

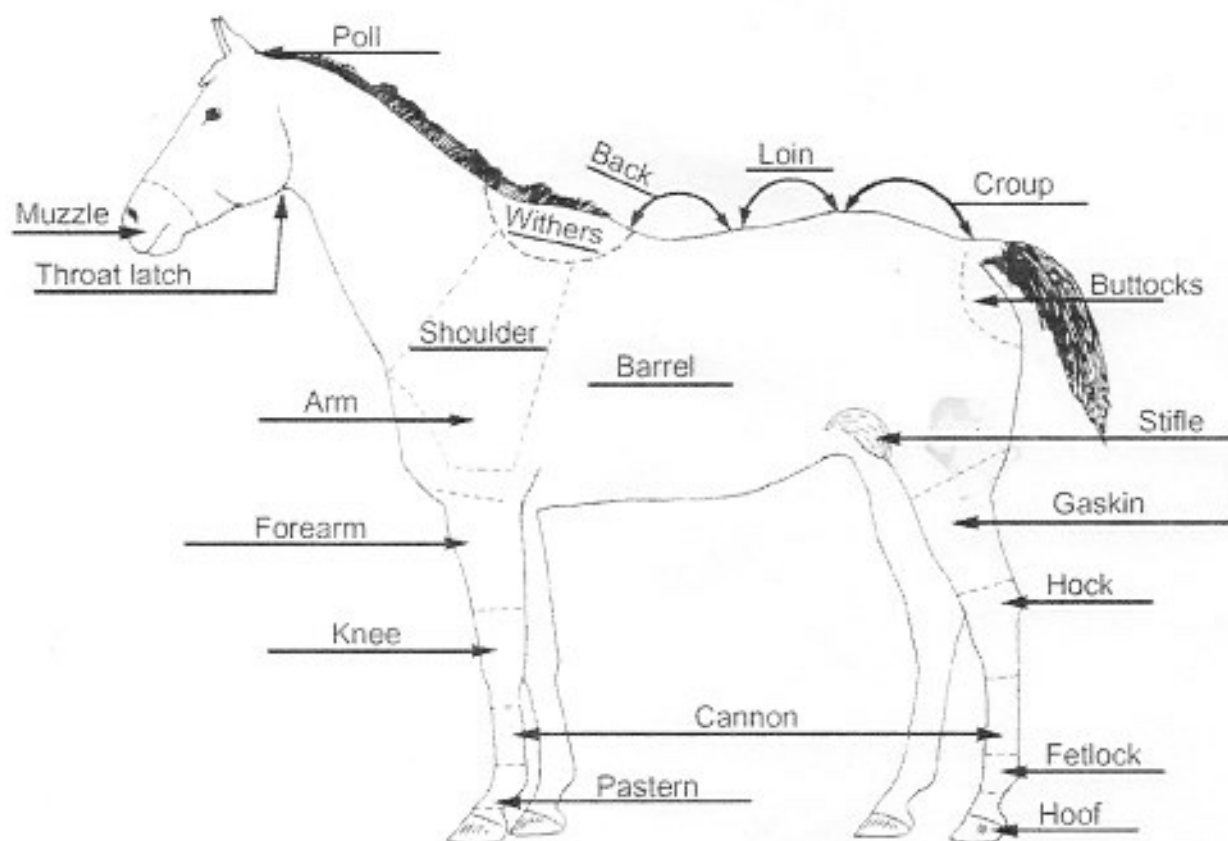
The Horse

Parts of the Horse

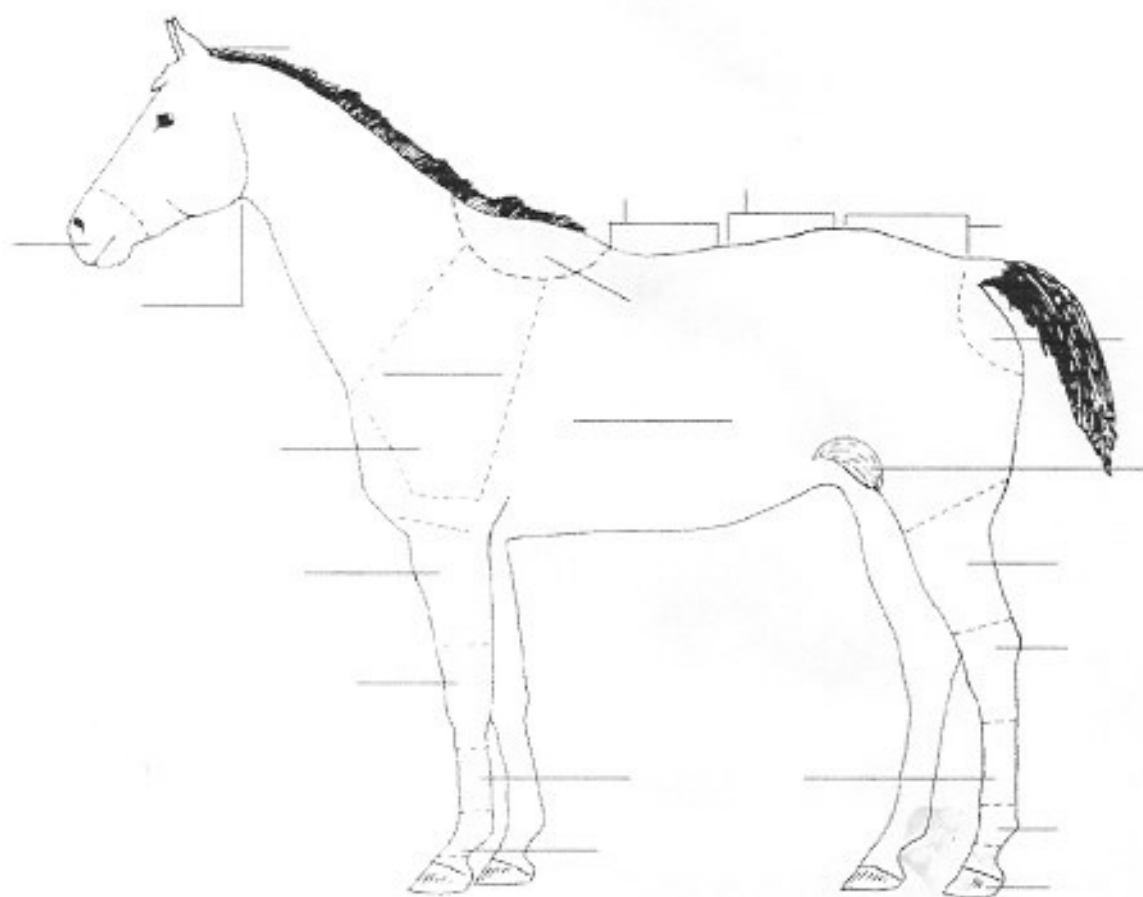
What is a Horse?

A horse is a large solid-hoofed mammal which man has used for centuries for work, war, transportation, and business. Today, however, the horse is used mainly for sport and pleasure.

A good horseman needs to know the parts of the horse so that he can talk with others about the characteristics of different horses.



Label the parts of the horse.



Arm

Back

Barrel

Buttocks

Cannon

Croup

Fetlock

Forearm

Gaskin

Hock

Hoof

Knee

Loin

Muzzle

Pastern

Shoulder

Stifle Poll

Throat Latch

Withers

Types of Horses

Horses are divided into three general types based on size, body build, and weight: light horses, ponies, and draft horses.

Ponies

Ponies are less than 54 inches in height. Most ponies weigh less than 800 pounds. Ponies generally have compact bodies with thick necks and full manes and tails.

Light Horses

Light horses are medium-sized with medium built bodies. Most of these horses weigh less than 1,200 pounds.

Draft Horses

Draft horses are large and sturdy with muscular bodies and hair growing on their lower legs. They can weigh more than 2,000 pounds.

Breeds

A breed is a group of animals which have a common origin. Each group, or breed, has definite characteristics not commonly seen in other breeds. These characteristics are passed on from the parents to their offspring.

Horses or ponies which do not belong to a specific breed are called "grade animals". They can be any size or color. These animals can be used for many purposes.

Breeds of Ponies and their Characteristics

Shetland

The Shetland is the most common small pony, weighing 300 to 500 pounds, and normally stands no taller than 10 hands. He comes in a wide variety of colors. The Shetland is used mostly as a child's pony under saddle or in harness.

Welsh

The Welsh pony is also used under saddle or in harness. It is a medium-sized pony, being about 10 to 12 hands in height and seldom weighing more than 500 pounds. It makes an excellent small jumping pony. Colors are the common chestnut and bay, with occasional grays and blacks.

Pony of the Americas (POA)

This pony breed, with a conformation between the Quarter Horse and Arabian and combining the superior characteristics of each, was developed in the United States in the 1950s. They have Appaloosa coloration and characteristics and make an excellent mount for youths.

Breeds of Light Horses and their Characteristics

American Saddle Horse

The American Saddle Horse originated in Kentucky by infusing Thoroughbred and Arabian blood. These horses are used mainly as three- or five-gaited horses for the show ring and bridle path. They are rather tall horses of 15 to 17 hands, weighing approximately 1,000 pounds. The preferred colors are bright sorrels with white points along with the bay and occasional grays.

