

FACILITIES

Three Things Your Horse's Pen or Pasture Needs:

Three items that every horse requires and that should be available at all times in their pen or pasture are shelter, water and salt.

Cleaning a Stall:

We usually do not strip the stall bare each time we use it; we just take out the manure, soiled bedding and all wet bedding.

1. Remove any obvious piles of manure with a metal fork if bedding with straw or a plastic fork if bedding with shavings.
2. Find the areas that appear to be clean; lift the bedding with the fork and make sure it is clean and dry. These are now your stock piling spots for clean bedding. Once you have cleaned a stall or two you can tell by the weight whether or not the bedding is clean or dirty.
3. The dirty goes in the wheelbarrow or muck bucket, the clean goes on the clean pile. Find the wet spot. If your horse has not urinated overnight, be a bit concerned. This is not normal. Completely expose the wet area and clean up excess moisture and any remaining manure using a fork, broom and shovel. Leave the wet area open to dry before re-bedding.

HEALTH

Giving Oral Medication:

Getting the horse used to you touching his muzzle and entering his mouth is a part of sacking out a young horse and is often done at the same time as halter breaking. The big thing to remember is safety. A fearful horse packs a big blow with his head if he feels the need to defend himself.

1. Stand beside the horse's shoulder (left or right) facing the horse's head. Put your outside hand holding the doubled shank on the side of the noseband. Put your other hand on the top of the horse's neck. Gently (no more than 1 lb. of pressure), using a take and release method, ask the horse to bring his head to you. Stay back by the shoulder so that if the horse resists, his head will move away from you, not toward you. If the horse moves, try to keep asking; don't let go unless you feel you are in danger. If you let go, you are teaching the horse that if he doesn't want to relax his neck muscles, all he has to do is move and you will let go. When he relaxes with his head bent (it may take you several days of 20 min. lessons to get this to happen) release, let him straighten and pat him. Try again.
2. When this is easy, change hands on the halter so your outside hand can stroke or scratch the side of his head, slowly moving to the muzzle area. Massage his lips, and slowly put your finger in the corner of his mouth. He has no teeth at the point where his top and bottom lip meet. Touch his tongue gently while keeping his head bent towards you. If he resists, go back to gently massaging the muzzle. When the horse no longer reacts to your finger in his mouth, other than trying to spit it out, introduce a small syringe, aiming the opening to the back of his tongue. If you hold him there too long, his neck will get sore and he will take his head away, but it will move away from you, not toward you.

Practise this skill before you hope to give oral medication. If using powder or pills, they can usually be crushed and added to water or sweet flavoured liquids that you have already introduced to your horse (water and molasses or syrup). Sometimes it is helpful to cut the tip off the syringe and make the opening bigger. The big thing about the whole exercise is NOT TO BECOME A PREDATOR and ATTACK YOUR HORSE. BE PATIENT, WAIT FOR THE HORSE TO RELAX and DON'T MAKE IT A STRENGTH EXERCISE – try to out think the horse, not out muscle.

GROOMING

Coat, Mane & Tail Care Specific to Your Interest:

Ask someone who specializes in the specific discipline you are interested in to show you the current trends.

Signs That A Horse Needs Its Hooves Trimmed:

- If the hoof wall is more than ¼ in. longer than the sole.
- If the hoof has chips, cracks, flares or a long toe.
- If the hoof is longer on one side than the other or the feet do not match.

Horseshoe Types:

1. Plain
2. Heels & Toes – for traction on soft ground.
3. Rims
 - a. high on inside – for traction on grass.
 - b. high on outside – for traction on fast turns.
 - c. high on both sides – for traction on turf (racing).
4. Sliding plates – wide and flat to slide on.
5. Corrective – many different shapes to relieve pressure from specific parts of the hoof.

EQUIPMENT

Bits and Bit Progression: A Training Problem Is Usually Not Fixed With a More Severe Bit.

Snaffle: - non-leverage bit.

- used to teach your horse the basics.
- used for a tune-up if horse is allowed to become unresponsive.

With the snaffle, the rider should be able to easily control the horse at all three gaits, halt, back, flex laterally and vertically, and neck rein. When we are easily able to do this in a snaffle, we advance to a leverage bit so we can gently still do all of the above with two hands, but now do most of it with one hand. However, because we now have more pressure points on the horse's head when using a leverage bit, the amount of contact should be lighter. If you are having trouble with the basics, there is a hole in your horse's education and you need to go back and train or retrain with the snaffle. When you do advance to a leverage bit, the broken mouthed bit is familiar to the horse and so makes the progression easier. Obviously the shorter the shank and the smaller the ratio of the length of the bit above the mouthpiece compared to the length below the mouthpiece, the less severe it can be if your hands are considerate. The broken mouthpiece also allows us to still ride with two hands when necessary and only affect the side of the horse's mouth on which we are applying rein pressure. Once the horse is comfortable with the broken mouthpiece leverage bit, a further progression may not be necessary.

GROUNDWORK

Cuing Your Horse to Move Sideways (Dismounted):

We should never allow ourselves to be in a small space between our horse and a solid object. To prevent this, our horse must be responsive to hand aids to move his hip, his shoulder or his whole body. We should be able to move the horse that is tied and the horse we are holding.

1. Get the horse's attention. At least, the ear on the side you are on must be focused on you.
2. Assess the horse's reaction to your presence (size of eyes, height of head, busyness of ears, muscle tension).
3. When safe for you to do so, a verbal command and light touch should move the desired part. Remember to speak "horse". If the horse does not respond by moving, DO NOT PUSH – "bite" him like another horse would with little jabs with your fingers.

