

Green Level HorseSense

A Study Guide for the Unmounted Learning Levels Curriculum



HorseSense Learning Levels

Welcome to the Green Level Guide to HorseSense!

Green Level is the third step of the Learning Levels program. It adds expanded detail to many of the concepts introduced in Red and Yellow Level HorseSense, and introduces important new horse care skills.



This guide will take you through each of the required objectives for Green Level HorseSense, explaining them in further detail, as well as offering helpful hints and activities for accelerating your progress.

Whether you have just taken your first lesson or have spent years around horses, we hope you find this guide to be informative and helpful as you journey towards becoming a well-rounded horseperson.

Please remember that this guide is meant to be a supplement to regular lessons, and not as a replacement. The activities mentioned in this guide should be practiced only under the supervision of an instructor or another knowledgeable adult!

Here's what you'll learn in Green Level HorseSense:

The Naming of Horses	p. 1	Stock Up	p. 20
Horses Big and Small	p. 2	Bandaging Basics	p. 21
Born to Run	p. 3	Wrap It Up	p. 22
A Splash of Color	p. 4	Vital Signs	p. 23
Horse Sports	p. 5	Taking TPR	p. 24
Sitting Pretty	p. 6	Weighing In	p. 25
A Need for Speed	p. 7	An Ounce of Prevention	p. 26
Something for Everyone	p. 8	The War Against Worms	p. 27
Happy Trails	p. 9	The Horse Doctor is In	p. 28
Preparation First	p. 10	Open Wide	p. 29
Road Safety	p. 11	No Hoof, No Horse	p. 30
Mind Your Manners	p. 12	All In a Day's Work	p. 31
Fitness First	p. 13	In or Out?	p. 32
Plan Ahead	p. 14	Seasonal Care	p. 33
Get Fit	p. 15	Buzz Off	p. 34
The Right Fit	p. 16	Year at a Glance	p. 35
Fitting a Saddle	p. 17	Test Yourself	p. 36
Fitting Horsey Headgear	p. 18	For Further Study	p. 37
First Aid Kits	p. 19		

Bandaging
Breeds and Breed Types
Conditioning
Dental Care
Hoof Care
Parasite Control
Riding Disciplines
Stable & Facility Mgmt.
Tack
Vet and Health Care

A Note About the Levels Program

The Learning Levels program is our unique method of tracking progress in students as they develop into versatile, well-rounded riders and horsemen. Students work to master specific skills in each of the levels, and receive recognition for completion when they are able to consistently demonstrate each of the skills to their instructor. In many cases, achievement of one level is a prerequisite for learning more advanced skills such as jumping.

The Levels are divided into two branches to reflect the main areas of study within our riding school:

- 🐾 The *Horsemanship Levels* concentrate on the rider's ability in the saddle, culminating in a rider who is balanced, educated and confident and can ride a schooled horse with skill and tact on the flat, over fences and in the open.
- 🐾 The *HorseSense Levels* focus on the extensive body of knowledge needed to care for and work with horses successfully, testing students on horse handling, veterinary and stable management skills.

If you are not already a participant in the Levels Program and you are interested becoming one, please ask your instructor for more information.

Nikki and Dana Surrusco
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Ellijay, GA


www.HorseSenseLearningLevels.com

Visit our website to learn more about the Learning Levels program.



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Special thanks to all of the HorseSense students and horses who are featured here.

Illustrations by Rhonda Hagy

Photographs by our amazing barn family volunteer photographers.

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Green HorseSense Objectives

It's not enough, in our view, to be able to ride a horse: truly effective horsemanship requires that riders understand and attend to their horse's basic needs. That means learning how horses are put together, what makes them behave in certain ways, and how to keep them happy and healthy.

Objectives: Student will be able to assess fit of tack; to identify basic first aid equipment; to understand concepts of conditioning for horse and rider; to apply simple bandages; to understand elementary stable management principles and routine horse care; to identify common breeds and riding disciplines.

- Fit a saddle, bridle (including bit), girth and halter to a horse.
- Identify items in equine first aid kit, giving reasons for each item's use.
- Take and record TPR.
- Measure a horse for weight and height.
- Administer a paste or gel dewormer safely.
- Apply a stable bandage.
- Describe ten riding disciplines (English or Western).
- Name five breeds in each of the following categories: sporthorse, draft, gaited, pony, color breeds.
- Discuss safe trail riding practices, including appropriate tack and equipment.
- Discuss basic conditioning for horse and rider.
- Know signs of a hoof needing trimming or shoeing.
- Know basic stall and pasture management practices to keep horse safe and happy, to include:
 - Provision for water, forage
 - Shelter and living arrangements
 - Fly and manure management
 - Seasonal considerations
- Create a simple calendar showing routine care needed for horse, to include: immunizations, shoeing or trimming, deworming, dental care and Coggins test.

The Naming of Horses

As you learned in **Yellow Level**, horses, like other animals, come in a wide variety of different **types** and **breeds**. Learning about breeds is an important part of an equine education. It will help you identify horses and understand their strengths and weaknesses. Someday, it might even help you choose a horse of your own!

What are horses bred for?

Size, temperament, color, conformation or build, and suitability for a specific purpose.

A horse may be purebred or a mix of two or more breeds. A **purebred** horse's parents, known as the **sire** and the **dam**, must both be the same breed. Purebred horses are eligible to be **registered** by their breed association; if a horse is registered, we say he has **papers**.

Sometimes crosses between breeds evolve into popular breeds themselves. A few examples include:

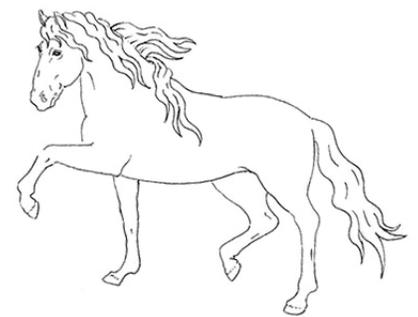
- 🐾 The **Anglo-Arab** (Thoroughbred x Arabian)
- 🐾 The **Quarab** (Quarter Horse x Arabian)
- 🐾 The **Appendix Quarter Horse** (Thoroughbred x Quarter Horse)
- 🐾 The **Morab** (Morgan x Arabian)
- 🐾 The **National Show Horse** (Saddlebred x Arabian)



If we don't know what breed a horse is, or we suspect he is a mixture of many breeds, we say he is a **grade horse.**

Each breed has distinctive characteristics, some of which make the horse more suitable for a certain kind of work. If you are interested in cross-country or hunter jumping, a horse with **Thoroughbred** blood is likely to have the long, efficient galloping stride that you need. If you want to compete in barrel racing, a stock-type horse such as the **Quarter Horse** is better equipped for the quick starts and turns. Although breeding does not **guarantee** that a horse will be suitable for a particular job, it can help you make an informed decision when selecting a horse for a specific purpose.

Breeds with common attributes are often grouped together as a **breed type**. You'll want to become familiar with different types as well as some individual breeds within each category.



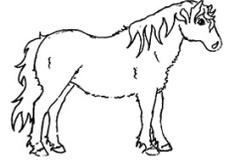
Andalusians and Lusitanos are both **baroque type** horses, a popular choice for dressage.

Horses Big and Small

Horses are described using a wide variety of different terms, which can be confusing until you learn the lingo. One common way to describe and categorize horse breeds is by size.

Ponies

A pony is any horse standing under **14.2 hands high**, regardless of breed. To be eligible for most **pony breeds**, the horses must **consistently** measure under this height. This rules out breeds such as the Arabian and Mustang, which sometime produce pony-sized horses but can also stand 15hh or higher.



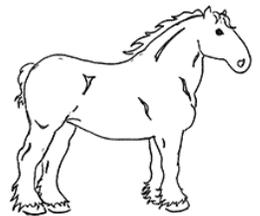
Pony breeds include:

- 🐾 **Welsh Pony**, a popular children's pony from Wales.
- 🐾 **Shetland Pony**, a hardy small breed originating in northern Scotland.
- 🐾 **Connemara**, an athletic Irish sport pony.
- 🐾 **Pony of the Americas**, or **POA**, a miniature version of an Appaloosa.
- 🐾 **Norwegian Fjord**, known for its striking dun coloring and bi-colored mane.
- 🐾 **Haflinger**, a thick-bodied large pony resembling the Belgian draft horse.
- 🐾 **Icelandic Horse**, a small gaited horse unique to Iceland. (Although Icelandic horses are pony-sized, the Icelandic language does not have a word for pony and they are referred to as horses.)

**Miniature horses are not ponies but true dwarf horses.
They are popular as companions and pets, and for pony rides for very small children.**

Draft horses

Draft horses are large and powerful, capable of pulling heavy loads. Most draft horses stand between 16-18hh, and weigh 1800 lb. or more! These huge workhorses are often gentle by nature and are referred to as "coldblooded" breeds.



Draft breeds include:

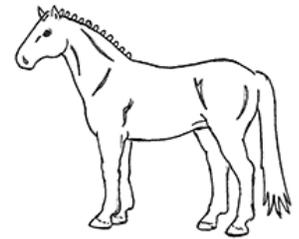
- 🐾 **Shire**, an English breed with heavily **feathered** legs, standing 17-18hh on average.
- 🐾 **Clydesdale**, a popular breed made famous by the Budweiser advertising campaign.
- 🐾 **Belgian**, recognizable by its flaxen chestnut coloring. Belgians are closely related to another draft breed called the **Brabant**.
- 🐾 **Percheron**, a French draft breed, usually black or gray.
- 🐾 **Friesian**, a lighter draft type with a distinctive black coat, popular for driving and dressage.
- 🐾 There are many other European draft breeds seen less commonly in the United States, such as the **Irish Draught**, the **Italian Heavy Draft**, and the **Ardennes**.

Born to Run

Many breeds are developed for their athleticism and their ability to perform a particular sport. Almost every country has its own unique sport horse, as well as smaller, hardier horses used for work and pleasure riding.

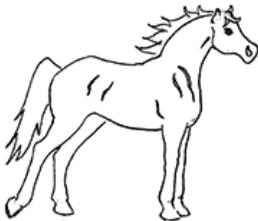
Sporhorses

A sporthorse is a horse bred for athleticism, specifically in English events such as dressage, jumping and eventing. Sporthorses can be seen performing at the Olympic level. Many of these breeds are **warmblood** breeds, created by crossing Thoroughbreds with heavier, draft-type horses.