Arabian

This breed originated in the desert areas of the Middle East and contributed greatly to many of the younger breeds. The Arab is used as a stock horse, pleasure horse, and as a show horse. It is rather small, being 14 to 15 hands tall and weighing 800 to 1,000 pounds. The predominant colors are bay, chestnut, and gray, with an occasional black.

Appaloosa

The Appaloosa is a versatile breed, used mostly as a stock horse. They normally have white markings over the rump; some color patterns have spots over the entire body. The Appaloosa was developed primarily by the Nez Perce Native Americans in the Northern Rocky Mountains.

Morgan

The Morgan, developed as a multi-purpose horse by Justin Morgan in New England, excels as a road horse pulling light loads and also as a saddle horse. They are normally about 15 hands and weigh 1,000 pounds. The conservative colors, chestnuts and bays, predominate in the breed.

Palomino

The Palomino is a color breed known for its golden coat. Normally these horses are used as parade mounts and as stock horses.

Pinto

The Pinto horse is a color breed. These horses are usually brown and white, black and white, or a combination of the three colors and have many uses depending upon body structure.

Quarter Horse

The Quarter Horse, another of the American-developed breeds, originated on the east coast as a race horse. They are used primarily today in short races and as stock horses. Quarter Horses are heavily muscled and even-tempered. They are normally 15 hands tall and weigh 1,100 to 1,300 pounds. Sorrels, bays, grays, and blacks are common colors.

Standardbred

The Standardbred is used in harness racing for both trotting and pacing as well as a roadster for some show classes. These horses are 15 to 16 hands tall and weigh 900 to 1,200 pounds. They are conservatively colored in sorrels, browns, and blacks.

Tennessee Walking Horse

This plantation walking horse was developed in the Old South as an overseer's mount. They have a gliding, ground-covering walk that has made them famous. About 15 hands tall and weighing 1,000 to 1,200 pounds, the Walking Horse comes in a variety of colors.

Thoroughbred

The Thoroughbred is the most popular race horse for both flat racing and steeple chase racing, along with his uses as a hunter, a polo pony, and a jumper. They are rather tall horses, 15 to 17 hands, and weigh 1,000 to 1,200 pounds. A Thoroughbred is normally bay or sorrel with white points.

Breeds of Draft Horses and their Characteristics

Belgian

Belgians are very large and powerful horses used to pull heavy loads. They came to America from Belgium and can be any solid color, although originally they were solid black. Teams of 4 or 6 glistening black Belgians are often popular exhibitions at parades, fairs, and shows.

Clydsdale

Clydsdales, originally from Scotland, are somewhat smaller and more freely moving than other draft breeds and have long flowing hairs on the lower legs. They usually are dark brown or black.

Percheron

The Percheron, originally from France, is very large - often weighing over 2,000 pounds. They are often dapple-gray with a white mane and tail. They have an excellent disposition and were used as a battle horse in medieval times.

Colors and Markings

Coat Colors

There are five basic coat colors:

BAY - A bay is a red brown or black brown horse that always has a black mane and tail and black legs, referred to as points.

BLACK - A black horse has black eyes, hooves, and skin. If there are tan or brown hairs on the muzzle or flank, this horse would be referred to as a seal brown.