Storing Your Bridle: (follows Unbridling)

Western: Hang the bridle exactly as it would sit on your horse's head if the horse were facing you with the reins crossed over his neck. The crown piece and throatlatch would be touching the hook where they would touch the horse's poll. The reins are then either crossed over and hung on the hook over the crown piece or placed together and draped over the crown piece from left to right or right to left.

English: Hang the bridle as you would the western bridle, except the cavesson and throatlatch are done up and the reins go behind the bit, inside the cavesson and are buckled over the throatlatch.

Turn on Haunches – Left & Right (Dismounted):

This is a skill that indicates good communication between horse and handler. It shows that the horse respects the handler's request to move out of his space. To teach the horse this skill, the handler must speak "horse". In a herd, if one horse wanted another to move his front end, that first horse would threaten to bite or kick the front end and then follow through with action if the second horse did not move. Remember, we are moving the shoulder, so assume a somewhat assertive stance, stare at the shoulder from a position ½ way between the eye and the shoulder, lean toward the shoulder, click, and tap the horse with braced fingers (bite) on both the neck and shoulder. Assess the horse's reaction and either tap quicker or slower until the horse moves 1 – 2 steps. Stop when he moves. The horse understands this. He moved out of your space and you quit "biting". If the horse moves ahead, change your position to be closer to the head so you can cut him off if he goes forward. A fence in front of his head will also help with this. Gradually increase the number of steps asked for, BUT ALWAYS quit the horse before the horse quits you.

MOVEMENT

Lameness: Observe – sharp objects, heat, swelling.

Types:

1. Bruised Sole: most common
 - a. Cause – rock or other sharp object lodged in hoof.
 - b. Prevention – checking feet often, especially if on rocky terrain.
 - shoes.
 - c. Treatment – remove cause.
2. Corns: bruising in the sharp angled area between the hoof wall and bars.
 - a. Cause – poor trimming or shoes causing pressure on this area.
 - b. Treatment – have farrier remove corn.
 - improve trimming/shoeing.
3. Nail Prick: shoe nail driven into sensitive part of foot causing great pain.
 - a. Treatment – remove nail and watch for signs of puncture wound – heat, continued lameness.
4. Wall Over-worn: horse walking on sole.
 - a. Cause – not putting shoes on when wall cannot protect the sole.
 - b. Treatment – keep on soft ground until wall grows long enough to shoe.
5. Internal Joint Injuries: Laminitis, Navicular (see index)
6. Sprains & Strains: involve tendons, ligaments, muscles.
 - a. Treatment – cold hosing will give some relief, especially if done soon after injury occurs. Consult a vet regarding proper bandaging and how much time off is required.

RIDING

Rider Position & Balance

Two Point Position

Purpose: To get the rider's weight off the horse's back.

To teach the rider how to use their core muscles to balance.

The two point position is very close to the basic position except the rider's seat is raised forward off the saddle and with their weight deep in their heels, the rider balances by using abdominal, buttock and thigh muscles.

Rein Effects

Support Rein (to be added to original on pg. 211)

Less active of the two reins but essential for the active rein to do its job. It is usually a holding rein and its position may vary to get the desired result.

Movements

Turn on the Forehand (Stage 3 – Advanced)

This exercise is used to increase suppleness, and is a lead up to collection, haunches in and two track.

Step 1 – Create forward motion, then bend around inside leg.

Step 2 – Stop the horse in the bent position and apply these aids:

- Inside rein direct to maintain a soft relaxed bend; rein may change to a rein of opposition to prevent horse from reversing his bend when outside leg is applied. Outside rein essential as support. Be careful not to over bend the neck or horse will not be able to give his hip.

- When the horse relaxes in the bent position, slowly add the outside leg to push his hip to the inside. The horse will usually try to bend around the outside leg so both reins and the inside leg are essential to keep the horse in the correct shape.

Only ask for 1-2 steps until the horse starts to relax when asked to do the skill. Another approach is to leg yield off one leg; hesitate, then while maintaining the shape of the leg yield, use the opposite leg to push the horse's outside hip in.

Haunches In

This is an excellent exercise to increase suppleness, collection, produce smooth lope transitions and prepare for flying lead changes.

In this exercise, the horse bends around the rider's inside leg, then moves his haunches inward off the track. The aids are the same as those described in the advanced turn on the forehand, except the horse must maintain forward motion (the rider's inside leg produces this). It may be done at any gait.

Shoulder In

This is a three track movement to increase suppleness and assist with balance and collection. If the horse is coming directly toward you, you can see the legs moving on three tracks.

Track 1 – closest to inside of arena – inside front leg.

Track 2 – middle track – outside front leg directly in front of inside hind leg.

Track 3 – closest to rail – outside hind leg.

Aids: Impulsion, bend, inside rein direct or rein of opposition and outside supporting or indirect.

Inside leg creates bend; outside leg works with hands to bring forequarters in off the track.

POSING: ¼ system - the safest place to stand if anyone is walking around your horse. This is also used for showmanship.

EQUINE PARAMETERS FOR NORMAL VITAL SIGNS

<i>Temperature:</i>	99° – 101° F 37.5° – 38.5° C
<i>Heart Rates:</i>	30 – 40 beats per minute – adults 40 – 60 beats per minute – yearlings 80 – 120 beats per minute – new born foals
<i>Respiratory Rate:</i>	8 – 16 breaths per minute
<i>Mucous Membrane:</i>	light pink
<i>Dehydration:</i>	pinch test on skin on neck. If remains tented more than a few seconds, the horse is dehydrated.
<i>Capillary Refill Time:</i>	1 – 3 seconds
<i>Gut Sounds:</i>	intermittent sounds 2 – 4 small sounds per minute. 1 larger sound every 2 – 3 minutes.
<i>Urinary Output:</i>	approximately 5 quarts per day
<i>Defecation:</i>	10 – 12 piles per day