Sporthorse breeds include:

- 🐾 **Thoroughbred**, bred for racing and excellent at eventing.
- 🐾 **Hanoverian**, a popular German warmblood.
- 🐾 **Trakehner**, a lighter-bodied warmblood originating in East Prussia.
- 🐾 **Holsteiner**, a German breed thought to be one of the oldest warmbloods.
- 🐾 **Irish Sport Horse**, an Irish warmblood sometimes referred to as the Irish hunter.
- 🐾 **Selle Francais**, a French warmblood renowned for its show jumping ability.
- 🐾 **Baroque horses** such as the **Andalusian**, **Lusitano**, **Lippizaner** and **Friesian** are popular choices for dressage.

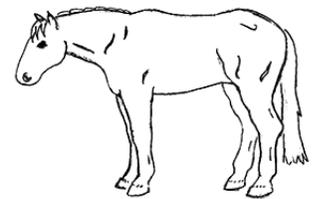


Thoroughbreds and warmbloods have Arabian ancestors.

The Arabian is thought to be the oldest breed of horse in the world. While the compact build of the Arabian makes it less suitable for upper-level jumping and dressage, it excels at endurance.

Stock horses

Stock horses are strong, fast working horses, standing 15hh-16hh, typically used in Western riding and ranch work. They are excellent sprinters and most have "cow sense," or the natural ability to herd cattle.



Stock breeds include:

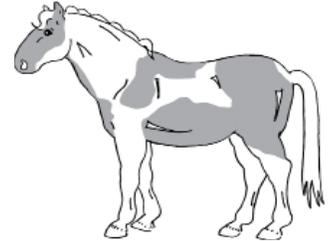
- 🐾 **American Quarter Horse**, the most well-known stock horse, which gets its name for being the fastest horse in the world over a short distance.
- 🐾 **Paint Horse**, a Quarter Horse with pinto coloring.
- 🐾 **Appaloosa**, an American color breed known for its spotted coat.
- 🐾 **Australian Stock Horse**, a popular multi-discipline riding horse used to work Australian cattle stations.

A Splash of Color

Some breeds are easily recognizable by their distinctive colors or markings. Color breeds are often popular, but a good horse must be bred for temperament and conformation as well as a pretty face!

Color breeds

A color breed is a horse that breeds “true” to color, consistently producing offspring with the same color or coat pattern. Some horses have a solid coat color but carry the genes for the color pattern; these horses are referred to as **breeding stock**.

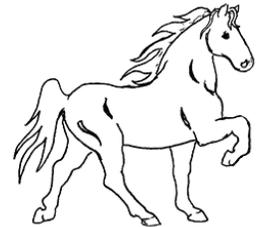


Color breeds include:

- 🐾 **American Paint Horse**, a stock breed with pinto coloring in several different patterns.
- 🐾 **Appaloosa**, a Native American spotted horse.
- 🐾 **Pony of the Americas**, or **POA**, a pony-sized Appaloosa.
- 🐾 **American Cream Draft**, a heavy breed with cremello coloring.
- 🐾 **Haflinger**, recognizable by its flaxen chestnut coat. The **Belgian Draft Horse** shares this coloring.
- 🐾 Other horses known for their distinctive coloring include the **Norwegian Fjord** (dun), the **Cleveland Bay** (bay), the **Friesian** (black) and the **Rocky Mountain Horse** (silver dapple).

Gaited horses

A horse is said to be “gaited” when its natural gaits vary from the normal walk, trot, and canter. Gaited horses are wonderful for trail riding but sometimes have difficulty with sports requiring trotting.



Gaited breeds include:

- 🐾 **American Saddlebred**, sometimes called a **racking horse**, used in saddleseat riding.
- 🐾 **Tennessee Walking Horse**, known for its smooth **running walk**.
- 🐾 **Missouri Fox Trotter**, named after its slow **fox trot**.
- 🐾 **Paso Fino**, a South American breed with three unique gaits.
- 🐾 **Rocky Mountain Horse**, recognizable by its **amble** and beautiful silver dapple coloring.
- 🐾 **Icelandic Horse**, prized for its fast **tölt**.
- 🐾 Some **Standardbred** horses **pace** instead of trot.



Are there wild horse breeds? The only true wild horse in the world is the **Przewalski's Horse**, an endangered species native to central Asia. But there are several well-known breeds of feral horses, such as the **Mustang** of western America, the **Chincoteague Pony** of Virginia, the **Sorraia** of Portugal, and the **Brumby** of Australia.

Horse Sports

Just as there are many different types of horse, there are also different competitive equestrian sports, or **disciplines**. It's a good idea to be familiar with popular disciplines—especially if you plan to shop for a horse, since many horses are advertised by their suitability for a particular sport.

Fun fact: Men and women can equally participate in equestrian sports in the Olympic games!
The three Olympic disciplines are dressage, show jumping, and eventing.

Dressage



Dressage tests the horse's **obedience** and **gymnastic development** using **tests**, or a pattern of prescribed movements ridden in walk, trot and canter. Dressage tests take place within a regulation-sized arena marked by letters, which show the riders where each movement begins and ends. Riders may also participate in **musical freestyles**, or tests choreographed to music.

The word dressage means "training." Outside of the show ring, **it is the training foundation for many other disciplines** as well, as it improves the horse's balance, strength, suppleness, and rideability.

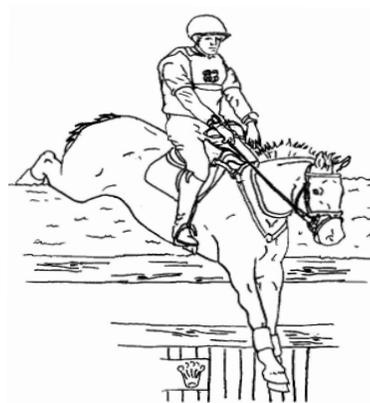
Show jumping



In show jumping, riders navigate a course of ten or more colorful fences set in an enclosed arena. They are not judged on form, but may receive **penalties for knockdowns or disobediences** such as stopping or running out of a jump. If multiple riders go "clean," with no penalties, then the **fastest rider wins**.

Riders starting out in the sport might jump 2'6" to 3', but at the **Grand Prix** level, jumps are routinely 5' or higher. In one special type of show jumping class, called **Puissance**, the horse who jumps the highest is the winner.

Eventing



The **triathlon** of the horse world, eventing tests horses and riders in three very different **phases**, beginning with a **dressage** test. After dressage, riders tackle a **cross-country** course over varying terrain. Horses may be asked to jump on or off banks, cross through water, and jump ditches, logs, and solid wooden fences, with time penalties given for riding too slow or too fast. Finally, they return for the **stadium jumping** phase, a show jumping course designed to test the horse's agility.

The **scores from all three phases are combined** to determine the overall winner. Local schooling shows often offer **combined tests** (dressage and show jumping) and **jumping derbies** (a course of show jumping and cross-country), but you can't compete in cross-country alone.

Sitting Pretty

If you go to a horse show, you will have to choose between many **classes**, or short events geared toward different disciplines and levels. Many of these classes judge the form of the horse or the rider.

Hunters

The hunter division developed in North America as a means of evaluating a horse's jumping ability and suitability for the fox hunting field.

Horses can compete in **working hunters**, over a simple course of natural-looking jumps, or in **hunter under saddle** classes, where they are judged on their movement at the walk, trot and canter. **Conformation classes** evaluate the horse's build and physical appearance. A good hunter should jump effortlessly, demonstrating a long, forward stride and good form in the air.



In traditional **fox hunting**, riders follow a pack of hounds across open country after a scent. The group is divided into the **staff**, including the **Master of Fox Hounds**, and the **field**. Many modern hunts do not chase actual foxes but instead follow a pre-laid trail of scent; this is called **drag hunting**.

Fox hunting is not competitive, but many hunts put on **hunter paces**. In a hunter pace, riders follow a marked trail with the goal of coming in closest to the **optimum time**.

Equitation

In equitation, it is not the horse's performance that is judged, but the rider's. **Hunt seat equitation** classes may take place over fences or on the flat, evaluating the rider's position and their influence on the horse. Jump courses, while no larger than 3'6", are quite technical, asking the rider to maneuver through challenging turns and adjust the horse's stride. At the top level, riders may be asked to work without stirrups, perform a pattern, or swap horses with another rider.

Other disciplines, including **saddleseat** and English and Western dressage, often offer equitation classes as part of a show. **Working equitation** is based off classical dressage and features a difficult obstacle course requiring excellent balance and communication between horse and rider.



Pleasure

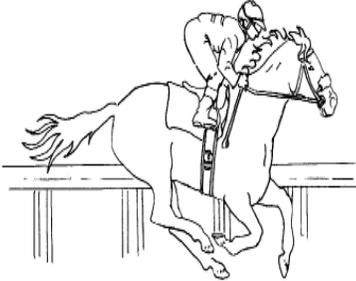
In both **English** and **Western pleasure**, the horse is judged at the walk, trot or jog, and canter or lope, demonstrating that they are easy and pleasurable to ride. Pleasure horses should demonstrate smooth gaits and a steady, slow rhythm on a loose rein. Horses that compete in English pleasure are usually ridden more forward than Western pleasure horses.



A Need for Speed

There are horse sports for everyone - including riders who prefer a little adrenaline in their equine activities.

Horse racing



One of the most recognizable horse sports is **flat racing**, where horses run head to head around a track. The best-known races for Thoroughbreds in the United States are the three races that make up the Triple Crown: the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness, and the Belmont. Horses may also race over brush jumps in a sport called **steeplechasing**.

A racehorse's career begins and ends while they are still quite young, so many off-the-track horses go on to become dressage, jumping or pleasure horses.

Endurance



A very different type of horse race tests the fitness of horse and rider by asking them to travel **long distances over varied terrain**. One of the most well-known endurance rides, The Tevis Cup, covers a hundred miles in twenty-four hours!

Endurance horses require careful conditioning, and must pass mid-race veterinary inspections before they are allowed to continue. Arabians are a popular choice for this discipline due to their exceptional stamina.

Mounted games



Fast-paced and exciting, mounted games is played in more than twenty countries. Teams made up of two to five riders and compete head to head in relay races, weaving through poles, dropping flags in cones and dunking socks in buckets. There are more than forty different games testing the speed and agility of both horse and rider.

Since many games require the rider to vault on and off and retrieve items from the ground, ponies are usually used by riders of all ages.

Western speed events



Similar to mounted games, popular Western speed events such as **barrel racing** involve running around obstacles at top speed—but riders compete individually, against the clock, instead of forming teams.

Barrel racing, in which the horses must run in a cloverleaf pattern around three barrels, is the most well-known speed event, but there are many others including **pole bending**, **Texas barrels** and the single-barrel **arena race**.

Something for Everyone

As you can see, there are a lot of different options for equestrian sports, whether you ride English, Western or both! Here are a few more disciplines you might enjoy:

Reining

The only Western sport included in the World Equestrian Games, reining tests the training of Western horses through a **pattern** of compulsory movements including flying lead changes, sliding stops and spins. Reining horses may also perform musical freestyles, including costumes.

