CLEANING THE FEET

Inspect your horse's underpinning and clean out his feet. This is usually the first step if the horse is just leaving the stable or being readied for the show ring. Daily inspection of the feet will give you an opportunity to check on injuries, loose shoes, small stones or other objects that may have become embedded in the foot, and thrush.

Follow a procedure when cleaning the feet so that your horse will know what to expect. Most horsemen work around the horse in a counter-clockwise direction — starting with the near fore foot, then the near hind, the off hind, and off fore.

To pick up the fore foot, stand beside your horse's shoulder facing his rear. Place the hand nearest the horse on his shoulder and run your other hand gently but firmly down the back of the leg until the hand is just above the fetlock. Grasp the fetlock area with the fingers and at the same time press your other hand against the horse's shoulder, thus forcing his weight onto the opposite foreleg. Pick up the foot and support the weight of the horse's leg on your knee.

The hind foot is picked up in much the same fashion except the hind leg is usually grasped just above the fetlock on the cannon. As you press against the horse's hip with your inside hand, lift the foot directly toward you with the other hand so that the leg is bent at the hock. Then move to the rear placing your thigh underneath the fetlock so as to support his leg firmly.

Once the underside of the foot is exposed, it is rather simple to clean out and inspect the foot. Work from the heel toward the toe with your hoof pick. Most important is a good cleaning of the bottom of the commissures or depressions between the frog and the bars. The deepest part of each depression is near the heel. It is the part most often cleaned improperly, and is the usual seat of thrush.

If the wall of the foot is dry, brittle and cracked, it is wise to use a hoof dressing on the feet occasionally.

The frequency of this will depend on the condition of the feet. For most horses once a week is enough. Several good commercial hoof dressings are on the market. If your horse is going into the show ring, make sure the wall of the foot is clean. This may require washing with water and a stiff brush to remove caked mud or manure. Hoof dressing or light oil, such as neat'sfoot oil, often improves the appearance of the feet for show.

GROOMING THE BODY

After the feet have been cleaned, the body is groomed. Some horsemen will go about this job differently than others: but regardless of the procedure, the idea is to remove dirt and dust from the haircoat and skin and bring out a sheen and gloss on your horse's body. Some horsemen will use the currycomb in one hand and the brush in the other — using both tools at the same time. Others feel they can do a more thorough job if they completely curry one side of the horse and then use the brush.

The usual procedure is to start on the left or near side, beginning on the neck, then the breast, shoulder, foreleg, back, side, belly, croup, and hind leg. Then move around to the right or off side and follow the same pattern. Then complete the brushing job with the head, mane and tail.

The currycomb is an excellent tool for removing excessive mud, dirt, loose hair, and saddle marks. Unless the horse is extremely dirty, a rubber currycomb is preferred over a metal currycomb. The currycomb is never used over the bony areas — on the head and below the knees and hocks. A vigorous circular motion will prove most effective when currying. Clean the currycomb out frequently by striking it on the back of the brush or the heel of your boot.

Follow the currycomb with the stiff-bristled brush. Effective brushing requires plenty of "elbow grease" plus some "know-how". Short, strong strokes with outward action away from the horse's body removes more dirt than long, gliding strokes. A strong, stiffened
arm backed up by the weight of your body and vigorous wrist action is necessary to get the hair coat clean. Brush the hair in the direction of its natural lay. Follow the same order as when the currycomb was used, except that in brushing the legs brush down to the hoof. Clean the brush every few strokes with the currycomb.

To pick up much of the fine dust out of the haircoat, follow the stiff-bristled brush with the fine, smooth-fibered body brush. Finish the job by brushing the head, mane and tail.

MANE AND TAIL

When cleaning the mane and tail, begin brushing at the ends of the hair and gradually work up to the roots. On breeds, such as the Arabian and 5-gaited Saddle Horses, that are normally shown with a full mane and tail, be very careful that you do not pull out any hair. Washing the mane and tail two or three times during the week prior to the show will make this hair clean and soft. Be sure that all the soap is rinsed out or else your horse might start rubbing his mane and tail. After rinsing and shaking out the excess water, "pick" the mane and tail by separating the locks with your fingers. This will keep them from drying in tangles.

REGULARITY

Of course, a horse that has not been groomed regularly will not be ready for the show ring with only one grooming. A well-groomed horse is cleaned faithfully every day for several weeks prior to the first show. He is certainly not clean if you can pick up scurf and dirt when passing the finger tips through the hair coat or leave gray lines on the coat where the fingers have passed.

Your show horse should be kept out of the sun most of the time in order to avoid a dull, sunburned appearance. If you are grazing your horse, turn him out to pasture at night or early in the morning and late in the evening.

WASHING

Washing your horse or pony all over is another method of getting him clean. However, washing is a poor substitute for regular grooming since it removes the protective oil of the hair and skin. But if you decide that washing is necessary, use lukewarm water and a mild soap. Rinse thoroughly with cool water and keep him out of drafts while being rubbed dry with a clean cloth. It is usually not advisable to wash your horse except the mane, tail and feet within two weeks of a show.

If you have a gelding, don't forget to clean the sheath occasionally. Some horses require it more often than others, especially those which urinate without protruding the penis. Use warm water, mild soap and remove the secretions, including the "bean" or ball of waxy secretion which sometimes develops in a depression in the head of the penis and which may interfere with urination.

HAND RUBBING

In addition to the regular grooming procedures of currying and brushing, some horsemen will bring out the bloom on their horse by hand rubbing. Hand rubbing removes loose hair, stimulates the circulation, and helps to produce a glossy coat. It is also restful to tired muscles after a long ride.

THE FINAL TOUCH

Before exhibiting your horse, the final touch consists of going over the horse's body with the grooming cloth. This should be done just before entering the ring if you are at a show, since the cloth will pick up any dust which may have accumulated since brushing. Avoid using an excessively oily rub rag for this final grooming because oil on the surface of the haircoat will cause dust to stick to your animal. With a clean cloth or damp sponge wipe about the ears, eyes, nostrils, lips, sheath, and dock.

A good showman will carry a small rag concealed in his pocket just in case it is needed in the show ring. Of course, it is used to "touch up" your horse only when the judge is occupied elsewhere in the ring.

CLIPPING and TRIMMING

As a rule, the program of most 4-H club members does not necessitate clipping the horse's entire haircoat for
winter. Clipping is usually practiced when the horse is worked regularly during the winter and only when the horse receives very careful attention. When not actually at work, clipped animals should be stalled and blanketed during cold weather. During severe weather it is not advisable to clip the legs. Where animals are to receive considerable work under the saddle, it is advisable to leave a saddle patch the size of a folded blanket. This will give protection from abrasions and infections and from wearing away the hair on the back under the saddle. Clipping must not be used as a substitute for proper grooming. Clipping reduces the labor of grooming, but the clipped animal needs the same thorough and vigorous grooming as an animal in full coat. Practically all horses being prepared for the show ring require some trimming — about the feet and legs, the head, the mane and tail.

FEET and LEGS

The hair around the fetlock joint is trimmed to give the legs a neater, cleaner appearance. Some exhibitors clip the legs from just below the knees and hocks down to the hoof head. Run the clippers with the natural lay of the hair. Clipping a couple of weeks before show time will allow the hair to grow enough to eliminate clipper marks and contrasting shades of color.

THE HEAD

The long hair on the inside of the ears and under the chin and jaw is usually clipped. Some horsemen prefer not to remove all the hair from inside the ears since it is there for a purpose — to help keep dirt and insects from entering the inner ear. Some also prefer not to remove the long feeler hairs or whiskers from around the muzzle because they serve the purpose of helping the horse make contact with his surroundings, especially in the dark.