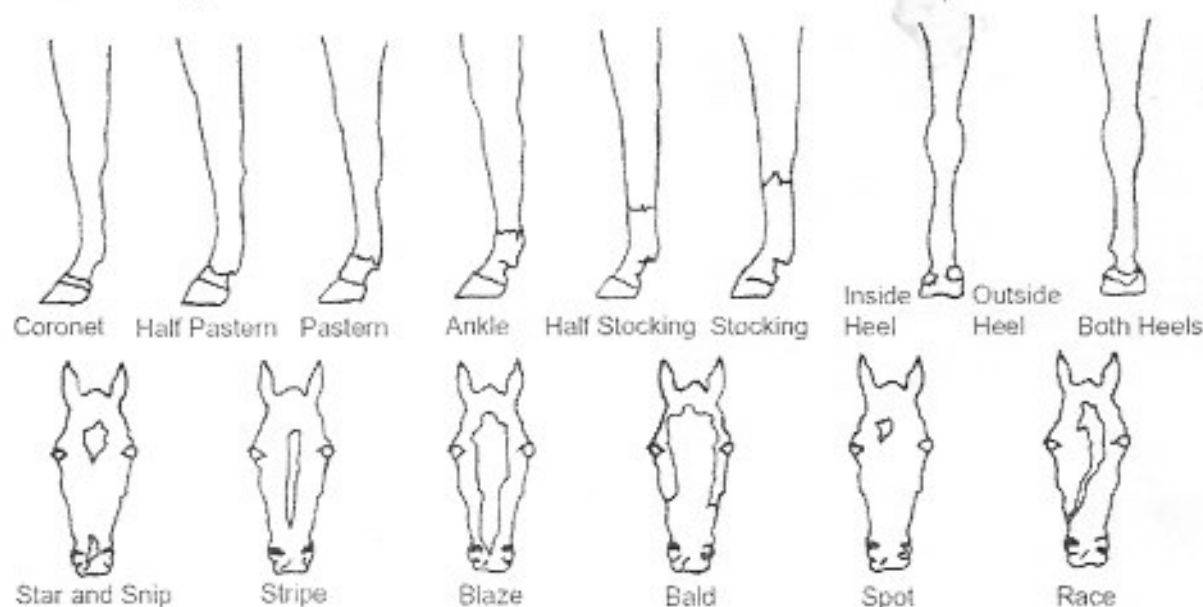
CHESTNUT (SORREL) - A chestnut horse is a horse whose coat is basically red. The mane and tail are normally the same color as the body. If the mane and tail are lighter in color than the body, the horse is referred to as having a flaxen mane and tail.

WHITE - A true white horse is born white and dies white. Very little seasonal change takes place in the coat color. Age does not affect it.

BROWN - A brown horse is just that, brown. Many brown horses are mistakenly called black. A close examination of the hair around the muzzle and lips will soon confirm if the horse is truly black or brown.

Markings of the Horse

You may need to distinguish a horse from others by more than its overall coat color. Usually any distinctive coloration on the face and legs is used. So, instead of simply saying "the sorrel horse", you might say "the sorrel horse with the blaze" or "the sorrel with the stocking behind".



Coat Colors of the Horse

Use a horse book for a reference to describe the following coat colors. You may also want to clip color pictures from magazines and attach them to this page.

1. BAY: _____

2. SORREL: _____

3. GRAY: _____

4. BROWN: _____

5. BLACK: _____

6. PALOMINO: _____

7. APPALOOSA: _____

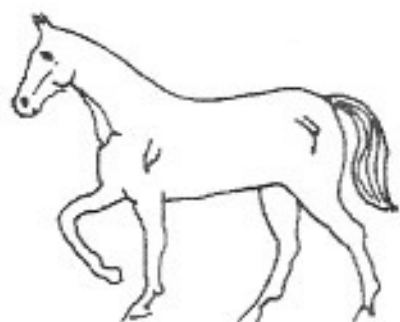
8. PINTO: _____

Gaits of the Horse

A gait is a manner of walking, running, or moving. The three natural gaits of any horse are the walk, trot, and gallop. The natural gaits of the Tennessee Walker are the walk, the running walk, and the gallop. Two other gaits - the slow gait and the rack - are artificial and must be learned by the horse.

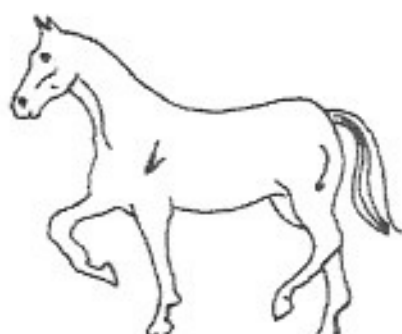
WALK

The walk is a four-beat gait with the feet striking the ground in the following order: right front, left rear, left front, right rear. The feet should be lifted from the ground and placed down flat-footed.



TROT

The trot is a two-beat gait in which the left front and the right rear feet and the right front and left rear feet strike the ground together. The horse's body remains in perfect balance. The trot should be balanced and springy.



CANTER

The canter is a three-beat gait that should be slow. The canter is actually a restrained gallop in which the horse may lead with either of his front feet. The lead foot will be the first to leave and the last to strike the ground. When a horse leads with his left foot, the feet will strike the ground in the following order: right rear, left rear and right front, left front.



Horse Safety

Horses are often timid animals and react violently when frightened, but there is no need to fear the horse if safety precautions are followed. To disregard simple safety rules in handling a horse can result in a serious mishap. Knowledge of safe riding and handling is important to basic horsemanship skills. The best horse handlers "think like a horse" and try to anticipate what a horse will do. The horse has a very large field of vision. They can move their eyes and see things on both sides at the same time. They have two blind spots, however, directly in front of them and directly behind them.

Approaching

Always speak to horse before approaching or touching it from behind. Most horses are likely to jump or kick when startled.