Reining is often referred to as “dressage for western horses” but should not be confused with actual **western dressage**, a new but fast-growing discipline pairing traditional dressage tests with the Western tradition.



Cutting

Many riding disciplines honor the original purpose of Western riding: **working cattle**. Cutting tests the ability of the horse to work cattle, or keep a cow separate from the rest of the herd. Cutting is unique in that the rider may actually be penalized for giving the horse instructions—once the cow is selected, it is entirely up to the horse to do the job!

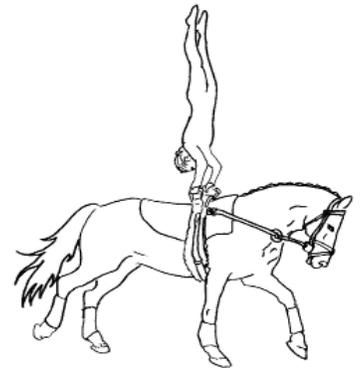
Other sports involving cattle include **team penning**, **calf roping** and **team roping**. Roping riders often compete at western events called **rodeos**.



Vaulting

Often referred to as “gymnastics on horseback,” vaulting involves a series of acrobatic maneuvers, such as mounts and dismounts, balancing poses and handstands, on the back of a cantering horse. Unlike **trick riding**, vaulting horses are controlled from the ground by a **longe line**. Vaulters compete individually or in teams, and may perform choreographed musical freestyles.

Neither an English or Western saddle is used - vaulters require a specialized piece of equipment called a **vaulting surcingle**. Draft horses are popular vaulting horses due to their broad backs.



Other equine activities include **polo** and **polocrosse** (think lacrosse on horseback), **saddleseat riding** (often seen on Morgans and gaited breeds) and **competitive trail** (obstacle courses in a natural setting). You can learn more about all of these disciplines by watching videos or attending nearby events as a spectator.

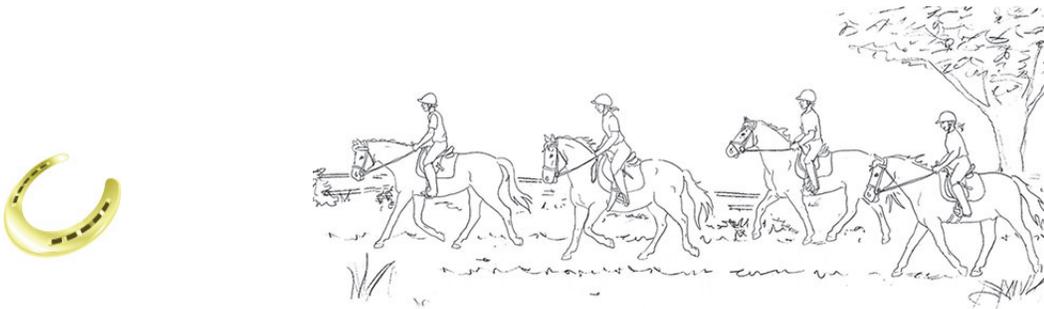
**The most important part of any discipline is that it honors the horse.
There can be no victory if it comes at the horse's expense!**

Happy Trails

One of the most popular equestrian pastimes for English and Western riders is **trail riding**. Whether you go for a leisurely walk through the woods, gallop across open fields, or head out to a state park for an all-day adventure, trail riding can be fun and relaxing for both horse and rider.

Choose your own adventure

Your definition of trail riding will depend mostly on where you live. You might be riding down dirt roads or quiet paved streets, following a desert wash, or in the woods for hours. You might be riding entirely at the walk, or trotting and cantering frequently.



If you are very lucky, you may be able to ride across the land close to your horse's stable **with permission**. Otherwise, you can trailer your horse to a **trail head**. Ask local horse friends for recommendations or search online for public horse trails.

Plan ahead

Like many other equestrian activities, trail riding requires some careful unmounted preparation to be safe and successful. **Start by doing some research:**



1. Plan your route. If you are riding across private land, make sure you have permission from all of the landowners. If you are riding on a public trail, you'll want to ask a few questions:

-  **What is the terrain like?** If it is hillier than your horse is used to, you'll need to plan on a shorter ride.
-  **What is the footing like?** If it is very rocky, do you have adequate protection for your horse's hooves?
-  **Is it a shared trail?** Bicycles and ATVs can be extremely frightening to a horse at first encounter.
-  **Is it free to ride there?** Some parks charge a small fee to offset the maintenance of the trails.
-  **What are the hours?** Some trail heads close at sundown, or are only open to horses on certain days of the week.

2. Make sure your horse is mentally prepared for the ride. Trail horses need to be comfortable working outside the arena and in a group, and should be able to confidently navigate obstacles such as gates, ditches, water, etc. If you have never taken a horse outside the ring before, start small!

3. Make sure your horse is physically prepared. Are you riding him several days a week, including lots of time at the walk and trot and over hilly terrain? If you are planning a long ride, he may need several weeks to months of **conditioning** to be able to complete the ride without stress or injury.

Preparation First

As you've already learned, when it comes to horses, stuff happens. It is much better to be overprepared than underprepared, especially when riding your horse away from home!

Before you hit the trails, be sure to:

- 🐾 **Check the fit and condition of all of your tack.** An ill-fitting saddle can be a big problem on a long ride, especially if you are going up and down hills. You also don't want a rein or stirrup leather breaking while you are out on the trail. Inspect your tack carefully and clean it before you go so it doesn't give your horse sores.
- 🐾 **Make sure your horse's hooves are fit for the ride.** He should be appropriately trimmed and/or shod and comfortable on his feet. Barefoot horses may need hoof boots or a protective coating to handle rocky trails.
- 🐾 **Check the weather forecast** to minimize the risk of riding into unexpected storms or excessive heat.



If your barefoot horse is easily bruised or tender on rocks, he may need to wear boots on the trail.

The number one rule for trail riding: ALWAYS tell someone where you are going!
It is best to use the buddy system, but no matter what, make sure someone at home knows where you are planning to ride and when you expect to be back.

If you are heading out on a **long ride** - two hours or more - you may need to do some **extra packing**:

- You need to be able to tie your horse safely in case of emergency. **Leave his halter on under the bridle**, and bring a **coiled lead rope**.
- Although you may not have service in remote areas, be sure to bring your **cell phone**. Keep it on **YOU**, not in a saddlebag. If you fall, you don't want your horse to run off with it!
- Bring **bottled water** and portable snacks. **Find out what watering options will be available for your horse**—is there a creek on your route?
- If your horse is shod, it's a good idea to bring a **hoof boot**, or **Vetrap and duct tape** to make an emergency boot if he loses a shoe.
- You may not be able to bring an entire first aid kit with you, but you should still have something to use as an **emergency sling or bandage**. If you or anyone in your group is allergic to **bees or wasps**, be sure to carry a treatment approved by their doctor.
- Dress in **comfortable, close-fitting layers**. Even if it is warm, bring a **waterproof jacket**, in case the weather changes when you are miles from home. **Half or full chaps** will protect your legs from rubs. As always, never go anywhere without your smooth-soled, heeled **boots** and ASTM-approved **helmet**!



Road Safety

In some areas, your adventures outside the arena might include **riding down a public or private road**. Although it is rarely a good idea to take your horse out onto a busy highway, it is smart to know how to ride on quiet roads safely.

The first thing you should do:

Find out what your state laws say about horses on public roads.

In many states, a horse is treated as a motor vehicle. This means that you must **ride with traffic, not against it, and obey all traffic laws**. If you come to a stop sign, you must stop. You should be familiar with right-of-way rules and understand who yields at intersections. Whenever possible, **move off the road to allow motorists to pass**, turning your horse to face the road at a slight angle so he can see the vehicle coming up behind him.

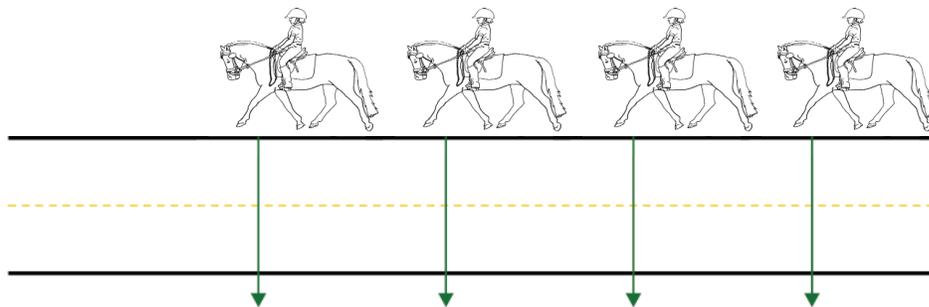


You also need to be able to signal to motorists behind you. Practice the **hand gestures used by cyclists**, which allow you to signal a left turn, a right turn and a stop using just your left hand, keeping your right hand on the reins.



Pavement can be beneficial for the horse's legs at the walk, but hard on the joints when ridden at fast paces. **Most of your roadwork should be done at the walk**—especially for shod horses who may slip and fall. You can also ride on the shoulder, but keep a sharp eye out for dangerous litter.

If you need to cross a road, and you are riding in a group, it is important that all riders line up and **cross at the same time**. The riders at each end are in charge of looking for traffic. Never cross one at a time—if a car comes, the horses left behind may panic and run into the street!



Always **wear brightly-colored clothing** when riding on the road. Reflective vests, saddle pads and/or quarter sheets all can help motorists see you. **Avoid riding at dusk or dawn** when visibility is poor.

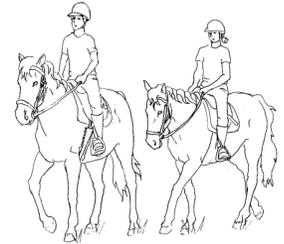
Remember that if a horse and automobile collide, the horse will not win.

Ride with caution and treat motorists with respect!

Mind Your Manners

In addition to preparing your horse, tack and equipment, it's a good idea to **review some basic rules** for safely riding outside the arena before you hit the trail:

- 🐾 **DO maintain a safe distance** between you and the other horses on the road, preferably one horse length. Too close, and you are likely to get kicked. Too far away, and your horse will get anxious, and may pull, buck or speed up in his effort to rejoin the group.
- 🐾 **DON'T take off trotting or cantering** without asking the other riders first! Horses copy each other, so if you speed up before another rider is prepared, they may lose control of their horse, causing a dangerous situation for all involved.
- 🐾 **DO let the other riders know if you need to stop or pass.** Ask permission before passing a strange horse - not all horses are tolerant of being passed, especially on a narrow trail.
- 🐾 **DON'T hold tree branches to the side** as you ride by. While it may make your passage easier, the branch will swing back when you release it, hitting the next horse or rider in the face!
- 🐾 **DO point out hazards** that you spot along the trail, such as holes, wire, or other dangerous debris. Point at it as you call out a warning. Each rider should pass the message back, in case the rider at the back of the line doesn't hear.