THE MANE

Treatment of the mane varies considerably depending on the type and breed of horse being exhibited. On all saddle horses, the mane is usually clipped where the crown-piece or head stall of the bridle crosses behind the ears. This clipped area is called the bridlepath. It is usually about 1½ to 2 inches long, but some gaited Saddle horses are trimmed 6 or 7 inches down the neck. This is to make the horse's neck appear longer and neater and finer through the throat latch. The forelock or foretop from the bridlepath foreward is seldom clipped and is pulled down under the center of the browband. This is braided with three strands of brightly colored ribbon on some ponies, the five gaited Saddle Horse and the Walking horse. About the only horse that is shown with a clipped foretop is the three gaited Saddle horse.

The entire mane is clipped on the three gaited Saddle horse. Many exhibitors of western or stock horses show them with a closely clipped mane except that the foretop and a tuft of hair on the withers are left intact. Care must be exercised in clipping the mane to perform a smooth job and not get down into the body hair on the side of the neck.

Stock horses whose manes are not clipped and hunters usually have them shortened and thinned for the show ring. This is accomplished by pulling or plucking the hair until the remaining hair on the mane is about 4 or 5 inches long. Plucking is done by grasping a few hairs at a time, sliding the hand up close to the roots, and pulling the hairs out by the roots with a quick jerk. Begin on the underside and pull the longest hair first. The hunter is usually shown with the mane braided into small braids tied with yarn along the horse's neck. The five gaited Saddle horse, the Walking horse, the Shetland and a few other breeds are shown with two braids on the mane — the foretop and the first section of hair on the mane behind the bridlepath.

THE TAIL

On stock horses the tail is pulled or thinned (not cut off) to just below the hock. The hair is pulled as in the mane, working on the longest hairs and mostly on the underside of the tail. Most hunters and polo ponies also have the tail thinned and shortened. The three gaited Saddle horse has the tail closely clipped for a distance of 6 to 8 inches from the base. Most hunters are shown with the tail braided for a distance of 8 to 12 inches from the base.
Performance showing is considered by most horsemen as the ultimate goal in the showing of a horse. In the case of 4-H horse activity, it is the most demanding preparation, the most training and the greatest attention to detail. Performance showing is as variable as the types of horses shown. It can be a class for elegant gaited horses or it can be a class for versatile Western trail horses; it varies from high-stepping harness horses and ponies to the novelty races of gymkhana events; it can be as sedate and precise as dressage or as fast and free as pole bending and barrel racing. But through it all runs a central theme, a unity of purpose, this being to display the horse at his best, doing what he does best. The rider then, in contrast to his dominant position in equitation classes, has a minor role. He is there to give aid and direction, to encourage but not as is all too frequent “go along for the ride”. In contrast to equitation where the rider should seem to merge with his mount, in performance the emphasis should shift to the horse, and the rider should seem to be no longer a part of the scene. In fact, the rider should seem to almost disappear.

Showing in performance classes is and should be fun. This fun should be the result of the knowledge that both horse and rider are completely prepared to accept the challenge of demonstrating the true ability of both. The show arena should not, however, be looked upon as a “show-off arena”, nor should it be considered a schooling arena or training ground. It is a place of work, strict rules, and attention to the 4 C’s: confidence, cooperation, consideration, and carefulness.

What is required to show a horse in a performance class? What is required to win? Neither question can be answered simply. There is complete dependence on all past experience and knowledge; since as was previously indicated, this type of showing is more or less the apex of all horse showing.

As is stated in the recipe for rabbit stew, first you must catch a rabbit, so indeed to show in performance classes first there must be a horse. There are a wide variety of performance classes so that almost any horse can do moderately well in one or more of them. If interest lies in one particular phase of performance, a horse suitable to be shown in those particular classes is required. Selection of a suitable horse to fit desires or demands is of major importance. It is virtually impossible to take just any horse and hope to compete on equal terms with horses bred, selected, and trained for one particular type of performance. No one should expect to show one horse in very many classes. Most horse shows preclude entry of one horse in more than a very limited number of classes, and very few horses are able to compete successfully in more than a very few classes.

It should be borne in mind that the actual length of time a horse is engaged in a performance class is quite limited, for as little as 20 seconds in races to as much as 20 minutes or more in large pleasure classes. Since the exposition time is so short, it’s obvious that the show ring cannot be used to train. There is little enough time to just demonstrate already learned ability. It also serves to emphasize the fact that most of the work for performance classes must take place outside the show arena and long before the show.

Once the horse has been properly trained and the rider is ready, then actual showing can be considered. Showing begins long before entry into the ring. Most horses cannot be “turned-on” at the entry gate. They must be warmed up to the occasion. The rider has to prepare himself as well. But, even farther back, is the saddling or harnessing of the horse and the dressing of the rider. Both horse and rider should be prepared long enough in advance of the call for a class so there is no rushing. Great care should be taken to insure every detail is correct. A check list such as a pilot uses before take-off is very helpful. The tack of the horse should
be checked to be sure it is sound and complete and it conforms to the class requirement. These requirements vary from show to show within the same class; failure to meet requirements is just cause for dismissal or even refusal of entry. Typical items to watch for are such things as slickers, spurs, crops, ropes, and hobbles. A check of the horse’s feet and shoes could forestall many problems. Insuring the tightness of shoes is essential before most performance classes because re-shoeing during a class is impossible. Many of these classes are extremely hard on shoes, so only good shoes that have been put on properly should be allowed. Equal care should be taken to insure that personal appointments are as prescribed and are complete.

This is also the time to make the final decision concerning actual entry into a class. Since most horses are vanned to shows, the chances of leg injury are always present. It is much better to scratch an entry than to enter a lame, injured, or sour horse. This type of entry is an insult to the judge, to the audience as well as to fellow exhibitors and to the horse himself. In general, it is considered a poor practice to ride your horse to a show and then expect top quality performances. It should be remembered that to be in top form, both horse and rider must be fresh, rested, and in top physical condition. Also, it is extremely difficult to keep a horse and appointments clean and neat during a long ride.

When all preliminary preparations for a show have been completed, the warm-up of the horse should begin. This should be timed so as to give both horse and rider a chance to get stiff muscles loosened up and to achieve a mental attitude conducive to competition. This length of time will vary with each horse and with the class. Many horses need only to be walked for a few minutes, others perform better when quite warm. The horse should not be indiscriminately raced nor should last minute training be attempted. If an exercise area has been provided this should be used. If none is available, some area away from people, cars and other distractions can usually be found. Alleyways, runways, and parking areas or any area where there are many people should be avoided during warm-ups. Anticipation of the classes will create a great deal of excitement, particularly in young people. This excitement is often transmitted to the horse. Every effort should be used to ease this tension and control excess excitement.

Timing warm-ups to be complete at about the time a class is called takes practice and a knowledge of the horse. It is generally much better to have to wait a few minutes to enter the arena than for the rest of the class to have to wait for a late entry. All entries should be ready to enter the arena when the class or their numbers are called. There should be no attempt at entry before a class is called and certainly the entry should not be made late. Some shows allow for only a short waiting period so punctuality is essential.

Each class has its own prescribed rules and procedures. Every rider should be completely familiar with these procedures from entry to exit. Failure to follow a given course or the directions from judges and stewards will be considered disqualifications in many events. When gait or direction changes are called for, compliance should be as rapid as is safe and correct. It is most disrespectful to hesitate or ignore such directions and if repeated, often calls for dismissal from the class.

The conduct in a class, whether in a group that is working together or an individual working singly, should be approached in a businesslike manner. Even though these classes are usually “fun”, as indeed they should be, they are all serious. It is a time for maximum effort on the part of both the rider and his mount. It is not a time to wave to friends or to “show-off”. No horse should be handled in such a manner as to make him excited. There is a wide difference between animation and excitement.