Never approach a horse directly from the rear. Even in a tie stall it is possible to approach at an angle.

Pet a horse by first placing your hand on his shoulder and neck. Don't reach for the end of the nose. This is the blind spot for the horse and is annoying to the animal.

Repeatedly dabbing at the end of a horse's nose, especially a young animal, can encourage biting.

When walking around horses, stay out of kicking range. Never walk under the tie rope or step over it.

Handling

When working around horses, stay close so that, if kicked, you will not receive the full impact of the kick. Stay out of kicking range whenever possible.

Work on a horse from a position as near the shoulder as possible. In this way, you cannot be touched by either the front or hind feet.

When working with the horse's tail, stand near the point of the buttock, to the side and facing the rear, not directly in back. Hold the tail, bringing it around to you.

Learn the proper way to lift the horse's feet.

Be calm and confident when around horses. A nervous handler can make a horse nervous and unsafe. This is important in showmanship.

Know the horse with which you are working. Know his temperament and reactions. Control your temper at all times. Let him know you are his firm, but kind, master. Never punish a horse in anger.

Know your horse's peculiarities. If someone else is riding, tell them what to expect.

Always wear boots. Never go barefoot or wear tennis shoes.

Hard hats are recommended for riding, especially for sports such as jumping.

Leading

Walk beside a horse when leading it, not ahead or behind. Always turn the horse to the right and walk around it, keeping it on the inside.

A horse is stronger than you are. Don't try to out muscle one. The horse will usually respond to a quick snap on the lead strap or rope if properly halter broken.

Never wrap the lead strap, halter shank, or reins around your hand, wrist, or body. Use a long lead strap, folded "accordion" style in the left hand, while leading.

When leading a horse into a box stall or pasture, turn the horse so that it faces the door or gate before releasing the lead strap or removing the halter or bridle. Otherwise, the horse is likely to bolt forward before it is released.

Tying

Tie horses with approximately two feet of rope. Always use a safety release knot. Don't stake them out.

Untie the lead shank before taking the halter off a horse. This may prevent the horse from pulling back and becoming a "halter puller".

Tie a horse away from strange horses so that they cannot fight.

Safety Release Knot

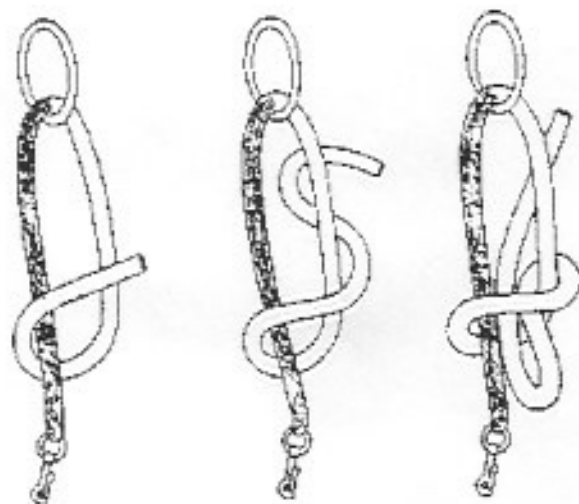
A horse should only be tied to solid secure structures that can not be pulled down. A frightened horse is surprisingly strong and can pull very suddenly. If the structure to which he is tied suddenly comes down around his ears, he can become panicked and dangerous, possibly injuring himself and/or a nearby person.

Horses should never be tied to wire fences, picnic tables, car doors, farm equipment, etc. It is best to tie horses to the post of a wooden fence, hitching post, the hitching post of a parked horse trailer, a tree, etc.

The safety release knot (or hitching knot) is used to prevent accidents. If a horse were to pull back and panic, the handler could release the horse quickly with the least amount of risk to himself/herself and the horse. Many times the sudden release of the pressure that is frightening the horse is enough to calm him down. **DO NOT** put yourself at risk of being kicked, trampled, or jumped on to release a panicked horse. A horse in this state is very dangerous.

How to Tie a Horse with a Safety Release Knot

- (1) Loop the free end around the standing part (shaded).
- (2) Loop a bight of the free end around the free end from above.
- (3) Loop the bight of the free end down through the loop around the standing part.
- (4) To release the knot pull on the long end.



Care Requirements

Food

Every horse needs a daily allotment of feed. The kind and balance of feed and its nutrients are important to the well-being of the horse.

The basic feeds include

- (1) grass and/or hay as a roughage source
- (2) grains, usually oats or corn or commercial ration, and
- (3) protein supplements.

The horse is an athlete and needs to stay in trim condition. Obesity is as much concern as not receiving sufficient food.