Leave no trace

Whether you are riding on public or privately owned land, make sure you show consideration by observing basic trail etiquette:

- 🐾 **DO ask permission before riding on someone's land.** Trespassing is illegal and makes it less likely that you will be granted permission to ride on private land in the future.
- 🐾 **DON'T ride across lawns, gardens or crop fields,** which can be damaged by your horse's hooves. Stick to the edges, and be extra careful when the ground is soft.
- 🐾 **DO leave all gates exactly as you found them.** Leave livestock alone, and try to avoid passing through occupied pastures if you can.
- 🐾 **DON'T litter,** or behave destructively towards the environment by breaking branches, stripping bark, etc. If your horse poops near a house or on a public walkway, be prepared to stop and clean it up.
- 🐾 **DO act friendly and courteous towards others you meet** on the trail. Always thank landowners, as well as anyone who stops to let you pass.



Save the trails

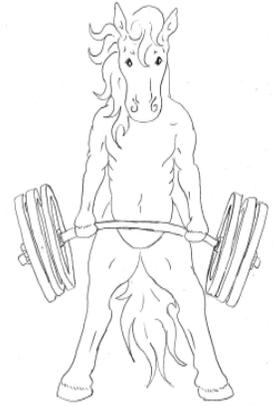
According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 6000 acres of open space are lost to commercial and residential development **every day**. This means that if we want to ride outside the arena, it is important for equestrians to demonstrate **good stewardship**, or care of the land, and to get involved in **conservation efforts**. Write a letter thanking landowners and government agencies for keeping their land available for equestrian use, or give back by organizing a trail clean-up day.

Fitness First

Before a horse can participate in horse shows or competitions, or even head out on the trail, he needs to be properly **conditioned**. Conditioning is the process of getting a horse physically fit, so that he can safely and easily perform his job.

Why is conditioning so important?

- 🐾 **It prevents injury** by gradually strengthening the horse's muscles, tendons, ligaments and bones.
- 🐾 **It makes your horse more athletic.** As his fitness improves, so will his speed, flexibility, agility and jumping ability.
- 🐾 **It makes him easier to ride.** Riders often get frustrated when their horses are physically unable to do as they are asked. Sometimes "behavior problems" or "training problems" stem from a lack of fitness.
- 🐾 **Your horse will be happier to see you** if he knows that your ride won't leave him sore and exhausted.
- 🐾 **It will help him maintain the correct weight.** Overfed and underworked horses can have a wide variety of health problems.



Still not convinced? Try this simple exercise:

Put on a backpack containing 10-15lb of books, or other loose objects that are likely to shift off balance as you move. **Go for a jog** around your house, or up and down a trail—bonus points if you try this on a warm day, or in soft deep footing like a sand arena. Chances are you won't be able to keep up your jog for long.

Now, imagine that your backpack is urging you on, and won't let you stop.

With regular training, you could learn to run with the backpack for longer and longer periods of time. But you wouldn't want to be forced to carry it for hours at a time in the beginning. This is what your horse experiences when he is asked to carry a rider. **Riders and trainers must learn to be aware of their horse's fitness level**, and adjust their workload accordingly.



If you want to jump high or ride fast, you'll need to make fitness a priority.

Wouldn't it help if the backpack stayed perfectly balanced and centered?

If it didn't bounce or shift against your back, you'd probably find the jogging easier. **A strong, flexible, athletic rider can also make a horse's job easier.** Riders who take their fitness seriously...

- 🐾 **Are less likely to get fall, or get hurt in a fall.**
- 🐾 **Can ride more effectively.** Horses move better and respond to cues more easily when their riders' bodies aren't accidentally getting in the way.
- 🐾 **Advance more quickly.** You can do a lot more when your body is able to maintain a balanced position!

Plan Ahead

Just like humans, horses need regular exercise and workouts in order to keep their bodies in good shape. Whether you are starting from scratch with a horse that's been out of work, or building the horse's strength for a particular activity or event, it is a good idea to make a **conditioning plan**.

Your horse needs to be exercised 3 to 6 consistent days a week to work comfortably.

The frequency and intensity of his workouts will depend on his current fitness level, the kind of riding you want to do, and how much turnout time he gets.



A written conditioning plan outlines how often the horse will be worked and what he will be doing each day to help achieve your goal. **Your plan should be flexible.** Be prepared to make changes if you miss several days due to bad weather, or your horse seems sore or lame.

How long will it take?

Successful conditioning does not happen overnight—it is a process that takes weeks if not months of consistent, repetitive work.

If a horse is just getting back into regular work, it will take at least **eight weeks** to get him to a level of “ordinary” fitness, where the horse can comfortably work for an hour. The first few weeks should consist mostly of walking, with short trots that gradually build in duration. The second month can introduce the canter, but don't expect that your horse will be able to canter for a long period of time in beautiful balance!

By the seventh and eighth week, the horse can start working over cavaletti or small jumps, and spend more of the ride in trot or canter. **Older horses or horses with physical issues may take much longer**; it can take a solid year to rebuild the muscling on an out-of-shape horse.

If the horse is going to be doing anything beyond pleasure riding, such as showing or long-distance trail riding, he will need **further conditioning work**, tailored for the activity of choice. Dressage horses and jumping horses might need to build muscle to perform well, while eventing and trail horses need aerobic work to strengthen their heart and lungs.

This can take **another six to eight weeks**. This means that the time to start thinking about fitness is **not** two weeks before the show!



Asking a horse to do something for which he has not been conditioned can be cruel.

It can also be dangerous - overexertion can cause a serious injury to horse, rider or both.

Schedule the time to get your horse fit and keep him fit!

Get Fit

Now that you know how important conditioning is for both health and performance, let's take a look at some **different activities** you can use to build fitness in both horse and rider. You can ask your instructor to suggest exercises for you and your horse, and learn more about conditioning in **Orange** and **Teal Level**.

Conditioning activities for the horse:

- 🐾 **Long walks and slow trots**, preferably along a road or trail with good footing, build up your horse's entire body, improving stamina, muscle tone, and bone strength.
- 🐾 **Hillwork** is a huge workout for a horse. Downhill slopes are best ridden at the walk, due to the increased stress on the horse's legs. Your horse may want to gallop up hills, but walking is much more of a workout!
- 🐾 **Intervals**, or short sets of fast-paced work separated by a short walk, can be ridden in the trot, canter or (for fitter horses) gallop. Over time, the length of the sets can be gradually increased.
- 🐾 **Correct flatwork**, with lots of **transitions** and **ring figures**, can improve the horse's suppleness and muscle tone. **Lateral maneuvers**, where the horse steps sideways as well as forward, build strength, flexibility and balance.
- 🐾 **For experienced riders and trainers, correct longeing** (with the horse bending and moving through the back) is a good way to build strength and suppleness.
- 🐾 **Ground poles or cavaletti** encourage the horse to lift his back and flex his joints, developing his balance and strength. *Grids of poles must be carefully measured to match the horse's stride.*
- 🐾 **Gymnastic jumping exercises**, with low fences spaced closely together, can also be used occasionally to condition horses for all disciplines.



As you ride, it is important to monitor your horse's ability to handle the work.

If he cannot recover his regular heart rate and respiration after 5-10 minutes of rest, he is exercising too hard and needs to scale back until he is stronger!



Conditioning for the rider:

- 🐾 One of the best ways to condition for riding is by **cross-training**. Many athletic activities such as dance, martial arts, and organized sports complement your in-saddle exercise. Aerobic exercise such as running, swimming or cycling will improve your stamina and build leg strength.
- 🐾 **Regular stretching** exercises, such as yoga poses, help with balance, flexibility and core strength.
- 🐾 In the saddle, the best two things a rider can do to improve fitness is to ride in **two-point position**, off the horse's back, and **without stirrups**. Start with just a minute or two and gradually increase the time.

The Right Fit

Before your horse can get fit, you'll need to make sure his **tack is fitted carefully**. Have you ever worn a pair of shoes that were too small? Imagine wearing these shoes while being made to run and jump hurdles with someone on your back!

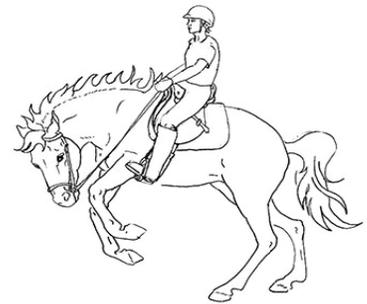
Many behavior problems such as bucking, rearing and resistance to moving forward can be associated with improperly fitted tack.

Asking the horse to work in ill-fitting tack is unfair at best, and can be cruel or dangerous!

Some pieces of tack can be fitted once and keep that adjustment for a lifetime. This usually includes **bridles, bits, halters, protective boots** and **horse blankets**.

Other pieces, such as **saddles** and **girths**, require their fit to be constantly evaluated. A horse can change shape multiple times in a single year due to fluctuations in weight and muscling.

You'll need to learn how to tell if your tack fits and get in the habit of checking regularly. It should be one of **the first things you look at if your horse starts behaving oddly**, especially if he is short-strided, reluctant to move forward, or cranky about saddling.



Your horse can't say "Ouch!" unless he acts it out!

Size matters

Tack comes in several different sizes, with occasionally confusing labeling. Before you go shopping, it's a good idea to familiarize yourself with some basic information on how different pieces of tack are sized.

Saddles are sized by their **trees**, which usually come in **narrow, medium/regular, and wide**. Your horse's weight, muscling, breed type and conformation will determine the size that he needs. Just like human clothing, all brands can fit a little differently. Some saddles come with an adjustable plates that allow you to increase or decrease the width of the **gullet**, or the channel clearing the horse's spine.

A saddle also needs to fit the rider. Seat size is measured from the front screw of an English saddle's pommel to the cantle. Children usually ride in a 14"-15", while adults may need anywhere from 16.5" to 18".

Bridles and **halters** usually come in three basic sizes: **pony, cob, and horse/full**. Many horses can fit comfortably in a cob, so you will need to measure your horse carefully. Size can vary from brand to brand.

Bits are measured by their **mouthpiece**, from outer edge to outer edge. The standard bit size for horses is **5"**, but every horse is unique and a quarter of an inch can make a big difference. Some horses may also prefer a narrower or wider bit to accommodate the shape of their palate and tongue.