While in group classes, bunching up should be avoided. If it becomes necessary to get away from a pack or bunch, a rider may short cut a corner, pass and get into the clear. A reasonable distance between horses should be kept. The horse should be placed in such a position that the judge can clearly observe him. However, one rider should never purposely attempt to place his own mount between the judge and a competitor. This is bad show manners.

When horses are asked to be aligned in the center ring, immediate compliance is again in order. Failure to line up quickly or properly can accomplish nothing more than irritate the judge and cause a “loss of points”. There should be room left on each side of the horse for close inspection by the judge. When horses are too close the judge cannot see; what he cannot see he cannot place. What usually happens as a result of the judge’s not being able to see a horse is a lower placing than perhaps deserved. At no time should the exhibitor relax or allow the horse to relax. Showing begins at entry and ends after exit. Nothing creates a worse impression of a horse than to see one badly out of position among a group being held posed and at attention. There is no way of anticipating a judge’s turning for a look backwards, so the necessity of keeping set is always present. The audience is watching also.

Many performance classes do not require posing, gait changes and the kinds of situations previously discussed. Classes such as Western trail, barrel racing, pole bending and reining usually have a contestant working alone, against a clock or under the careful scrutiny of a judge. In timed events, form counts little
except as it may effect time; but even in these timed
events, time is not at all important.
Generally speaking, the same type of actions are re-
quired in such classes as reining and trail. Emphasis
should be on a quiet, steady, well-mannered display.
At no time should the rider display loss of temper,
with its resultant abuse of the horse, nor should the
rider indulge in any actions that would tend to excite
or annoy the horse. Very careful use of the reins to
avoid any indication of head fighting is required. If
spurs are worn, they should not be used except with
a light touch.
When winners are announced there is a tendency to
either relax or become more excited. Both should be
avoided. Win graciously—lose the same way. When
riding to pick up the rosette, care should be taken
to avoid riding over the judge or steward. If no award
is received, exit should be in an orderly manner after
the award presentation.
Pay close attention to the official discussion of the
placings of the class. This will help you to perform
better in the future. One of the worst things that can
be done after a class is to engage in criticism of the
judge and his decisions. He usually knows much more
about the entire business than any of the exhibitors
and was in a much better position to see the class,
thus render a decision. It’s all too easy to find other
losers to “cry” with. After all, there can be only one
winner.
Another rather unpardonable bit of conduct is all too
frequently seen following the completion of a class.
This is groups of exhibitors, now free from the antici-
pation of the show arena, racing around, both mounted
and afoot, causing distractions, confusion and in
general, being of no little annoyance to the exhibitors
in the arena, the judge and the audience. It is certainly
poor manners and thoughtlessness on the part of those
thus engaged.
Win or lose, improvement can always be made. Every-
one can profit from experience and the show arena is
good experience. Always the attempt should be “To
make the best better”.
The performance classes for horses are so many and
varied that it is not possible to describe them in a
guide sheet of this kind. Instead, follow the official
rules of the show in which you are exhibiting.

**SPECIAL SHOW HINTS FOR YOUTH GROUPS**

1. Be ready when class is called.
2. Good sportsmanship shall prevail at all times.
3. Unnecessary roughness or discourtesy will be
   cause to be dismissed from further competition.
4. Contestants shall, at all times, act as ladies and
gentlemen.
5. Exhibitor shall keep horse under control at all
times.
6. No horse is to be exercised except in assigned
   area.
   No riding shall be permitted in spectator or
   concession area.
7. Do not tie horses to arena fence or park them at
   the arena.
8. Check saddle cinch before every performance
   and loosen cinch after each class when dismounted.
9. Neat and appropriate attire shall be worn in all
   classes. Sneakers and low shoes are not considered
   safe or suitable.
10. Teach horse to lead easily and freely at any gait
    before trying to show in ring.
11. Walk beside a horse when leading, never in front
12. Always turn the horse to the right and walk around
    him when showing. This allows the judge an unob-
    structed view.
13. Every show announcement is to carry a full de-
    scription of what the class will be expected to do
    and how it will be judged.
The opportunity to show a well-groomed and properly-fitted horse in top competition is a most rewarding experience. Such shows attract ever-expanding crowds in all sections of the United States. Methods of showing vary somewhat among the different breeds of light horses. However, the following points should be learned by all exhibitors, regardless of the breed they are showing.

1. Be neat, clean and appropriately dressed for the class.

2. Do not try to show a horse at halter until you are sure you can control him. You will need to practice with mock shows or trials.

3. Enter the ring and lead in the direction indicated by the ring steward until the judge requests that the horses line up for inspection.

4. Be alert. Keep one eye on the horse and one on the judge but remember the horse is the main attraction.

5. Leave at least ten feet between your horse and the nearest other horse both in circling the ring and in the line-up.

6. When showing in line, hold the lead rope or strap in your right hand about 12-24 inches from the halter. The other end of the lead rope or strap should be neatly doubled in the left hand. You may change hands if it is more convenient to put your horse in position or in showing to the judge. Try to attract the horse's attention to the front so he turns his ears forward but do not hold his head too high.

7. Halter classes are shown "in hand," which means that they are exhibited at the halter, preferably, or when wearing a bridle. The halter should be clean, properly adjusted, and fitted with a fresh-looking leather or rope lead. If the horse is shown when wearing a bridle, the leader should avoid jerking on the reins so hard that the horse's mouth will be injured.

8. Move his feet by pulling or pushing on the halter rope as necessary along with putting your right hand on his left shoulder and putting on pressure as needed. Never use your feet to move your horse's feet. Proper use of whip and voice cues are acceptable in showing certain breeds.

9. Stand facing the horse near the left shoulder or in front of him and face him in such a way as to be able to see the animal and present a full view to the judge. Avoid standing on the right side of your horse. Do not be distracted by persons or objects outside the ring.

10. Stand the horse as straight as possible with weight distributed equally on all four feet. When standing, the horse's hooves should point straight ahead. (Be careful to avoid standing the horse in a low place).
11. The standing position of the horse should vary according to the breed. For example, Arabians and Quarter Horses are not stretched, but American Saddle horses are stood with their front legs straight under them and their hind legs back slightly. Other breeds are generally placed in a slightly stretched position between these two examples.

12. When you are requested to move out of the line always move in a straight line away from and toward the judge. Walk or trot at the left of the horse, close to his shoulder, never in front of him. Bring your horse to a complete stop at either end of the line before turning him. When turning at the end of the line, turn him to the right or away from you with his hind feet staying nearly in place in order to keep him in line for the judge to see.

13. If you are asked to back your horse push back on the lead strap and back him one body length. If you must push on him with the other hand, he is not well trained.

14. Handle your horse with dispatch but do not excite him. Never be rough or strike your horse in the ring.

15. Win modestly, lose without anger and remember that good sportsmanship builds character faster than purple ribbons.

16. Lead horse at a brisk walk or trot as judge directs, with animal’s head carried at a height appropriate to the type or use of horse.

17. When judge is observing other animals, let yours stand if posed reasonably well.

18. Be natural. Overshowing, undue fussing and maneuvering are objectionable.

19. Show your animal to best advantage — Recognize the conformation faults of your animal and show it to overcome these faults.

20. Respond rapidly to requests from the judge and officials.

21. Be courteous and sportsmanlike at all times.

22. Keep showing until the entire class has been placed and the judge has given his reasons.
IMPORTANCE OF FOOT CARE

The value of a horse depends on his ability to perform work. To this end, four sound feet are indispensable. Oddly enough, foot troubles and the necessity for shoeing are largely man-made.