Water

The horse will need gallons of fresh water each day. During the summer water intake will increase because the horse will lose additional water through perspiration and will have to replace that lost moisture. The water should be clean and cool, and each horse should have his own drinking utensils. After work, horses should be cool and dry before they are allowed to drink large quantities of water.

Exercise

Horses that are turned out each day into paddocks or fields can run and play for their exercise. However, stabled horses will need exercise each day to keep them in condition and to avoid developing bad habits simply from boredom. Forced exercise, usually riding, can be a fun part of owning a horse.

Shelter

The horse is an outdoor animal and normally needs little shelter. However, he does like a place to protect himself from the rain and cold winds. Stalls that are used daily should be cleaned daily to prevent any substantial buildup of manure and to keep the horse as healthy as possible.

Vaccinations and Parasite Control

Horses should be vaccinated against a number of infectious diseases. You can avoid many problems with parasites with good management. However, a parasite control program (wormer) is required for horses. A veterinarian should be consulted as to needed vaccinations and a parasite control rotation program.

Grooming

Grooming, an important part of management, includes daily inspection of the horse to check for cuts, bruises, or any problem. It also means that the horse's foot is picked up and cleaned with a hoof pick before and after each ride. Then the horse's body is groomed to remove dirt and hair from the entire body.

First, go over the horse with a curry comb in a circular motion, except for the bony areas around the knees and hocks. Then brush the horse with a stiff-bristled brush. Comb the mane and tail to eliminate tangles; do this carefully in order not to break off an excessive number of hairs.

Next, shine the horse with a dandy brush and a grooming cloth to bring out the oils in his hair coat. After riding the horse, you can bathe him or simply scrape the sweat with the scraper. If a horse is unduly sweaty, it is a good idea to bathe him to remove the perspiration and salt that have accumulated.

Hoof Care

A horse must be able to move; therefore, good feet and legs are necessary. The important points in the care of a horse's hoofs are to:

Keep them clean.

Prevent them from drying out.

Trim them so they retain proper shape and length.

Shoe them correctly when shoes are needed.

Cleaning the Hoofs

The horse's feet should be cleaned each day with a hoof pick to remove dirt, manure, and stones. Always pull the hoof pick from the heel to the toe of the horse's hoof (never from toe to heel) to avoid damage to the frog and heel.

Preventing Dry Hoofs

It is important that horses not stand in mud or wet conditions for extended periods of time. A hoof dressing, applied to the coronet area daily, can help to correct dry or cracked hoofs. This does take time, however, as only the new growth can be corrected.

Trimming

The hoofs should be trimmed every six to eight weeks whether the animal is shod or not. A farrier (person who shoes horses) should be consulted or should do the trimming.

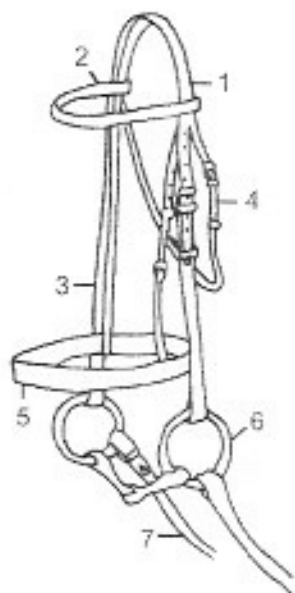
Shoes

Metal shoes protect the feet of horses that work on roads, hard surfaces or rocky ground. Light shoes, weighing about 8 ounces, are the most commonly used on horses. Shoes may change gaits, aid in gripping the ground, correct faulty hoof structure or grow the, and protect the hoof from such conditions as corns, contraction, or cracks.

Equipment

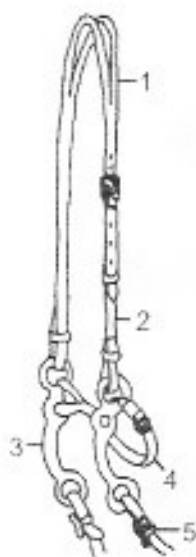
Bridles and Bits

Bridles come in many styles. Each style calls for a special complement of bits. The reins, bit, and Headstall compose the bridle, and different types of riding require different ones. The snaffle-bit, single-reined bridle is commonly used for hunting, jumping, or trail riding. The curb-bit, split-eared bridle is generally used for western riding. The hackamore has a set of reins and lacks a bit. It is used to control and train young horses without injuring their mouths.



