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Your 4-H

Horse Project

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Club Series

H-24

4-H CLUB

MEMBER

**August
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Federal Cooperative Extension Service

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Contents

	Page		Page
Requirements	3	To Pick up a Hind Foot	13
Objectives	3	Accidents and Diseases	14
Your Horse	3	Equipment	14
Parts of a Horse	4	Horsemanship	18
Light Horse Breeds	7	Showing	20
Type, Confirmation, and Breed	8	Catching Your Horse	20
Are You a Good Judge of Livestock?	8	Tying a Rope Around a Horse's Neck	22
Gaits of a Horse	8	Tying a Horse to a Tying Ring	23
Care of Horses	9	Bridling a Horse	24
To Pick up a Front Foot	12	Safety Notes	24

Glossary of Horse Terms

Words which apply to horses

Foal—a young horse of either sex up to yearling.

Filly—a young female under 5 years.

Colt—a young male horse up to 5 years.

Mare—a mature female at least 5 years old.

Horse or Stallion—a mature male.

Gelding—an unsexed male.

Words used to describe horses

Balance—depth and width from front to rear with all parts blending smoothly, giving a pleasing appearance to the eye.

Bloom—usually refers to hair that is clean, glossy, and of a healthy, fine texture.

Characteristics—identifying or distinguishing points or parts.

Coarse—Rough, harsh appearance; lacking refinement.

Conformation—body shape or form.

Mellow hide—soft, pliable, and easy to handle.

Palatable—agreeable, pleasing to the taste.

Paunchy—applied to an animal which carries too much belly.

Pudgy—dumpy, short, and thickset.

Quality—fineness of texture; freedom from coarseness.

Soundness—freedom from any abnormal deviation in structure or function which interferes with the usefulness of the individual.

Stylish—having a pleasing, graceful, alert, general appearance.

Symmetrical—proper balance or relationship of all parts.

Action—straight and true, clean-cut, free, and bold.

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Your 4-H Horse Project

L. J. MARKS
*Wheeler County Extension Agent
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Requirements

To be a 4-H Horse Club member you must:

1. Own or have complete control, including the responsibility for care and management, of at least one horse or pony you can ride and handle safely, or a colt or young horse that you are raising and training.

If you borrow or lease a horse for your project, make a business-like written agreement with the owner. Include such items as the length of time you are to keep the horse, training, use, feeding special care, shoeing, breeding, etc.; then be sure to live up to your part of the agreement.

2. Have suitable equipment, including saddle, bridle, halter, currycomb, horse brush, and saddle blanket available for your use. You are to be responsible for care of this equipment.
3. Be responsible for the feeding, care, and management of your horse. You should do all the work in preparation for showing your horse.
4. Keep a record of expenses and receipts for your 4-H horse project in a 4-H livestock record book.

Objectives

1. Learn how to care for horses.
2. Learn how to ride.
3. Learn how to select and know a good saddle horse.
4. Learn how to train and handle horses.
5. Learn a healthful outdoor recreational activity.

Your Horse

The horse you pick for your 4-H saddle horse project will depend on your experience with horses. If you are a beginner, you should give more thought to training and temperament than to conformation and type. A gentle, well trained horse is an ideal companion for a boy or girl. An untrained horse, even if gentle, is not good for an inexperienced horseman. Knowing horses and how to handle them comes from experience with well trained horses.

Training or breaking of horses should be left for the more experienced horseman. After you have had two or three years' experience with horses, you may want a more spirited or younger horse, or you may want to train a colt.

4-H saddle horses vary considerably in size, conformation, and type, depending on horses available, and the primary uses of horses where you live.

Parts of a Horse

The following characteristics are desirable in all horses regardless of size and type.

1. A strong, heavily muscled back which looks short.
2. A short, wide, strongly muscled loin and a close coupling.
3. A deep, wide chest.
4. A roomy middle, with long, well sprung ribs.
5. Well set legs, pasterns, and feet, viewed from front, side, and rear.
6. Strong leg joints, deep from front to rear, clearly defined, with clean smooth bones.

7. Straight action, smooth, light, and snappy.

8. Good head and eyes.

9. Quiet disposition—not nervous.

Back and loin

When examining a horse, you will note muscles that extend from the shoulder over the back and loin to the hips. On very heavily muscled horses there will be a crease down the top of the backbone caused by the muscles standing up on both sides.