The wild horse seems to have been practically free from serious foot trouble. But with domestication these troubles began to appear. The horse was brought from soft pasture to hard roads; from self-regulated exercise to enforced work; from healthy pasture to filthy housing where he was often made to stand in his own feces and urine or in mud; and from a light, self-limiting maintenance ration to the heavy, artificial diet necessary for work. Even the basically sound horse frequently breaks down under the artificial environment and misguided “care” of man. The horse with a conformational defect is almost certain to break down under the conditions imposed by domestication.

The important points in the care of a horse’s feet are to keep them clean, prevent them from drying out, and trim them so they retain proper shape and length. You should learn the names for the parts of a horse’s foot.

Each day, clean the feet of horses that are shod, stabled, or used. Use the hoof pick for cleaning. Work from the heel toward the toe. Be sure to clean out the depressions between frog and bars. While you are cleaning the feet, inspect for loose shoes and thrush.

Thrush is a disease of the foot characterized by a pungent odor. It causes a softening of tissues in the cleft of the frog and bars. This disease produces lameness and, if not treated, can be serious.

Hooves occasionally become dry and brittle. Dry, brittle hooves may split and produce lameness. The frog loses its elasticity and no longer is effective as a shock absorber. If the dryness is prolonged, the frog shrinks in size and the heel contracts. Dry hooves usually can be prevented by keeping the ground wet around the watering tank. If the hooves of a shod horse become too dry, either pack them in wet clay once or twice a week after the horse has been used or attach burlap sacks around them. Keep the sacks moistened.

After the hoof has absorbed enough moisture, brush on a hoof dressing such as neatsfoot oil, sweet oil, or linseed oil. Before each soaking with burlap, remove the oil.

Trim the feet so that the horse stands square and plumb. This will alleviate strain on the tendons and help prevent deformity, improper action and unsoundness.

The healthy hoof grows 3/8 to 1/2 inch per month. If the hoof is not trimmed, the wall will break off and will not wear evenly. To prevent this, trim the hooves regularly, about once a month, whether the horse is shod or not. Use nippers to trim off the horn; level the wall with a rasp.

Incorrect foot posture is caused by hooves grown too long either in toe or heel. The slope is considered normal when the toe of the hoof and the pastern have the same angle. This angle should be kept always in mind and changed only as a corrective measure. If it should become necessary to correct uneven wear of the hoof, correct gradually over a period of several trimmings.

Trim the hoof near the level of the sole — otherwise it will split off if the horse remains unshod. Trim the frog carefully. Remove only rugged edges that allow filth to accumulate in the crevices. Trim the sole sparingly, if at all.

Never rasp the walls of the hoof. This removes the periole, or thin varnishlike outer layer provided by nature as a protective coating that prevents evaporation.

An unshapely hoof causing uneven wear may make foals become unsound of limb. Faulty limbs may be helped or even corrected by regular and persistent trimming. This practice tends to educate the foal, making it easier to shoe at maturity. If the foal is run on pasture, trimming the feet may be necessary long before weaning time. Check the feet every 4 to 6 weeks. Trim a small amount each time rather than an excessive amount at longer intervals.

Before trimming the feet, inspect the foal while it is standing squarely on a hard surface. Then watch it walk and trot.

Careless trimming may strain the foal’s tendons.

REASONS FOR SHOEING

Shoeing is a necessary evil. Nailing an iron plate to a horse’s foot does not make walking easier for him. The added weight of a shoe does not make for agility. While the foot and leg are engineered to minimize shock and road concussion, shoeing only increases them. Nail holes made in attaching the shoe help to weaken the hoof wall and may provide entries for infection or separation.

Allowing a horse to wear the same shoes too long also invites trouble. Since the hoof wall grows out perpendicularly to the coronary band, the horse’s base of support actually grows out from under him if shoes are left on too long. This transfers excessive strain to flexor tendons. Shoes worn too long grow thin and become loose, bend dangerously and may shift, causing shoe-nail punctures or “corns.”
PARTS OF THE PASTERN AND FOOT

FETLOCK
PASTERN
CORONET
HOOF
BULB
CANNON BONE
LONG PASTERN
SHORT PASTERN
DEEP FLEXOR TENDON
CORONARY BAND
COFFIN BONE
PLANTAR CUSHION
SENSITIVE FROG
SENSITIVE LAMINAE
INSENSITIVE FROG
WHITE LINE
COFFIN BONE
LATERAL CARTILAGES
QUARTER
HEEL
TOE
WALL
SOLE
FROG
BUTTRESS

TO PICK UP FRONT FOOT
TO PICK UP HIND FOOT
FOOT INSPECTION
Shoes protect the hoof against excessive wear when unusual work is required. They provide better traction under unfavorable conditions of terrain, such as ice and mud. They help correct defects of stance or gait, often making it possible for an unsound horse to render satisfactory service. Shoes may be used to help cure disease or defective hooves (contracted heels, thrush, divided tendons). They also may be used to afford relief from the pain of injured parts (hoof-wall cracks, bruised soles, tendinitis).

Shoe horses to be used on hard surfaces to prevent the wall from wearing down to the sensitive tissues beneath. A correctly shod horse is a more efficient performer. Shoes may be used to change gaits and action, to correct faulty hoof structure or growth, and to protect the hoof itself from such conditions as corns, contraction, or cracks.

Racing “plates” are used on running horses to aid in gripping the track.

Shoeing always should be done by a farrier who is thoroughly experienced in the art. Shoes should be made to fit the foot, not the foot to fit the shoe. Reshoe or reset at 4- to 6-week intervals. If you leave shoes on too long the hoofs grow out of proportion. This may throw the horse off balance.

**COMMON FAULTS CORRECTED BY TRIMMING**

**Splayfoot** (front toes turned out, heels turned in) can be helped or corrected by trimming the outer half of the foot.

**Pigeon Toe** (front toes turned in, heels turned out—opposite of splayfoot) can be helped or corrected by trimming the inner half of the foot more than the outer half.

**Quarter Crack** (a vertical crack on the side of the hoof) usually can be corrected if the hoof is kept moist and the toes shortened.

**Cocked Ankles** (standing bent forward on the fetlocks—usually hind fetlocks) can be helped or corrected by lowering the heels. Cocked ankles will not occur if foals are allowed to get ample exercise and are not overfed, and the foal’s heels are kept trimmed so that there is plenty of frog pressure.

**Contracted Heels** (close at heels) can be spread apart if the heels are lowered and the frog allowed to carry more of the animal’s weight.

**HOOF CARE HINTS**

Begin when foal is only a few months old.

Keep feet well rounded.

Exercise foals on dry ground to allow natural wear.

If kept in stall, rasp down every 2 to 3 weeks.

Clean soles and clefts of frog frequently.

Do not pare out sole, just clean.

Do not trim away healthy frog unless there is clearly an excess. (See illustration B.)

Keep foot straight with angle of short pastern.

Front hoof-to-ground angle should be approximately 45°. (See illustration B.)

Rear hoof-to-ground angle should be approximately 45°. (See illustration B.)

Rasp sharp edge of hoof wall to make bearing surface approximately true thickness of wall. (See Illustration C.)

Do not rasp outside wall.

Always rasp in such a manner that the heel is included in each stroke. (See illustration D.)
It requires patience, careful handling and skill to develop a horse. In training a horse for pleasure or work, your object is to obtain a friendly, obedient animal that will respond quickly and with animation. How do you get these results?

1. START THE GENTLING PROCESS EARLY

Handle the foal frequently, build his confidence, and he will lose his fear. You may want to halter-break him when he is only a couple of weeks old. He is easier to handle at this age. Many horsemen do not start the training process until weaning age, but training should start before he is many months old.