Girths are measured in inches. Pony sizes typically run between 30" and 40", while a large, heavy horse may wear a girth 50" or more. If you have a **dressage saddle**, or a saddle with long **billets**, you will need a shorter girth. These are usually marketed as **dressage girths** and run in sizes 20" shorter than regular girths.

Fitting a Saddle

Saddle fitting is a tricky science—entire books have been written on the subject. Ideally, you should have your horse and saddle looked at by a **qualified saddle fitter**. If there are no fitters near you, or you cannot afford one, there are several things you can look for to decide if a saddle fits correctly:



The light shows the saddle is not touching the horse's spine.

- 🐾 The saddle should **sit level and balanced** on the horse's back, **behind the shoulder blades and in front of the final rib**. If you place a pencil on the seat and allow it to roll, it should stop directly in the center of the saddle.
- 🐾 Both the **front and the rear panels should rest evenly against the horse**. You should be able to run your flat hand underneath the panels all the way around without encountering tight spots or gaps. Uneven contact can cause **bridging**, which creates painful pressure points on the horse's back.
- 🐾 You should be able to **look down the gullet** of the saddle from the rear and **see daylight**. A saddle that sits on the horse's spine should NOT be used!

- 🐾 You should be able to fit **three fingers, turned sideways, between the pommel and your horse's withers**. More space than this indicates that the saddle is **too narrow** - this is often accompanied by pinching in the shoulder area, or the saddle may be tipped to the rear. Less space suggests that the saddle is **too wide**. Test this while you are sitting in the saddle, since many saddles compress under the rider's weight.



- 🐾 After your horse has a workout, take a look at the **sweat mark** underneath the saddle. It should be uniformly wet. **Dry or ruffled patches** can indicate areas of uneven pressure that might make your horse sore.
- 🐾 The saddle **should not rock or shift when the horse is in motion**. The panels should maintain even contact, not pop up off the horse's back.
- 🐾 **Girths should reach the middle holes on each of your billet straps**, leaving a couple of holes above and below on each side.

Some extra padding



A foam riser pad can balance a saddle that tips too far to the rear - but check that the saddle isn't too narrow first!

When you try a saddle on a horse, you should **evaluate it without a pad at first**. While special saddle pads and **half-pads** can be used to correct a balance issue, or to help the saddle sit more comfortably on the horse's back, **they won't fix a poorly-fitted saddle**, as they usually just increase the pressure.

Some saddles come with foam pads called **shims** that can be used to fine-tune the fit. **Riser pads** or **lift-front pads** change the balance of a saddle, while **withers relief pads** allow more space for bony withers.

If the saddle seems to fit well but slides back as the horse works, he may need to wear a piece of tack called a **breastplate**.

Fitting Horsey Headgear

Fitting a bridle can be just as important for the horse's comfort, especially when it comes to the bit. Here are some guidelines to use when evaluating the fit of horsey headgear:

- 🐾 The **cheekpieces** should be adjusted so that the bit rests against the corners of the horse's lips, on the **bars** of the mouth and away from their teeth. Male horses have more teeth than mares and must be fitted particularly carefully.
- 🐾 For most **snaffle bits**, there should be **two soft wrinkles** in corners of the horse's mouth, near the bit ring. Bits with **leverage**, including **curbs** or combination bits such as **Kimberwickes** or **Pelhams**, are designed to sit slightly lower, showing one soft wrinkle.
- 🐾 There should be approximately **1/4"** of bit showing on either side of the horse's mouth. It should not pinch the corners, or slide sideways through the horse's mouth when pressure is applied to a rein.
- 🐾 Adjust the **throatlatch** until you can **fit one fist between the horse's throat - not cheek! - and the strap**. Too tight, and it will restrict your horse's breathing; too loose, and the bridle may slip off over your horse's ears. Make sure the **browband sits level beneath the horse's ears** - a crooked browband can affect the fit of the throatlatch.



- 🐾 For **all other straps**, you should be able to just fit **two fingers**, turned sideways, between the horse's head and the bridle.
- 🐾 The **noseband** should sit level on the horse's nose, high enough that it sits on solid bone, and not on the delicate cartilage above your horse's muzzle. You should be able to place **two fingers between the noseband and the protruding edge of your horse's cheekbone**.
- 🐾 If the bit has a **curb chain or strap**, it should be rotated until it lies **flat**, fastened under the horse's **chin groove**, and adjusted so that you can fit **two fingers** underneath.

Halter fit matters, too

Halters should be fitted similarly to bridles, with the noseband resting **two fingers below the horse's cheekbone**. You should not be able to fit more than **three sideways fingers between the bridge of the nose and the noseband**. Rope halters should be fitted similarly, with the smaller knot at the bottom of the halter resting directly under the horse's throat, not cheek or jaw.

It is easy to develop sloppy haltering habits, and many horses wear halters that are too big or too loose. **Improper halter fit can be dangerous**, however. The halter may slip off the horse's head if he pulls back, or he may catch a dangling noseband on a protruding object - including his own hind hoof if he tries to scratch an ear! Try to buy halters that are adjustable at the noseband as well as crownpiece. If your halter hangs too low even on the highest hole, you can use a **leather punch** to add holes to the crownpiece.



First Aid Kits

Horses are accident-prone creatures—if there is a way for them to hurt themselves, they will find it. While there are many injuries and ailments that require veterinary attention, as we learned in **Yellow Level**, you can handle minor issues such as bruising, small cuts and abrasions yourself.

In order to do this, you'll need a well-stocked first-aid kit.

Let's take a look at some basic supplies that every horse owner should have on hand:

Wound care



Antibacterial scrub is often made with one part **Betadine** solution to one part antibacterial liquid soap. Used for disinfecting wounds. Hydrogen peroxide can damage tissues and cause a painful sting, so it's not recommended for use on horses.



Antibacterial topical agent for dressing wounds. It is a good idea to have both a powder, such as **Wonder Dust**, and a cream. You can buy wound cream designed specifically for horses but **triple antibiotic ointment** from the drugstore works just as well.



Rubber or latex gloves keep hands clean and help prevent the spread of germs. It is a particularly good idea to wear gloves when handling open wounds, or applying a medication that could be absorbed through your skin.



Large syringes can be used for irrigating dirty wounds as well as flushing out the horse's mouth and administering oral medication.



4" x 4" sterile gauze squares, which can be used for cleaning wounds as well as creating a padded dressing. **Sanitary napkins** also make a good dressing material, especially for wounds that bleed heavily.



Roll of absorbent cotton can be used to cover a wound and stop bleeding. Read labels carefully - not all cotton can be applied to an open wound. **Sheet cotton**, for example, contains many small fibers and is only useful for bandaging over a dressing. **Gamgee** is a good choice.



Tweezers can be used for picking debris out of contaminated wounds as well as tick removal.



Isopropyl alcohol is for disinfecting tools. Do not use on an open wound - it will sting, potentially causing the horse to kick, and can damage healing tissue!



Before treating any wound, be sure to review guidelines for whether or not you need to call your vet. If in doubt, always check with a knowledgeable horseperson first! Some injuries, such as puncture wounds or cuts across tendons or joints, may look minor at first glance, but can develop dangerous infections without proper treatment.

Stock Up

First aid kits should be kept **clean, labeled** and **easily accessible**. It is a good idea to inventory your kit every couple of months and replace items that are running low. Here are a few more items you will want to keep at the ready:

Bandaging basics



Appropriate padding for 2-4 stable wraps. Must be thick, clean, and sized to fit the horse's legs. Washable quilted pads are easiest, but you can make your own with rolled sheet cotton.



Stable bandages. Standard stable bandages come in 9' lengths and are washable. New bandages come rolled incorrectly, with the Velcro on the outside, so you will need to reroll them before using!



Self-adhesive bandage, such as Vetrap. Useful for bandaging hooves and other hard-to-wrap areas. Can also be used for stable bandages, but is not reusable.



Roll of gauze bandage for securing wound dressings before wrapping over them with a stable bandage.



Baby diapers, preferably infant sized, can be used in making a temporary hoof boot (often used when the horse has an abscess).



Duct tape creates a waterproof layer on the bottom of temporary hoof boots. You should also have a roll of **masking tape** or **adhesive tape** for securing tricky bandages and dressings.



Bandage scissors allow you to safely remove hoof wraps and dressings.

A few other essentials



Epsom salts are used for soaking bruised or abscessed hooves.



Drawing salve and/or poultice clay for drawing infection out of abscesses or swollen legs. Poultices are often applied to the legs with a **brown paper** dressing.



Equine eye wash or saline solution for flushing out irritated eyes. In a pinch, sterile bottled water can also be used.



6" inch section of flexible tubing, such as a garden hose, to insert in horse's nasal passages to prevent suffocation in case of extreme swelling or anaphylactic shock.



Thermometer, veterinary or digital with string and clip. It is also helpful to have a **stethoscope** on hand for accurate readings of pulse.



Petroleum jelly for greasing the thermometer and waterproofing chapped pasterns and dressed wounds.

Bandaging Basics

Bandaging, or wrapping, is a useful HorseSense skill, and an important one to learn to do correctly. There are many different kind of bandages, including **shipping bandages**, **hoof wraps**, and **polo wraps** or other **exercise bandages**. Let's start by learning about one of the most important: the **stable bandage**.

Why would you need to do a stable bandage?

- 🐾 **The horse has a wound on the lower leg** that needs to be dressed and covered to prevent infection.
- 🐾 **The horse has a tendon injury** and needs additional support.
- 🐾 **Stable bandages can prevent stocking up**, or a build-up of fluid in the horse's lower legs. This often happens when horses that are used to living out are kept in a stall, at a show or due to an injury.
- 🐾 **If you don't have shipping boots or bandages**, stable bandages can be used along with **bell boots** to protect the horse's legs while **traveling in a trailer**.



What do you need to apply this bandage?

- 🐾 **2-4 rolled pads**, just long enough to reach from the bottom of the horse's knee to the bottom of the fetlock joint. Pads compress around the horse's leg, evening the pressure and protecting the tendons. They may be made of quilted cotton, sheet cotton, or covered foam.
- 🐾 **2-4 stable bandages**, knit bandages 9' to 12' long. Buy wraps designed specifically for this purpose, which will have just the right amount of stretch. Self-adhesive bandages can be used but are not reusable and easy to over-tighten. Fleece polo wraps have the opposite problem and do not make a good stable bandage.

Some general bandaging rules:

- 🐾 **Right legs should be wrapped in a clockwise direction, and left legs counterclockwise.** This helps keep most of the pressure against the cannon bones, instead of the delicate tendons.
- 🐾 **Wrap snugly.** Leave just enough room to slip 1-2 fingers under the bandage.
- 🐾 **Make sure your fasteners are no tighter than the bandage itself.** Indentations in the finished wrap show areas of increased pressure that may damage your horse's tendons.
- 🐾 **Always squat next to your horse's legs, instead of sitting or kneeling.** If they move suddenly, you need to be able to get out of the way!