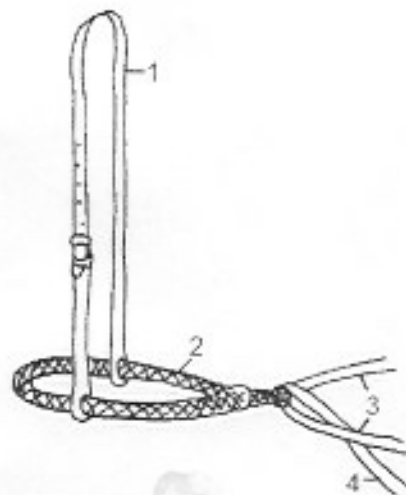
Single-Reined Bridle

1. Crownpiece or Headstall
2. Browband
3. Cheekpiece
4. Throatlatch
5. Noseband
6. Snaffle Bit
7. Reins



Split-Eared Bridle

1. Crownpiece or Headstall
2. Cheekpiece
3. Curb Bit
4. Curb Strap
5. Reins



Bosal Hackamore

1. Headstall
2. Bosal
3. Reins
4. Tie or Lead Rope



Pelham



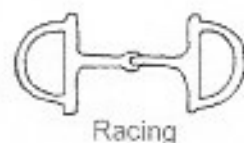
Curb



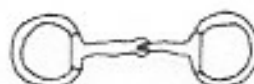
Weymouth



Spade



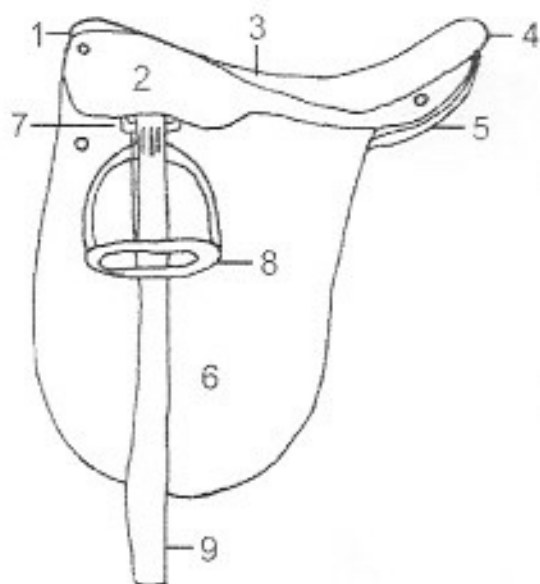
Racing



Snaffle

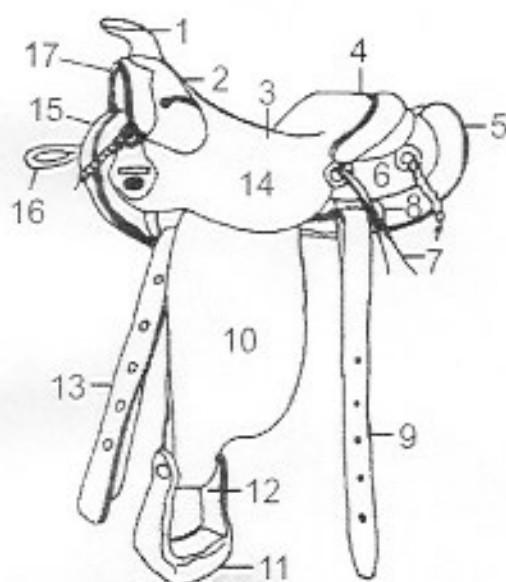
Saddles

Saddles also come in many styles. The saddle indicates more the type of riding an individual does than the type of animal he is riding. However, certain horses look better tacked one way than they do another. The two main types of saddles are the English and Western. It is as necessary that the saddle fit the horse properly as it is that the rider fit the saddle.



English Saddle

- 1 Pommel
- 2 Skirt
- 3 Seat
- 4 Cantle
- 5 Panel
- 6 Flap
- 7 Stirrup Bar
- 8 Tread of Stirrup Iron
- 9 Stirrup Leather



Western Stock Saddle

- 1 Horn
- 2 Fork
- 3 Seat
- 4 Cantle
- 5 Skirt
- 6 Back Housing or Back Jockey
- 7 Lace Strings
- 8 Dee Rings
- 9 Leather Flank Girth
- 10 Fender
- 11 Stirrup
- 12 Stirrup Leather
- 13 Front Tie Strap or Cinch Strap
- 14 Front Jockey and Seat Jockey, one piece
- 15 Wool Lining
- 16 Rope Strap
- 17 Pommel

Equipment Care

A rider should always:

- Put gear away carefully. Inspect it for worn or broken places.
- Hang the blanket to dry and store the saddle so that the leather is not folded or pressed out of shape.
- Hang the bridle so it does not tangle after washing the bit so the bit will be clean and palatable next time.
- Clean the leather regularly and keep all gear out of the rain. It will look better and last longer.
- Store grooming aids and stable gear together, in a convenient place.