In these early weeks and months he gradually accustoms himself to handling. These daily training sessions should be short lessons, repeated often. Young foals, like young children, have a limited capacity to absorb new things. They learn by repetition, and in step-by-step order. A half hour lesson every day is ample.

2. THE FIRST LESSON - HALTERING

The best classroom for the foal is a small pen away from other disturbances. There should be no outside distraction. He should be handled gently but firmly. Frequent brushing with a soft brush or hand rubbing tells him there is nothing to fear during the lessons. When he has learned to eat grain use a little to help gain his confidence.

The very first halter lesson can be done by two people crowding the foal into a corner where he is haltered. After haltering he is pulled gently and slowly to one side. As soon as he takes a step or two steps the pull is eased up, he is petted and given a taste of grain. The trainer then steps to the other side and pulls in the opposite direction, repeating the process. Usually after 8 or 10 lessons the young foal has become an apt pupil.

After he has been gentled to a halter, a non-skid loop is slipped over the hind quarters to help teach him to lead promptly. This step should not be taken until he handles quietly.

3. YIELDING HIS FEET

After several lessons on haltering and leading, start working with his feet. After the colt is leading, then start handling his legs. Work with him quietly, picking up the front feet first. Do it many times and, if he resists, put the foot down, pat him, quiet him down, and do it all over again. First lift up one foot, then the other foot. Next train him to yield his hind leg as if he were going to have his foot trimmed and shod. Patience and time are necessary. If he starts struggling, let the foot down and pet him. In a few minutes pick up the foot again, repeat this process until he no longer objects to yielding his feet. Some colts learn in two or three lessons, while other colts require many lessons.

4. TEACHING VOICE COMMANDS

The lessons as a foal or weanling were on leading, handling the feet, and gaining confidence. As a yearling he is ready for the next grade. Many ranchers and breeders of a large number of colts do no further training until he is two and one-half years old, but in training your own colt the yearling age is an ideal time to work him on a 25-30 ft. line in a circle (longeing) where you teach voice commands of walk, trot, canter and whoa. It combines muscle building exercises with learning. Start the foal slowly in a quiet confined area.
Carry a whip that he can see and begin by making the circles very short. Gradually he will work to a larger circle as you play out the line. Make him go in both a clockwise and counter-clockwise direction. Teach him to stop at the end of the line and reverse his direction. These lessons in the beginning should be for no more than ten minutes, and can gradually be lengthened to 20-30 minutes as he advances in his training.

5. PREPARATION FOR SADDLING

As the colt approaches two years of age he should be getting ready for saddling. If you have worked patiently and frequently with him he should not fear movement about him, but to help him conquer any remaining fear tie him up and rub him with a soft sack. Then flip the sack over and about his body and legs. The same thing can be done with a soft cotton rope by drawing the rope back and forth across his body. In this series of lessons, the next step is to use the saddle blanket. Lead him for awhile until he is completely quiet; then let him smell the blanket which is then slipped over his neck and withers. Then push back to its proper place. This is continued until the young horse accepts the blanket without moving. After he becomes thoroughly used to the feel of the blanket, a surcingle can be slipped on and tied moderately tight. Then lead him around a few times. This is repeated until he no longer flinches. The surcingle can then be fastened snugly around his chest. If, in the beginning, he should jump and start to fuss you can put a hand against the surcingle and pull the colt toward you and thus keep his movements in a short circle which prevents much jumping.

WORKING ON THE LONGE LINE

SADDLING AND RIDING

1. SADDLING

The young horse is ready to be taught the feel of a saddle. First, review his previous lessons. He should be quiet and gentle and understand that no harm will befall him. Slide the blanket on and off several times until he is used to it. Then slip on the saddle, cinching it only moderately tight with a single cinch. Lead him around the corral at a walk while he gets accustomed to the feel of the saddle on the back. During this leading session, lead him close to you and turn him either way. As the lessons progress, gradually tighten the cinch and continue to lead him. It would be well to saddle and unsaddle him several times to get him accustomed to the saddle before you ever try to ride. Some trainers, after leading the colt with an empty saddle, like to tie up the bridle reins and turn the yearling or 2 yr. old loose to trot and canter until accustomed to the feel and squeak of the saddle and the swinging of the stirrups. If he should happen to buck, which is rarely, then catch the colt and lead him at a walk before you turn him loose again with the reins tied up.

At this point, some trainers teach the horse to drive so he will learn responses to the bit. Cotton rope lines (0.3 inch diameter and 20 feet long) are attached to the bit and passed through the saddle stirrups for driving lessons. In the first lesson the line on the near side is left out of the stirrup. Then if the horse turns and looks at the trainer, this near line can be used as a lead to straighten the horse out. After the horse is accustomed to driving, the near line can also be passed through the stirrup. This training teaches responses to the bit and lets the horse become accustomed to having ropes touch his hind legs. Initial schooling in backing can also be given at this time.

2. RIDING

The next step is to mount the horse. Be sure that he has satisfactorily passed all his other lessons. First get your horse under control by adjusting the reins evenly with enough tension to feel the bit and hold the horse steady. Don’t get the reins too tight. Hold the reins in your left hand and place this hand on the neck in front of the withers. Grasp the ridge of the neck or a lock of mane. Twist the near stirrup with your right hand and place your left foot in the stirrup with the ball of your foot resting securely on the tread. Brace your left knee against the horse and move your right hand to grasp the saddle horn. You are now braced against the horse with two hands and the left leg forming a triangle of support. Push with your right leg and spring up and over the seat of the saddle. Swing your right foot over and into the stirrup quickly, lightly, and smoothly.

Because the colt is trained to lead, it is often better to have someone lead the colt with you on his back.
until he gets used to the new experience. Some colts may walk the first time he is mounted without any additional assistance.

This first lesson, which is held in a corral, should be done with only a little guidance from you. When the colt learns to relax and walk well, you can turn him and make him travel back and forth.

Start your horse by squeezing your legs gradually. At first you may have to tap him with your heel, but with patience he will learn to start on pressure. A horse will learn faster with two short 20 minute lessons than one long lesson a day.

Remember, he is just a youngster and tries easily. As his lessons progress, gradually start training him to trot and later on to canter a little, but take it easy.

3. NECK-REINING

To teach neck-reining you probably will need to use two hands at first, one to pull with and one to bear on his neck. This is called "leading and bearing rein". By working with him in the corral you can anticipate his turns and use the reins as a signal. As you ride up to a barrier and you know he is going to have to turn, then use your reins to indicate to him that the rein is the signal to turn.

4. TRAIN AT SLOW WORK

A horse learns best at slow work, a walk or a trot, so the initial lessons should be at those gaits. Except to train him to break from a walk into a canter his other lessons should be done at the slower gaits.

Usually his training to this point is with a hackamore. However, at this stage a bridle may be placed under the hackamore until he gets used to it. Then add reins and use the two together until you can finally use the bridle alone.

It has been said "no mouth, no horse". A properly bitted horse responds to the bit and becomes a pleasure to control. Be careful and never bruise the bars or tongue of your horse. Be sure the head stall fits. These early lessons with a bit are to get him accustomed to its feel and use.

5. BACKING UP

Horses used for stock work should back well. Start this training from the ground.

Stand in front of your horse and push back on the reins, tap him with the quirt or reins on the breast and legs. Be patient and repeat often.

Then mount, squeeze your legs as you would to start him, cause him to pick up his foot, pull back lightly, making him move his foot to the rear instead of the front. These short lessons will soon train him to back up.