Keep your knees off the ground as you wrap!

Wrap It Up

Correctly applied bandages can mean the difference between a lame horse and a sound horse. **However, incorrectly applied bandages can ruin your horse's legs.** Learn under the supervision of a knowledgeable horseperson, and plan on spending plenty of time practicing before your skills are put to the test!

How to apply a stable bandage:

Before you start, assemble your supplies in an easy-to-reach place. Make sure stable bandages are rolled tightly with the Velcro on the inside! Safely tie or cross-tie your horse, or ask someone to hold him. The horse's legs should be clean before bandaging.



1. Starting on the outside of the cannon bone, wrap your padding snugly around the horse's lower leg. The padding should sit just under the knee and cover the fetlock joint.



2. Secure the end of the bandage under the edge of the padding, about 2/3 of the way up. Wrap once around. Be sure to roll off the *back* of the bandage.



3. Wrap downward toward the fetlock, leaving just 1/2" of padding showing at the bottom. With every wrap, pull the bandage snugly against the cannon bone.



4. Wrap back up towards the top of the padding, leaving another 1/2" to 1" of padding showing. You can use your other hand to smooth out wrinkles as you go.



5. Fasten the Velcro tab at the top of the leg. Ideally, it will end up on the outside of the bandage, where the horse can't pull it loose. Getting the Velcro to the right spot takes practice!



6. The finished bandage. **Wrap legs in pairs** to provide support for the uninjured leg. *Stable bandages should be removed and rewrapped every 12 hours.*

Wrap evenly, taking the time to smooth out lumps and wrinkles as you go.

If you drop the bandage, or your padding loosens and slips, it's best to take the whole wrap off, reroll the bandage, and try again.

Over-tightening, uneven pressure and sagging bandages can all damage the horse's tendons!

Vital Signs

As you learned in Yellow Level, your horse's **vital signs** are important indicators of his health and condition. You'll want to practice taking and recording your horse's vitals so you can do it confidently and quickly in an emergency.

Vital signs include:

- 🐾 **Temperature**
- 🐾 **Pulse**, or resting rate of heartbeats per minute
- 🐾 **Respiration**, or resting rate of breaths per minute

Every horse has a slightly different "normal" - a slight fever for one horse might be a healthy temperature for another. Conditions such as extreme heat can also change a horse's resting rates. It is a good idea to take your horse's vitals several different times. Average the results to get an accurate idea of his normal range.

A horse's normal TPR can **increase significantly during exercise**. A horse's heart can beat over 200 times per minute during intense work!



At rest means the horse is standing still and completely relaxed.



Other vital signs you should check routinely:

- 🐾 **Mucous membranes, such as gums.** They should be moist and pink, not red, purple or white.
- 🐾 **Capillary refill**, or the time it takes for the gums to regain normal color after pressed with a thumb. A capillary refill slower than 2 seconds can indicate dehydration.
- 🐾 **Gut sounds** indicate the digestive tract is active. If you press your ear against the horse's flank, you should hear some continual quiet growls and a couple of big gurgles each minute.

Routinely checking your horse's vital signs can help you spot early signs of trouble.

If the horse is ill, this might save his life.

Abnormal vitals can indicate **colic, laminitis, toxic plant poisoning**, and other serious ailments. Monitoring your horse's TPR can also help you track and increase his fitness and avoid overwork.

Average TPR ranges:

Temperature: 99° to 101° Fahrenheit

Pulse: 30-48 beats per minute

Respiration: 8-20 breaths per minute

Taking TPR

To take your horse's TPR, you need a **digital or veterinary thermometer**, a **watch** or **smartphone** with a **stopwatch function** or second hand, and a **stethoscope** (optional). You will also need a notepad and pen, or some other way of recording your measurements.

It is a good idea to take a horse's TPR in reverse order: respiration, then pulse, then temperature.

If the horse gets excited or nervous, his numbers will elevate - and having a thermometer inserted into his rectum can do this easily!

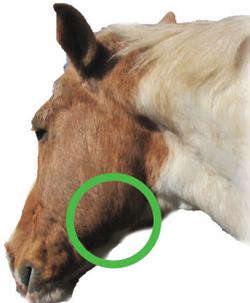
Respiration



Make sure the horse is cool, calm and relaxed, preferably tied standing at ease in his stall. **Watch his flanks** and count the number of times they move in and out (one breath) in fifteen seconds. Multiply this number by four to get the total number of breaths per minute.

Stand well away from the horse's nostrils as you count breaths. The horse may sniff at you with interest, which will change his normal breathing pattern.

Pulse



Place your fingertips on the inside edge of your horse's **jawbone**. Avoid using your thumb, which has a pulse of its own. Locate the **facial artery**, which feels like a piece of string where it crosses the jawbone. Press the artery **lightly** against the bone to restrict the blood flow and make the pulse tap against your fingers.

Once you can feel the pulse, record the number of beats in fifteen seconds and multiply by four to get the total number of beats per minute. You can also use a **stethoscope**, placed **deep under your horse's left elbow**, but as you may not have one available in an emergency, it is best to practice with the facial artery.

Temperature



Remove the thermometer from the case, check that it is clean, and grease it with **petroleum jelly**. If you are using a veterinary thermometer, shake it until the mercury is below 97° Fahrenheit. If you are using a digital thermometer, press the button and wait until it says "Lo," or follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Stand to the **side** of your horse's hindquarters and lift his tail, sliding the thermometer about two-thirds of the way into his **rectum**. Hold the end firmly! It is a good idea use a **string and clip** to attach the thermometer to his tail - this prevents it from falling or getting sucked into the horse's body.

If using a mercury thermometer, wait two to three minutes before removing and reading. Wipe your thermometer down with alcohol to disinfect it when finished.

Don't forget to write your numbers down!

Post your horse's normal vital signs in your barn, next to your veterinarian's phone number.

Weighing In

In order to safely administer any equine medication, including a deworming agent, you must first know how much your horse weighs. You can find this out for yourself using a **weight tape**, available at most tack and feed stores.

No scale required

To measure your horse for weight, wrap the tape around the horse in the area of the **heartgirth**. The top of the tape will fall over or just behind the withers, depending on the horse's conformation, and the bottom will loop under their belly right behind their elbow.

Make sure that it lies smooth and flat, and pull the end against the lines marking off approximate weight in pounds. If the numbers don't make sense, check that you are using the right end of the tape!



Most average-sized horses weigh between 900 and 1100 lbs.

Ponies weigh less, and draft horses weigh much more - some can literally weigh a ton!



Weight tapes give you a general estimate - enough to calculate dosage - but can sometimes be off by as much as 100 lbs. If you want to calculate the horse's exact weight, and are prepared to do a bit of math, you can use a soft measuring tape and the following formula:

$$\frac{[\text{Girth (in)} \times \text{Girth (in)} \times \text{Body Length (in)}]}{330} = \text{Weight (lb)}$$

Most weight tapes can also be used **measure your horse for height**. Follow the directions printed on the tape (most will have you stand with your toe on a line) and pull the tape up straight, making a **right angle** to the horse's withers instead of wrapping around the horse.

Again, the tape may not be exactly accurate, but you can estimate the height within an inch or two. A **measuring stick** designed for horses will give you the most accurate reading.



A perfect score

A horse's weight can fluctuate throughout the year, depending on his workload and diet. Many horses need additional calories to maintain weight in the winter, for example.

A weight tape technically can help you track this, but it is more common to keep track of a horse's weight using a **body condition score**. **A healthy horse falls between 5 and 7** on this chart, which evaluates the amount and location of visible body fat.

An Ounce of Prevention

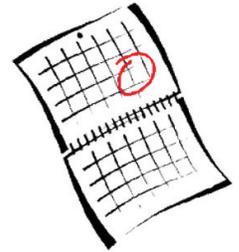
The phrase “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” is especially true when it comes to horses.

Routine health care, such as **immunizations** and regular **dental work**, can save you and your horse from pain, heartache and big vet bills.

Make a plan

A horse’s preventative health care should be scheduled with input from your veterinarian. In general, it should include:

- Annual or biannual wellness exam.** The vet will examine your horse’s overall condition, including his weight, teeth, heart and lungs.
- Parasite control** includes regular **fecal testing** and **deworming**.
- Vaccinations** are given to horses annual, biannually, or four times a year, depending on where you live and what diseases the horse might be exposed to.
- Coggins testing** is required in most states to show that your horse is free of **equine infectious anemia**.
- Dental work** may need to be performed once or twice a year by your vet or equine dentist.
- Hoof trimming and/or shoeing** occurs most frequently, usually every four to eight weeks.



Keeping up with your horse’s routine care can prevent:



-  **Serious illness.** Most unvaccinated horses that get tetanus or rabies die.
-  **Colic.** As you learned in **Yellow Level**, colic is a dangerous digestive ailment that can be caused by a heavy parasite load or poor health.
-  **Weight loss** occurs in horses with parasite infestation or bad teeth.
-  **Lameness.** Horses with overgrown or unhealthy hooves can become chronically or permanently lame.

Make notes

Managing a horse’s care requires careful record-keeping. Even if you don’t have a horse of your own, you can learn how to plan - and budget! - for a horse’s routine health care needs by starting a **record book**.

The best way to do this is to get a loose-leaf binder, to which you can add health papers, receipts, show records and copies of other important documents. Make sure to include:

- Horse information** including name, age, physical description and photos
- Contact information** including vet, farrier, and any other equine professionals you use
- Normal vital signs**, known allergies or medical conditions
- Vaccination schedule**, including date of Coggins test
- Deworming schedule**, including fecal test results and types of dewormers used
- Farrier schedule**, including treatment regimen for any hoof conditions
- Feed chart**, including list of feed and supplement suppliers
- Conditioning schedule** and show records, if applicable

The War Against Worms

While much of your horse's routine health care should be done by professionals such as your veterinarian and farrier, a few things—like parasite prevention—you can take care of yourself.

All horses carry internal parasites, often referred to as worms.

Worm larvae emerge from horse manure and reinfect the horse as he grazes.

As you might expect, internal parasites can cause a number of health problems in horses, including weight loss, poor coat and condition, and even life-threatening colic—but you can reduce this risk by keeping the parasite load at a manageable level.



The poop scoop

Veterinarians *used* to recommend deworming with a **chemical paste** or **gel** every 6-8 weeks, rotating between different classes of drugs. Now that parasites are showing an increased resistance to these drugs, deworming programs have changed. Many vets suggest **targeted deworming** two to four times a year.