Styles of Riding

Each of the three styles of riding requires that the horse be controlled by the use of the rider's seat, legs, hands, and voice. Describe the differences and similarities of the three styles listed below.

Saddle Seat



Hunt Seat



Stock Seat



Tips for Good Horsemanship

Mount correctly from the left side. Make the horse stand still until you are properly seated in the saddle.

Ride with your heels down, your toes turned out slightly, your head and chest lifted. Your shoulders should be square, your elbows close to your body, and your ankles, shoulders, arms, and wrists flexed.

Avoid such habits as clacking to the horse or slapping him with the ends of the reins.

Warm up the horse slowly. Walk him the first half mile, and then jog him slowly for another quarter mile.

Hold the horse to a walk when traveling over paved streets or roads.

Keep to the right side of the road, except when passing, and give right-of-way courteously.

Never rush past riders who are proceeding at a slower gait. This startles both horses and riders and frequently causes accidents. Instead, approach slowly and pass cautiously on the left.

Keep the horse under control at all times. Galloping a willing horse not only is poor horsemanship but also shows ignorance on the part of the rider.

Keep the proper tension on the reins; avoid either tight or dangling reins. Slow the horse down when making a short turn.

To avoid being kicked, do not ride too close to the horse in front. Either keep abreast or a full horse's length behind other mounts.

Walk the horse when going up or down hill.

Do not force the horse to maintain a rapid gait for more than a half mile without allowing a breathing spell.

Walk the horse when approaching and passing through underpasses and going over bridges.

Bring the horse in cool; ride at a walk the last mile to the stable.

Never let the horse gorge on water or feed when he is hot. Groom the horse thoroughly after each ride.

Avoid walking behind any horse.

Wash the bit off thoroughly before hanging it in the tackroom. Remove any hair or sweat marks from the saddle and girth before putting them on the rack. Wash all leather equipment at frequent intervals with saddle soap.

Feed the horse a balanced ration and keep him healthy.

A Horse of Your Own

Owning a horse is a major responsibility. It requires a commitment of both time and money. In most cases you should learn to ride before considering buying a horse.

How to Obtain the Use of a Horse

To obtain the use of a horse, you can buy and own one, borrow, or lease one.

Factors to Consider When Buying a Horse

When buying a horse, you should consider:

- The facilities available for keeping a horse
- The expense of keeping a horse
- The riding area available
- Your ability as a rider
- Your style of riding
- The use you will make of the horse (hunter, pleasure, trail riding, etc.)
- The suitability of the horse for you
- The age of the horse - beginners should use aged, well-schooled horses
- The breed, age, sex, and color of the horse
- The price you can afford to pay
- The health and soundness of the horse
- The conformation of the horse
- Your dedication to feed, care for, and manage your horse

People Who Can Advise You in Selecting a Horse

Following are the people whom you might ask for advice before purchasing a horse:

- Your parents
- Your Extension Agent
- A farrier
- A veterinarian (if possible, have a veterinarian inspect your prospective purchase)
- A horseman

Try to buy your horse on a trial basis to determine its suitability, health, and soundness.

Sources of Horses for Sale

Following are sources where horses are available for sale:

- Breeders
- Trainers
- Farms
- Riding Schools
- Neighbors
- Auction Sales

Recommended reading

You should learn as much about horses as you can before considering buying one.

In addition to the general 4H references the book A Horse of Your Own by M. A. Stonebridge will provide useful advice.

Do You Have Time for a Horse?

Most people would love to have their own horse and say they would be willing to give it a lot of attention, but as time goes on, some of the initial charm wears off. Generally one person takes most of the responsibility for caring for the horse. This activity will help you consider what must be done and how much time it will take.

Consider the things you do during a typical day. Pick a school day and estimate the time you spend in each of the activities below to the closest one-half hour. The total should add up to 24.

Interview someone and find out the amount of time it takes to do the necessary things to take care of a horse. Estimate how much time it takes every day for each activity involving horse care to the nearest one-half hour and fill in the spaces below on the right.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Hours per Day</u>		<u>Hours per Day</u>
Breakfast	_____	Feed and Water	_____
School	_____	Groom	_____
After School Activities	_____	Clean Out Stalls	_____
Sports	_____	Training/Exercise	_____
Watch TV	_____		
Dinner	_____		
Homework	_____		
Chores	_____		
Free Time	_____		
Sleep	_____		
<i>Total Time</i>	<i>24 hours</i>	<i>Total Time Required</i>	_____