6. SCHOOLING AT THE WALK, TROT, AND GALLOP

The young untrained horse has no difficulty handling his own weight at any gait but he does not have sufficient coordination and muscular development to carry a rider. This must be accomplished by proper training procedure which is a progressive movement from a walk to a trot and to a gallop as follows:

First, walk the horse slowly in a large circle until he is fully relaxed and carrying your weight with ease.

Second, move the horse into a slow trot for a round or two and then advance to a fast trot.

Third, when the horse is moving fully at a fast trot, use the correct aids to push him into a gallop, leading in the direction you are turning. Hold him on the gallop at this lead around the circle two or three times. If the horse does not take the correct lead or changes to the wrong lead, stop him and start over again, beginning with the walk.

Fourth, stop the horse, reverse and repeat the walk, trot and gallop in the other directions.

Fifth, forget speed and strive for perfection in these movements. Remember, 20 to 30 minutes per lesson is long enough.

This training procedure is actually an athletic exercise by which a horse is developed for further training. Until a horse can perform these movements with ease, he is not ready to be advanced in his schooling.
Safety for yourself and others, courtesy for others and kindness to horses are basically akin. They fit into the same “package” for discussion. Safety goes hand-in-hand with common “horse sense” and good animal husbandry practices. Horses have an instinct or awareness for reflecting the care, caution and concern of the rider. They are normally gentle and quiet animals, but can become highly excited or nervous if frightened or mistreated. A calm attitude, slow easy movements and a gentle flow of soft words will lessen fear and excitement in nervous horses. Disregarding simple safety rules in handling horses can result in serious injury, or even fatality.

Basic safety rules are a must and should be learned and practiced until they become everyday habit and custom.

For purposes of clarity and convenience, we shall discuss horse and rider safety and courtesy under five appropriate classifications.

These are:

1. Safety in catching, handling & leading horses.
2. Safety in bridling, saddling & mounting horses.
3. Safety controlling and riding horses.
4. Showing the horse with safety and courtesy.
5. General safety rules.

I. SAFETY IN CATCHING, HANDLING & LEADING HORSES

1. CATCHING YOUR HORSE SAFELY

   a. Approach a horse from his left and from the front. Never walk or stand behind a horse unannounced. The horse is always on the defensive. If he becomes aware of something behind him his immediate instinct—prompted by fear—is either to kick or run. If tied or confined in a stall, the animal cannot run, so he usually kicks. Even in single stalls it is possible to approach from an oblique angle at the rear.

   b. When a rider is kicked, it is usually through his own carelessness. If it is necessary to approach a horse from the rear, speak to him to warn of your presence. As soon as the animal is aware of you, stroke him gently on the croup, then move calmly to the head, keeping always close into the horse’s body. The closer you stand to a horse, the less likely you will be kicked; you may be shoved away, but not hurt.

2. SAFE HANDLING OF YOUR HORSE

   a. Always let the horse know what you intend to do. For instance, when picking up the feet, do not reach for and seize the foot hurriedly, as this will startle the horse and is liable to cause him to kick. Learn the proper way to lift the feet.

   b. Learn simple means of restraint, such as cross-tying in the open and holding up a front foot.

   c. Tie horses with right length of rope. Don’t stake them out.

   d. Pet a horse by first placing your hand on his shoulder and neck. Don’t dab at the end of his nose.

   e. Work about a horse from a position as near the shoulder as possible. In this way, you cannot be touched by either the front or hind feet of the horse. This is particularly true when passing around the horse’s head, or in working about the haunches.

   f. Always walk around your horse. Never walk under the tie rope nor step over it.

   g. Tie your horse far enough away from strange horses so they cannot fight.

   h. Always untie the lead shank before taking the halter off your horse. This may prevent him from pulling back and becoming a “halter-puller”.

3. LEADING YOUR HORSE SAFELY

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

   b. Use a long lead strap and both hands when leading. If the horse rears up, release hand nearest the halter so you can stay on the ground.

   c. When leading a horse, grasp the reins 12 to 24 in. from the bit on the left side.

   d. Your horse is stronger than you, so don’t try to out-pull him. He will usually respond to a quick snap on the lead rope.

   e. Never wrap lead strap, halter shank, or reins around your hand, wrist, or body. Always keep a secure hold on lead strap.
f. If the horse hangs back on the end of the rope, lead him a few steps forward before touching him with your hand.

g. Keep leads and long lines off the ground.

h. When leading into a box stall, turn the horse so that he faces the door before releasing the lead strap.

II. SAFETY IN BRIDLING, SADDLING & MOUNTING HORSES

1. BRIDLING SAFETY

a. Keep your head in the clear when bridling the horse. He may throw his head or strike to avoid the bridle. Avoid bridling a nervous animal in close quarters. After buckling the throat latch always place the loose end of the strap through the keeper on the buckle.

2. SADDLING SAFETY

a. In using a double rigged saddle—remember, saddle front cinch first, rear cinch last; but when unsaddling a horse, be sure to unbuckle the rear cinch first. Failing to do so can "spook" your horse and cause a bad accident.

b. When saddling be careful to keep cinch ring from striking the off knee.

c. Adjust the saddle carefully and the cinch tight enough so it will not turn when you mount. Lead the horse a few steps before mounting.

d. In addition to safely putting equipment on your horse it must be kept in good repair. Keep bridle reins, stirrup leathers, and cinch straps in the best possible condition, as your safety depends on these straps. Replace any strap when it begins to show signs of wear.

3. MOUNTING SAFETY

a. Stand with your feet well back in the clear and reach forward when saddling the mount.

b. Swing the saddle into position easily—not suddenly. Dropping the saddle down quickly or hard may scare the horse.

c. Soon after starting the ride, dismount and again tighten the saddle girth. Horses often swell up when first saddled, and failure to tighten girths later can result in serious accidents.

d. Never mount the horse in a small barn, near fences, trees, or over-hanging projections. Side-stepping mounts have injured riders who failed to take these precautions.

III. SAFELY CONTROLLING AND RIDING HORSES

1. CONTROL YOUR HORSE SAFELY

a. Keep your horse under control and maintain a secure seat at all times. Horses are easily frightened by unusual objects and noises. Anticipate these and steady your horse.

b. When your horse is frightened and attempts to run, turn him in a circle and tighten the circle until he stops.

c. If your horse is frightened by an obstacle, steady him; give him time to overcome his fear. Then ride by the obstacle. Do not punish him.

d. When your horse is too full of steam, work him on a long line a few minutes before riding.

2. RIDING YOUR HORSE SAFELY

a. Ride with your weight at the balls of your feet so you can free your feet from the stirrups if your horse should happen to fall.

b. Hold your mount to a walk when going up or down hill.

c. When riding in groups, keep a horse-length between animals, and be alert for overhead tree branches.

d. Reduce speed when riding rough ground or in sand, mud, ice, or snow, where there is danger of the mount falling or slipping.

e. Avoid paved roads or streets. Slow your mount to a walk when crossing such roads. If he is a spirited young horse, dismount and lead him across.
f. Don’t forget you are doing the driving. Keep away from obstacles where you or the horse may get hurt.

g. Travel single file and on the right side of the road.

h. On long rides, dismount and lead for five minutes each hour.

i. Walk the horse to and from the stable. This keeps him from running home and refusing to leave the stable.

IV. SHOWING THE HORSE 
WITH SAFETY AND COURTESY

a. Don’t try to show a green horse. Teach the horse at home, not in the show ring.

b. Avoid letting the horse kick when close to other horses. Space horses when possible.

c. Keep calm, confident and collected. Remember that the nervous showman creates an unfavorable impression.

d. Carefully and courteously follow the instructions of the judge and the ringmaster.

e. Be courteous and respect the rights of other exhibitors.

f. Be a good sport: win without bragging and lose without complaining.