The best way to determine what your horse needs is to have your vet perform a **fecal test**. These tests count the number of parasite eggs in manure to show the type and amount of the parasites in the horse's body. This allows you to choose the best dewormer and frequency of deworming for your horse.

A few parasites - including tapeworms and bots - don't show up on fecal tests.

You should talk to your veterinarian about the best plan for targeting these parasites.



Giving the horse any kind of oral medication can be tricky. You can use a clean and empty dewormer tube or a syringe and practice with applesauce to help you and your horse get comfortable.

1. Start by measuring your horse to find out his **approximate weight**. **Rotate the dial** on the dewormer to the appropriate dosage for his weight, and lock it in place.
2. Put a **halter** on your horse, and stand by the side of his head.
3. Insert the **dewormer tube into the corner of his mouth**. Push it toward the back of his tongue, as far as possible, before depressing the plunger. Many horses try to spit it out, so be prepared to hold his head up until he swallows.



While chemical dewormers are generally considered safe, they can cause digestive upsets and complications in very young, very old, and debilitated horses.

Be sure to consult with your veterinarian before starting any deworming program with a horse, and adjust your schedule and dosage accordingly!

The Horse Doctor Is In

The veterinarian visits your horse at least once a year to perform the **vaccinations**, also known as **immunizations** or **shots**, required for your area. How often you have these done depends on the part of the country you live in and how frequently your horse travels/is exposed to other horses.

Needle work

Vaccinations prevent your horse from contracting diseases by stimulating the horse's immune system to produce the **antibodies** needed to fight the disease. Your veterinarian can help you decide what vaccinations are appropriate for your horse, but here are a few shots most horses receive on an annual or semi-annual basis:



- 🐾 **Rabies.** Rabies is a particularly dangerous disease that is passed on by infected saliva. Humans can contract it as well!
- 🐾 **Sleeping sickness.** Equine encephalomyelitis, also known as sleeping sickness, is a virus that infects the brain. There are different types: Eastern, Western, and Venezuelan, abbreviated as **EEE/WEE/VEE**.
- 🐾 **Tetanus.** Also known as lockjaw, tetanus is caused by bacteria entering the horse's bloodstream, usually by way of a deep puncture wound.
- 🐾 **Influenza.** Horses can also contract flu, especially if they are exposed to large groups of horses, such as at a show or sale.

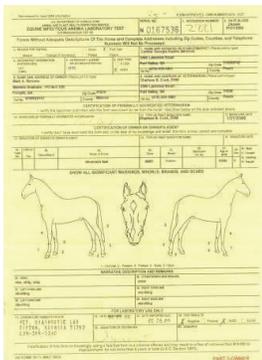
Other diseases your vet may recommend vaccinating for include **West Nile, strangles, rhinopneumonitis,** and/or **Potomac horse fever.**

What is a Coggins test?

Your vet will also draw a sample of your horse's blood once a year for a test called a Coggins test. This proves that the horse is free from a disease called **equine infectious anemia**, also known as EIA or swamp fever.

EIA is transmitted by flies or mosquitoes, and is usually fatal. There is no cure, but stringent testing requirements have helped to almost eradicate the disease in North America.

Most stables and show grounds require a horse to have a negative Coggins test drawn within the last twelve months. Some states require this along with additional health paperwork before your horse is allowed to travel over state lines.



Most vaccinations are scheduled in the spring and/or fall, to coincide with mosquito activity and horse show seasons.

It is a good idea to schedule your vaccinations, Coggins test and exams at the same time. Vets charge a call fee to visit your farm, which can make your bills add up in a hurry!

Open Wide

Your horse should also have his teeth examined once or twice a year, either by your veterinarian or by an **equine dentist**. A horse doesn't need routine cleaning or fluoride treatments - instead, his teeth will be checked for **wear** and **balance**.

Inside the horse's mouth

Most horses have 36 to 40 teeth: **incisors** in the front, **premolars** and **molars** in the back. The **canine teeth**, if present, emerge in between, close to the space where the bit rests in the horse's mouth.

The incisors are used for tearing at grass, while the premolars and molars do all the chewing. **Because horses are grazing animals, designed to chew continuously, their teeth also grow out continuously.**



Fun fact: You can estimate a horse's age by looking at his teeth.

Horses lose their baby teeth by age five.

The angle, color and surface of adult teeth change gradually as the horse grows older.

Horses chew in a circular motion. In a healthy, balanced mouth, the teeth wear down at the same rate that they grow. If something happens to interrupt the chewing pattern, such as a loss of a tooth, the horse can develop **slanting, sharp edges** or **hooks** on the surface of his teeth.

It is very difficult for you to see the molars yourself. Some horses need a mild sedative to have their teeth examined and rebalanced. For this reason, dental work should always be left in the hands of a qualified professional.



What does the dentist do?

A dentist or veterinarian will examine the horse's teeth for abnormal wear, cracks or infection. If the horse's teeth are not able to chew optimally, the dentist will use large files to smooth away excess growth and sharp surfaces. This is called **floating**.

A horse with a healthy mouth may not need floating every year, but should still get an exam. Old horses usually start losing their teeth around the age of twenty. They may need more frequent check-ups and/or a soft food diet.

A horse's teeth are an essential part of his health and comfort.

Dental problems can cause weight loss, difficulty chewing, resistance to bridling, crooked or abnormal gaits, and tension or discomfort under saddle.

No Hoof, No Horse

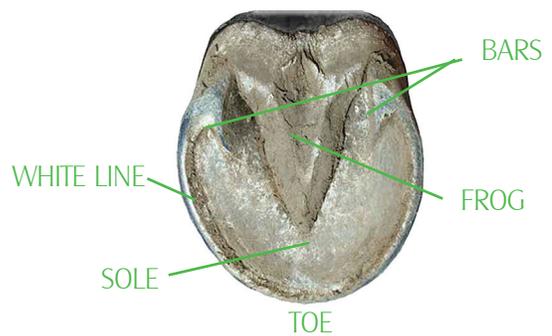
Horses spend most of their lives on their feet, and strong, balanced hooves are critical for a horse's health and happiness. While a qualified **farrier** should take care of your hoof trimming and shoeing needs, you should have a basic understanding of how horse's hooves work and how to keep them healthy.

To shoe or not to shoe?

Whether or not a horse wears shoes depends on his workload, the condition of his hooves, and his environment. Many horses can live **barefoot** happily and productively, provided that their diet and living conditions support it.

Shoes or **boots** might be required to support a lameness problem or provide extra traction in extreme sports. Some horses wear down their hooves at a faster rate than they grow and need extra protection.

HEEL BULBS



Daily care

Regular cleaning is one of the best things you can do to keep your horse's hooves in good shape. This includes daily **hoof picking**, whether you ride your horse or not.

Hooves that are exposed to wet conditions may develop nasty infections such as **thrush** (in the frog) and **white line disease** (also known as seedy toe). Affected areas are easily recognizable by their black coloring and strong smell, and can be treated with a number of different antibacterial and antifungal products.



Time for a trim

It is best to stay on a regular schedule with your farrier, but here are some signs that a hoof is ready for a trim:

- 🐾 **Long toes**
- 🐾 **Cracks** or **ragged hoof wall**
- 🐾 Hoof **flares**, or dishes outward
- 🐾 Hoof wall **worn unevenly**
- 🐾 Horse **stumbles** or **forges** (knocks front hoof with back toe)

Shod horses may show all of the above signs, as well as a few more:

- 🐾 **Clinches** (folded ends of horseshoe nails) pop away from the wall of the hoof
- 🐾 Hoof **grows over the edge** of the shoe
- 🐾 **Nails loosen**; shoe may **wiggle** on hoof

Try to avoid waiting until the shoe is loose or missing nails before calling your farrier. Your horse may go lame if he throws a shoe, or he might tear off a bit of hoof along with it!



Flaring often occurs when the horse's toe is too long.



Clinches are pushed away from the wall as hoof expands.

All In a Day's Work

Keeping horses healthy and happy is a lot of work. If your horse is boarded, then the barn staff may do some or all of the work for you - but **knowing how to care for a horse yourself is important**, especially if you want to take your horse to shows, or think you might like to keep a horse at home someday.

Let's take a look at some of the responsibilities that come along with horse ownership, starting with some basic **stable management**.

What care do horses need EVERY day?



Watering includes checking and refilling water containers at least once a day (twice is better), and **dumping or scrubbing buckets and troughs** as needed.



Forage should make up most of the horse's diet, and provide them with the ability to graze or chew steadily throughout the day. If you have good-quality pasture, that can take care of your forage needs most of the year. You may need to **feed hay** if he lives in a stall part time, if his pasture is poor, or in the winter when the grass stops growing.



Supplementary feeding might include **grain, vitamins and minerals**, and **supplements**.

Most working horses need additional calories to keep their weight up. Grain should be fed in small amounts, so if your horse eats more than a pound of grain, it is best to split it into **two or more feedings**.



Horses are designed to move. Even a horse that is not being ridden needs daily **exercise**. Ideally, the horse should be **turned out** most or all of the time in a pasture or large paddock. If he has to live indoors the majority of the time, he will need daily hand-walking, longeing or riding.



Stabled horses need their **stalls cleaned** every single day. If the horse is indoors more than he is out, it's a good idea to "pick" stalls during the day, removing the big piles of manure and obvious pee spots between thorough cleanings. Run-in shelters and small paddocks need regular mucking out as well.



At least once a day, you should **groom your horse**, or at least do a close **visual inspection**. Check for cuts, scrapes, heat and swelling, especially in the legs. Clean and check the condition of the hooves. Many health problems can be avoided by catching the warning signs early.

Big barn projects

If you regularly ride or train, or keep your horse at home, you'll have some additional responsibilities:

- 🐾 **Cleaning and conditioning tack.** Inspect it regularly and make repairs promptly!
- 🐾 **Washing blankets, fly masks, saddle pads** and **protective boots/wraps**.
- 🐾 **Giving your horse an occasional bath** in hot summer months.
- 🐾 **Regularly inspecting and mowing pastures** and **checking fence lines**.
- 🐾 **Barn cleaning**, including removing cobwebs, stripping stalls, and clearing drains.

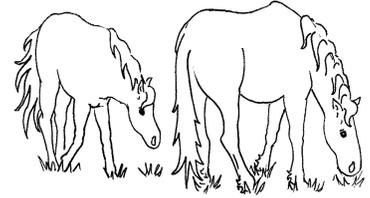


In or Out?

There are different opinions about whether or not it is better to keep a horse stabled or pastured. **In general, it is better for the horse to live outside** as much as possible - but the horse's needs often must be balanced with the need to maintain property.

