migrated into Russia across the frozen ice land bridge between Alaska and Siberia. After that time, horses migrated into Asia and Europe.

In the early history of the horse, horses were hunted as a food source. After man discovered they could domesticate the horse, the horse became a useful way to travel. As domestication spread through Asia, North Africa and Europe the horse began to be used for travel, transportation and war.

After North America was discovered, horses were brought over by settlers to help settle the new world where they were used for travel, transportation, war, work, sport, and recreation.

USES OF THE HORSE

The horse has been around for 58 million years and its use has changed over the years. At first, the horse was used as a source of food. As people began to realize its usefulness, they started using the horse for a variety of things.

Warfare

Horses have been used in warfare for most of recorded history. The first archaeological evidence of horses used in warfare dates to between 4000 to 3000 BC. Although mechanization has largely replaced the horse as a weapon of war, horses are still seen today in limited military uses, mostly for ceremonial purposes, or for transport activities in areas of rough terrain where motorized vehicles are ineffective.

Work

There are certain jobs that horses do very well, and technology has not developed to replace them. For example, mounted police horses are still effective for certain types of patrol duties and crowd control. Cattle ranches still use riders on horseback to round up cattle that are scattered across terrain. Search and rescue organizations depend upon mounted teams to locate people, particularly hikers and children lost in rough terrain.

Although machinery has replaced horses in many parts of the world, horses, donkeys and mules are still used for agriculture and transportation in less developed areas. Some land management practices like logging can be efficiently performed with horses. In agriculture, less fossil fuel is used and environmental conservation occurs over time with the use of horses. Logging with horses can result in reduced damage to soil structure and less damage to trees due to more selective logging.

In the early 1900's, Shetlands were used as pit ponies. They went down into coal mines and hauled around heavy carts. They usually lived underground, which was terribly unhealthy for them. The ponies were just right for this job because of their immense strength and small sizes.

Entertainment and Culture

Modern horses are often used to reenact many of their historical work purposes in war reenactments or movies. Horses are frequently seen in television, films and literature. They are sometimes featured as a major character in films about particular animals.

Public exhibitions are another example, such as parades and musical exhibitions. The Budweiser Clydesdales are often seen in parades and commercials pulling a wagon. Countries such as the United Kingdom still use horse-drawn carriages to convey royalty and other VIPs to and from certain culturally significant events.

The horse frequently appears in coats of arms in heraldry, in a variety of poses and equipment. The mythologies of many cultures, including Greco-Roman, Hindu, Islamic, and Norse, include references to both normal horses and those with wings or additional limbs, and multiple myths also call upon the horse to draw the chariots of the Moon and Sun. The horse also appears in the 12-year cycle of animals in the Chinese zodiac related to the Chinese calendar.

Sports

Equestrian sports provided entertainment for crowds and honed the excellent horsemanship that was needed in battle. Many sports, such as dressage, eventing and show jumping, have origins in military training, which were focused on control and balance of both horse and rider. Other sports, such as rodeo, developed from practical skills such as those needed on working ranches and stations. Sport hunting from horseback evolved from earlier practical hunting techniques. Horse racing of all types evolved from impromptu competitions between riders or drivers. All forms of competition, requiring demanding and specialized skills from both horse and rider, resulted in the systematic development of specialized breeds and equipment for each sport.

Sports such as polo do not judge the horse itself, but use the horse as a partner for human competitors. Horse racing is an equestrian sport and major international industry, watched in almost every nation of the world.

Horse shows, which have their origins in medieval European fairs, are held around the world. They host a huge range of classes, covering all of the mounted and harness disciplines, as well as "In-hand" classes where the horses are led, rather than ridden, to be evaluated on their conformation.

Therapeutic use

People of all ages with physical and mental disabilities can benefit from activities with horses. Therapeutic riding is used to mentally and physically stimulate people with disabilities and help them improve their lives through improved balance and coordination, increased self-confidence, and a greater feeling of freedom and independence.

Horses also provide psychological benefits to people whether they actually ride or not. "Equine-assisted" or "equine-facilitated" therapy is a form of therapy that uses horses as companion animals to assist people with mental illness, including anxiety disorders, psychotic disorders, mood disorders, behavioral difficulties, and those who are going through major life changes

Products

Horses are raw material for many products made by humans throughout history, including byproducts from the slaughter of horses as well as materials collected from living horses.

Horse meat has been used as food for humans and carnivorous animals throughout the ages. It is eaten in many parts of the world, though consumption is illegal in some cultures.

Horsehide leather has been used for boots, gloves, jackets, baseballs, and gloves. Horse hooves can be used to produce animal glue. Horse bones can be used to make tools. Products collected from living horses include mare's milk, horse blood, urine, and tail hair for bows.