SAFETY RULES FOR JUMPING

1. The rider should be able to go over Cavaletti (poles on the ground which are properly spaced) and do this adequately both with and without stirrups.

2. Before starting to jump the main objective is to instill confidence in the rider and therefore a safe, quiet, but willing horse is a necessity.

3. A great variety of low jumps should be used at first until skill has been sufficiently developed.

4. The rider should go over these low jumps at the trot to develop control and the ability to “stay with the horse.”

5. Keep the rider at the low jumps until all errors have been corrected.

6. Riders should wear “hard hats” at all times when jumping.

7. Only riders with superior riding ability should be permitted to jump.

8. If a rider should fall from the horse in the process of jumping, he should not be moved until checked by a nurse or a physician.

V. GENERAL SAFETY RULES

1. SAFETY LESSENS DANGER

a. Know your horse, his temperament and reactions. Control your temper at all times, but let him know that you are his firm and kind master.

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

c. Horses require kind, gentle, but firm, treatment. There are few vicious horses. Most of those become vicious through abuse. However, you must be firm and consistent. Decide what you want from your horse, and insist on getting it.

d. Never tease your horse. He may develop bad and dangerous habits the rest of his life. If so, your safety is in serious jeopardy.

e. Do not punish your horse, except at the instant of his disobedience. If you wait even a minute he will not understand why you are punishing him. Punish without anger, lest your punishment be too severe. Never strike or kick your horse about the head or legs.

f. Riders and attendants should not be loud or rowdy. Noise makes a horse jumpy and nervous both on the ground and under saddle. Eventually, some horses will react by kicking. A sharp tone of voice may be used for checking an animal, but your voice should never be louder than is required to meet the situation.

g. Ask permission when leading through a group of people.

h. Manners and suitability to the experience of the owner are prime qualities in any horse. Above all, know your horse, and make sure your manners are at least equal to his.

i. Never race. Horse play is only for the unmounted horse, not for the horse and rider.

j. Always treat other people on horses and afoot in the same way you would like to be treated.

k. Remember — “Kickin’ never gets you nowhere, less’n you’re a mule.” — Cowboy Proverb
Action: How a horse moves its feet and legs as at walk, trot, etc.
Aids: The legs, hands, weight, and voice, as used in controlling a horse.
Alter: To castrate a horse, to geld.
Amble: A slow, easy pace. The front and rear feet on a side move in unison.
Appaloosa: A breed of horses characterized by leopard-spot markings. Developed by the Nez Perce Indians.
Appointments: That equipment and clothing used in showing.
Astringent: Drugs that cause contraction of infected areas, such as tannic acid, alum, and zinc oxide or sulphate.
Back: To step a horse backward.
Bandy Legs: A horse pigeon-toed on his hind feet with the points of his hocks turned outward.
Banged tail: Hair of tail cut below the dock or bony part of the tail.
Barren mare: A mare that is not in foal.
Bearing rein: Neck rein — rein pushed against neck in direction of turn.
Bight of the reins: The part of the reins passing between thumb and fingers and out the top of the hand.
Biting rig: A combination of bridle, harness pad and crupper. Used to teach horse to flex at the poll.
Black points: Mane, tail, and legs black or darker than rest of horse.
Blemish: Any mark or deformity that diminishes the beauty but does not affect usefulness.
Bloom: Usually refers to hair that is clean and glossy, denoting a healthy appearance.
Bosal: That part of hackamore that fits over the nose.
Brand: A mark of identification. A private registered mark burned on cheek, shoulder, or hip. A number burned on upper neck as in army horses. Temporary brands are made by burning a number on the hoof, or painting a mark on the skin with silver nitrate. Brands are now tattooed on inside of upper lip to avoid disfiguring body.
Broom tail: A western range horse; a poor, ill-kept horse of uncertain breed.
Buck-knee’d: Knees bent forward.
Bugeyed: Eye protruding; horse usually cannot see well.
Canter: The Canterbury gallop. A three-beat gait, a moderate, easy, collected gallop.
Cantle: The back of a saddle.
Cannon: The lower leg bone below knee and below hock.
Castration: Removal of testicles from a male. A castrated male horse is a gelding.
Cavesson: A noseband on a bridle. A stiff noseband on a halter used with longe strap in training.
Cavy: A collection of horses.
Cayuse: A general term used to describe a horse of nondescript breeding.
Center fire: A western saddle with cinch hung from center.
Chaps; chaparajos: Seatless overalls made of leather, sometimes fur covered, for protection when riding in brush or for protection from cold. Also spelled chaparreras, chapareros.
Chestnuts: The hony growths on inside of horse’s leg; also called night eyes.
Cinch; cinch: A wide cord girth used on western saddles.
Chukker: A seven-and-one-half-minute period in a polo game. (From Hindu meaning “a circle”).
Coarse: Lacking refinement; rough, harsh appearance.
Cob: A stylish, high-actioned horse used for driving and riding.
Cold-blooded: A horse with ancestry from the draft breeds.
Collected: Controlled gait: a correct coordinated action.
Colt: A male foal.
Combination horse: One used for saddle and driving.
Conformation: Structure, form, and symmetrical arrangement of parts as applied to a horse.
Congenital: An abnormal condition that an animal possesses at birth, such as hernia.
Coon Footed: Long, sloping pasterns throwing fetlocks low.
Corona: Saddle pad cut to fit shape of saddle; has a large colorful roll around edge.
Coupling: Region of the lumbar vertebrae, loin, or space between last rib and hip.
Cow-hocked: Hocks close together, feet wide apart.
Crest: Upper, curved part of neck, peculiar to stallions.
Cribbing: Biting or setting teeth against manger or some other object while sucking air.
Criollo: A breed of South American horses; a small, sturdy horse used as a cow pony.

Cross: A dark stripe across the shoulders.

Cross reins: Method of holding single reins where reins overlap in hands across horse's neck.

Croup: Part of the back just in front of base of tail.

Crow hops: Mild bucking motions.

Dam: The female parent of a horse.

Defect: Any mark or blemish that impairs usefulness; unsoundness.

Docked: Bones of the tail cut in shortening the tail.

Dressage: Advanced exercises and training in horsemanship.

Dropped sole: Downward rotation of toe of coffin bone inside hoof due to chronic founder or laminitis.

Entire: A stallion.

Equine: of or pertaining to a horse.

Equitation: art of riding horseback, horsemanship.

Ergot: A horny growth behind fetlock joint.

Ewe-necked: Top profile of neck concave like a female sheep's neck.

Farrier: A horse shoer.

Far side: The right side of a horse.

Favor: To favor; to limp slightly.

Fenders: The wide pieces of leather along the stirrup leathers.

Feral: A wild horse. Has escaped from domestication and become wild, as contrasted to one originating in the wild.

Fiadore: A special knot on hackamore, exerts pressure at rear of jaws.

Filly: A female foal up to 3 years.

Five-gaited: A saddle horse trained to perform in five gaits, namely the walk, trot, canter, slow gait, and rack.

Flame: A few white hairs in center of forehead.

Flat-foot: When the angle of the foot is noticeably less than 45 degrees.

Flat race: A race without jumps.

Floating: Filing of rough, irregular teeth to give a smoother grinding surface.

Foal: Colt or filly under one year old.

Forefooting: Roping an animal by the forefeet.

Forehand: The fore part of a horse; the forelegs, head, and shoulders.

Founder: Inflammation of the feet causing lameness.

Fox trot: A short-step gait, as when passing from walk to trot.

Gaits: The manner of going. The straight gaits are walk, trot, canter, and gallop. Five-gaited horses walk, trot, canter, rack and do one of the slow gaits: Running walk, fox trot, or stepping pace.