Benefits of turnout:

- 🐾 The horse **lives as nature intended**: constantly moving and foraging in a herd. This **reduces his stress**, making him calmer and easier to handle, and can prevent stable vices such as wood chewing and pawing.
- 🐾 The horse gets most of his calories from pasture grass or hay, eaten slowly around the day. This **improves his digestive health** and can reduce your feed bill.
- 🐾 Due to the increased movement, the horse **maintains fitness** more easily and is less likely to be injured during riding or training.
- 🐾 **Hoof health is generally improved** as damp shavings can be a breeding ground for bacteria.
- 🐾 You can **save time and money** because you don't have to clean stalls every day!



If you have enough land (preferably one to two acres per horse), it is mentally and physically healthier for horses to live outdoors - but they must have some kind of shelter.



A simple three-sided **run-in shed** that protects against prevailing winds is a good choice, as long as there is plenty of room for the horses to move around inside. Some barns allow horses free access to open stalls. A thick stand of trees can provide shade and a windbreak, but is less safe during storms.

Drawbacks of turnout:

- 🐾 Without good management, **the horse can destroy grazing areas** by eating the grass down to the roots and tearing up soft ground.
- 🐾 **Grooming can be a much bigger job**, as the horse will get muddy, sun bleached, or tick-infested.
- 🐾 It takes **extra time to catch your horse** before a ride, especially if he is in a large pasture.
- 🐾 **Pasture accidents** can occasionally occur from rough or exuberant play. Pastures must be maintained carefully to reduce risk of injury.
- 🐾 Horses may need **extra protection from bugs or sun**.



The compromise requires most suburban horses to live in a stall part time, with daily turnout in a paddock or pasture. How much time your horse spends outside each day is referred to as his **turnout schedule**. A horse might be **turned out during the day or the night**. There are advantages and disadvantages to each of these routines as well. You will learn more about managing turnout in **Purple Level**.

Seasonal Care

Each season brings its own special horse care challenges. Here are some extra duties you may have to perform depending on the time of year:

Winter

Horses need **plenty of hay** to keep warm and to maintain their weight, which means supplementing pastures with good-quality round bales or several square bales daily. They are also **less likely to drink water** when it is very cold, making dehydration and colic a big winter risk. **Troughs should be kept ice-free** by use of flotation devices or electric de-icers, or you can install freeze-proof automatic waterers.

Some horses require blanketing in cold or wet weather. This means monitoring weather forecasts and making appropriate decisions about type and weight of blankets. (Remember that an overheated, sweaty horse is worse off than a horse with no blanket at all!)



Inspect hay carefully for mold, strings or toxic weeds.

Spring

Lush green grass can be problematic for many horses, especially if they have been kept off of better pastures during the muddy months of winter. Horses should be introduced to new pasture slowly, an hour at a time. They may need a **grazing muzzle** to prevent **laminitis**, a painful inflammation of the hooves caused by an overdose of simple carbohydrates.



As the weather warms, **shedding coats** will mean **extra grooming time!** Horses that have been out of work over the winter will need **conditioning** to prepare for spring shows or trail rides.

Summer

Horses are easily stressed by heat, and need **extra water and salt** during the hottest months of the year. It is important that they have some **shade** available to them, even if they live outdoors. Many barns turn horses out to graze at night when it is cooler and keep them indoors during the hot part of the day.



Stalls can be equipped with fans, and horses should be hosed off if they sweat heavily, using a sweat scraper to remove excess water. **Flies** are at their peak in the summer, which means defending your horse with fly masks and repellent.

Fall

Frosty nights and sunny days often cause a **spike in pasture sugar levels**, similar to spring grass, which means sensitive horses may need grazing muzzles or reduced pasture time until after the grass dies off.

Bot flies usually begin laying their eggs in the early fall. The eggs look like small yellow seeds, found on your horse's legs, mane and belly. You can **remove the eggs** with a bot knife, grooming block or a piece of sandpaper to prevent your horse from swallowing them and becoming infested.



Buzz Off

If you live in a warm climate, one of your biggest horse care challenges will involve flies. Biting insects are attracted to the taste of horses, and without a thorough **fly control program** they will quickly make both you and your horse miserable!

Keep it clean



House and stable flies love horse manure, so good stable management practices go a long way towards making your barn less fly-friendly. In addition to **daily mucking and stall-picking**, manure in pastures should be managed through either regular removal or **mowing and dragging**. **Manure piles** should be located as far away from the barn as possible, and frequently hauled off for spreading or composting.

Flies also like food, including horse grain. Make sure all **feed is secured in airtight containers**, and **clean up spilled grain** immediately. **Wash feed pans** and buckets regularly to remove sticky residue left by grain and saliva. Use **trash cans with lids**, and don't leave unwrapped food or uncovered drinks in the barn.

Cover up

Flies and gnats often swarm around horses' faces, targeting the delicate skin around the eyes and inside the ears. Most horses are grateful for a **fly mask** in the spring and summer months. Fly masks must be fitted carefully, and the horse's face should be groomed regularly and checked for sores. You can also purchase lightweight **sheets** and **leg wraps** designed specifically to keep flies away.



Chemical warfare



For immediate relief, and to keep your horse bug-free and focused during your summer rides, you can spray him with **fly repellent**. There are many different kinds of fly spray available; some kill flies on contact, while others are made of more natural ingredients that discourage flies from landing. In general, it is best to use the least toxic option that is effective for you and your horse.

There are several **feed-through supplements** for fly control on the market. Some change the smell and taste of your horse's sweat, making him less appealing to flies. Others prevent larvae from fully forming in manure, preventing reproduction.

Home defense

An environmentally-friendly method of killing flies involves **fly predators**, or tiny wasps that live off fly larvae, killing flies before they hatch. You can arrange to have predators shipped monthly through the mail, and sprinkle them in stalls, manure pits and other areas flies frequently. While a bit more expensive than other fly control options, predators can drastically reduce the number of flies on your farm within a year.

Adult flies can be managed with **sticky tape** and **traps**. There are **fly poisons** available, but these **must** be kept away from other animals, including birds and barn cats.



Year at a Glance

It is useful to have a master calendar that shows you what routine health care work needs to be scheduled over the course of a year. Making this calendar is a great planning exercise if you are preparing for a horse of your own. Choose a school horse, or invent an imaginary horse of your own, and determine what his health care schedule would look like.

Make sure to include:

- Vaccinations and Coggins test
- Deworming
- Regular hoof trimming and/or shoeing
- Dental care

MONTH	VET/DENTIST	HOOF CARE	DEWORMING
January			
February			
March			
April			
May			
June			
July			
August			
September			
October			
November			
December			

Test Yourself

In order to earn a **Green HorseSense** ribbon, you need to be able to **discuss your knowledge** and **demonstrate hands-on skills** such as bandaging. Sometimes you may feel like you know the material inside out, but as soon as you open your mouth your mind goes blank! It can be helpful to **practice explaining each subject out loud** - first to an empty room, then to your parents, friends and animals. While brushing down your horse, you can describe pony breeds, or name as many horse sports as you can think of.

Ready to give it a try? See if you can answer the following questions:

1. Name at least five different breeds you might see in the Olympic games.
2. What do a Saddlebred, a Tennessee Walker, and an Icelandic Horse all have in common?
3. What is the difference between hunter jumping and show jumping?
4. In what Western sport do you ride a pattern including spins, rollbacks and sliding stops?
5. What are the three phases of eventing? Which is the most influential?
6. Name five items you should take with you on a long trail ride.
7. A group of four riders needs to cross a busy road. How can they do it safely?
8. How long will it take before your "pasture potato" can safely do an hour-long lesson?
9. What are three exercises your horse can do to improve fitness? What are three exercises *you* can do?
10. What can happen if you ride your horse in a saddle that doesn't fit?
11. How can you tell if you've adjusted your horse's halter correctly?
12. Name at least ten items that should always be in your equine first-aid kit.
13. Your horse has a small cut on his knee. What items will you pull out of your first-aid kit, and why?
14. Name three reasons why a horse might need to wear a stable bandage.
15. Why is it a bad idea to sit or kneel on the ground while wrapping your horse's legs?
16. What is the normal respiration rate for a healthy horse at rest?
17. How can you measure a horse to estimate his weight?
18. Name three reasons why it is important to know how much your horse weighs.
19. What is the best way to figure out a deworming plan for your horse?
20. What kind of shots do horses get? How frequently do they need them?
21. What is a Coggins test?
22. How often does a horse need his feet trimmed and/or reshod?
23. Name four signs of a shod horse in need of farrier care.
24. What are two common problems that horses can have with their hooves?
25. If your horse lives in a stall, name four stable management chores you will need to perform daily.
26. If your horse lives full-time in a pasture, name three things that he needs besides grass.
27. What special care might a horse need in the winter?
28. What risk is associated with the rich, new grass that grows in the spring?
29. Why is it important to remove manure from your stalls and paddocks daily?
30. Name five ways that you can control flies around your stable.

For Further Study

We hope this guide has served as a helpful companion to your Green Level education. If you are interested in learning more, look for the following resources:



Download the **full HorseSense curriculum** and get updates on **online courses**:

<https://horsesenseridingacademy.com>

Harris, Susan, 2012. **The USPC Manual of Horsemanship - D Level, 2nd ed.** One of the best how-to books of horse care and riding ever written for beginners, with simple and clear explanations and illustrations. Strong emphasis on safety, with special sections for parents.

Hill, Cherry, 2012. **Horse Care for Kids.** Easy-to-read yet packed full of detail on selecting and caring for a horse. Lots of photographs for the visual learner.



Haas, Jessie, 2017. **The Horse-Lover's Encyclopedia, 2nd ed.** This A-Z guide to everything equine will have you speaking like a horseperson in no time.

Sly, Debbie, 2018. **The Complete Book of Horses - revised ed.** Photographic guide includes information on horse breeds, colors and markings, horse care practices, and saddlery.



We have a playlist of recommended videos for Green HorseSense saved on the official **HorseSense YouTube channel** - with a library of Learning Levels videos coming soon! Search for "HorseSense Learning Levels" and go to the Playlist tab.



Follow HorseSense Learning Levels on Pinterest and browse Pins for every Level.

<https://pinterest.com/horsesenselevels/boards/>



Join our Quizlet classroom and test your horsey knowledge!

<https://quizlet.com/join/r2Vq9vMms>

Equine magazines:

Expand your horsey knowledge by subscribing to an equine periodical. Here are a few of our favorites:

www.practicalhorsemanmag.com

www.equusmagazine.com

www.horseillustrated.com

www.youngrider.com

Are you an **instructor** interested in **teaching guides, challenges** and **incentives** that can help you teach Green Level? Visit:

<https://horsesenselearninglevels.com>