Gallop: A three-beat gait resembling the canter but faster, 12 miles per hour. The extended gallop may be a four-beat gait and is about 16 miles per hour.

Gaskin: The muscular part of the hind leg above the hock.

Geld: To geld; to cut or castrate a horse.

Gelding: An altered or castrated horse.

Gestation period: The length of time for the development of the foal from time of breeding, usually about 11 months.

Get: The progeny of a stallion.

Girth: The measure of the circumference of a horse's body back of the withers. A leather, canvas, or corded piece around body of horse to hold saddle on.

Glass eye: Blue or whitish eye.

Goose-rumped: Having narrow, drooping rump.

Go short: To take short steps, indicative of lameness.

Green horse: One with little training.

Groom: To groom a horse is to clean and brush him. Groom also refers to person who does this.

Gymkhana: A program of games on horseback.

Hack: A horse ridden to a hunt meet. A pleasure riding horse.

Hackamore: A bitless bridle of various designs used in breaking and training. (From Spanish word Jaquina).

Hand: A measure of the height of horses; a hand's breadth equals 4 inches.

Haw: A third eyelid or membrane in front of eye which removes foreign bodies from the eye.

Head shy: Applied to a horse that is sensitive about the head; jerks away when touched.

Head stall: The leather bridle straps exclusive of bit and reins.

Herd bound: A horse who refuses to leave a group of other horses.

High school: Advanced training and exercise of the horse.

Hobble: Straps fastened to the front legs of a horse to prevent him from straying from camp.

Hogged: Short-cut mane.

Hoof: The foot as a whole in horses. The curved covering of horn over the foot.

Honda: A ring of rope, rawhide, or metal on a lasso through which the loop slides.
Horse: General term for an animal of the horse kind.

Horse length: Eight feet: distance between horses in a column.

Horsemanship: Art of riding the horse and of understanding his needs.

Jack: A male donkey or ass.

Jaquima: Spanish bridle; a hackamore.

Jockey: The leather flaps on the side of a saddle.

Laminae: The horny-grooved inside of the hoof.

Lariat: From Spanish, larrea, meaning “the rope”.
       A rope, often of rawhide, with running noose, used for catching cattle.

Lead: The first stride in the canter.

Lead strap: A strap or rope attached to the halter for leading.

Light horse: Any horse used primarily for riding or driving; all breeds except draft breeds.

Longe: A strap, rein, or rope about 30 feet long, attached to halter or cavesson, used in breaking and training.

Mare: A mature female horse.

Martingale: A strap running from the girth between front legs to the bridle. The standing martingale is attached to the bit. The running martingale has rings through which the reins pass.

Maverick: An unbranded stray.

Mecate: A hackamore lead rope.

Mellow hide: Soft, pliable, and easy to handle.

Mule: A cross between a jack and a mare.

Near side: The left side of a horse.

Neat’s-foot: An oil made from suet, feet, and bones of cattle, used for softening leather.

Off side: The right side.

Open behind: Hocks far apart, feet close together.

Orloff: A breed of Russian trotting horses.

Outfit: The equipment of rancher or horseman.

Outlaw: A horse that cannot be broken.

Palatable: Agreeable and pleasing to the taste.

Passenger: One who rides a horse without control, letting the horse go as he wishes.

Pathological: A diseased condition.

Paunchy: Too much belly.

Pony: A horse under 14.2 hands.

Pointing: Standing with front leg extended more than normal — a sign of lameness.

Poll: The top of a horse’s head just back of the ears.

Polochain: A chin chain of flat, large links.

Port: The part of the mouthpiece of a bit curving up over the tongue.

Posting: The rising and descending of a rider with the rhythm of the trot.

Pounding: Striking the ground hard in the stride.

Pudgy: Short and thickset.

Pull leather: Holding to the saddle with hands while riding a bucking horse.

Pulled tail: Hairs of tail thinned by pulling.

Quality: Fineness of texture; freedom from coarseness.

Ray: A black line along the spine. Also called dorsal stripe.

Recata: Spanish for lasso.

Registration: Recording an animal from registered parents in the breed registry association.

Remuda: A collection of saddle horses at a roundup from which are chosen those used for the day. A relay of mounts.

Ridgling: A male horse that has retained one or both testicles in his body cavity.

Roached back: Thin, sharp, arched back.

Roached mane: Mane cut off so part is left standing upright.

Rolling: Side motion of the forehand.

Rowels: The toothed wheels on spurs.

Rubberneck: A horse with a very flexible neck, hard to rein.

Running walk: A four-beat gait faster than a walk, often over 6 miles per hour.

Sacking: To slap a horse with a sack, saddle blanket, or tarpaulin as a part of gentling and training.

Shank: That portion of the cheek of the bit from the mouthpiece down.

Sickle-hooked: With a curved, crooked hock.

Side-wheeler: A pacer that rolls the body sidewise as he paces.

Single-foot: A term formerly used to designate the rack.

Sire: The male parent of a horse.

Slab sided: Flat ribbed.

Snaffle-key bit: A snaffle with small metal pieces dangling from center used in training colts to the bit.

Sound: Free from any abnormal deviation in structure or function which interferes with the usefulness of the individual.

Spread: To stretch or pose.

Stallion: An unaltered male horse.
**Stargazer:** A horse that holds his head too high and his nose out.

**Stud:** A place where stallions are kept for breeding.

**Stylish:** Having a pleasing, graceful, alert, general appearance.

**Sunfisher:** A bucking horse that twists his body in the air.

**Sureingle:** A broad strap about the girth, to hold the blanket in place.

**Symmetrical:** Proper balance or relationship of all parts.

**Tack up:** To put on bridle and saddle.

**Tapadera:** Stirrup cover.

**Three-gaited:** A saddle horse trained to perform at the walk, trot, and canter.

**Thrifty condition:** Healthy, active, vigorous.

**Traverse or side step:** Lateral movement without forward or backward movement.

**Tree:** The wooden or metal frame of a saddle.

**Tucked up:** Thin and cut up in the flank like a greyhound.

**Undershot:** Protruding under jaw.

**Utility:** The use to which a horse is designated.

**Veterinarian:** One who is trained and skilled in the treating of diseases and injuries of domestic animals.

**Vice:** An acquired habit that is annoying, or may interfere with the horse’s usefulness, such as cribbing.

**Walk-trot horse:** A three-gaited horse; walk, trot, and canter.

**Walleyed:** Iris of the eye of a light color.

**War bridle:** An emergency bridle made of rope.

**Weanling:** A weaned foal.

**Wrangling:** Rounding up; saddling range horses.

**Yield mare:** A mare that did not produce a foal during the current season.

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### Additional Horse Terms

The mark of a knowing horseman is the terms and “horse-talk” which he uses frequently and correctly. Learn these terms and use them correctly.

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A mare is carrying a foal, or in foal, or with foal.

Mare with foal at side or nursing a foal (to be more specific, use colt or filly).

A mare will foal, or is with foal, to (name of stallion).

The sons and daughters of a mare are her produce.

A foal is by its sire.

A foal is out of its dam.

When a stallion stands for service, he is offered to the public for breeding purposes.

Stallion owners usually present one of the following terms to the mare owner when he offers his stallion for stud:

**Stud Fee:** That charge for breeding services rendered by a stallion.

**Stud Fee Each Service:** The mare is not guaranteed to be with foal and a stud fee is charged for each service.

**Guarantee Foal to stand and suck:** Guarantees a live foal.

**Return privilege in season:** You may bring your mare back until she is with foal for that breeding season only. A second fee will be charged after that current season if the mare is returned.