These muscles lift the forequarters of the horse when he rears, they strengthen the arch

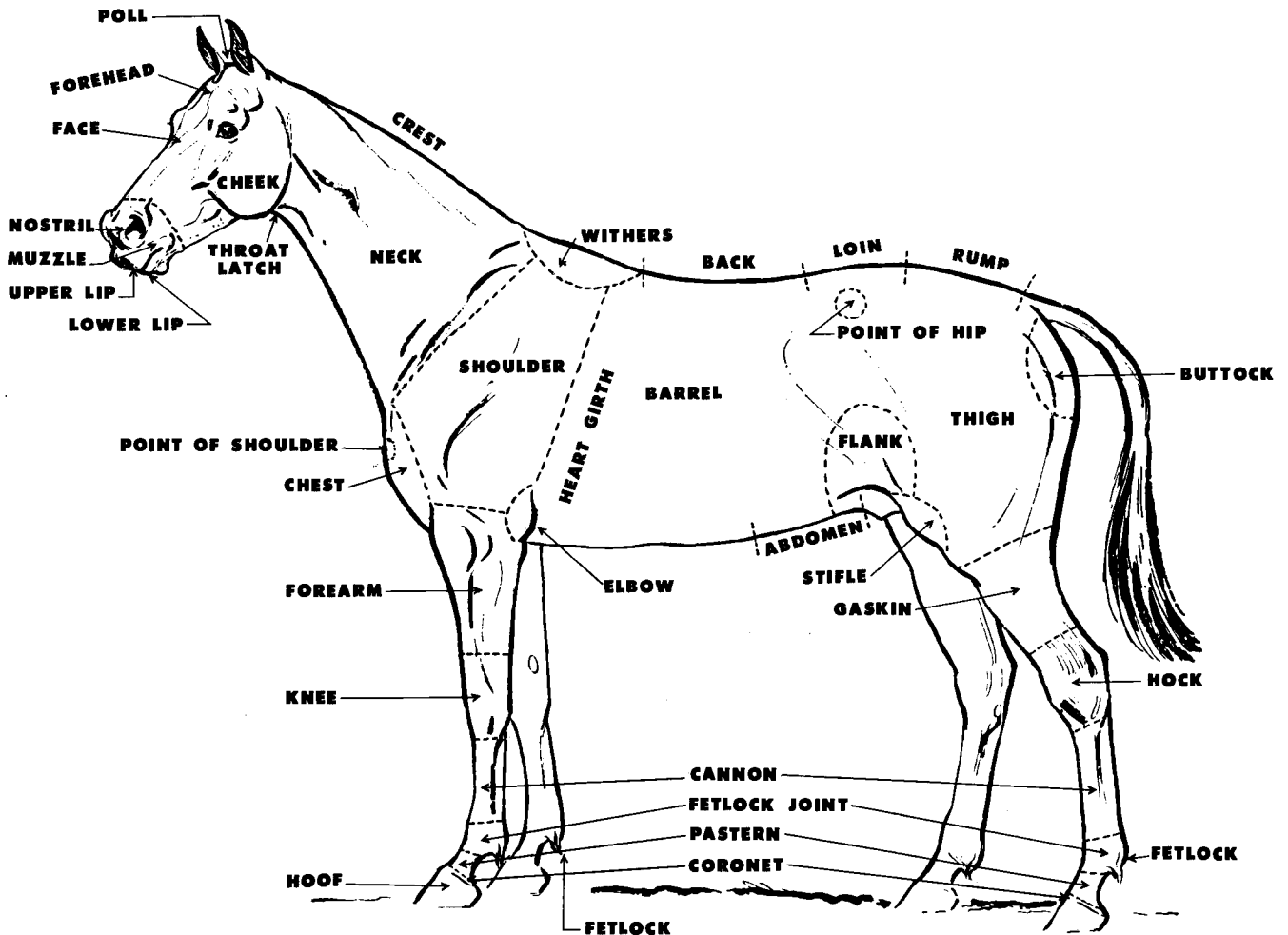


Figure 1. The parts of a horse are named on the illustration above.

of the back when the horse is pulling, trotting, cantering, or running, and they help carry your weight when you ride. When these muscles are large and well developed, the arch of the back is good, and the horse has a strong back and powerful loin.

Chest and constitution

The chest extends from the first to the tenth or twelfth rib, counting from the front. It should be deep and wide.

Depth of chest means the depth through the chest from the backbone to the breastbone or sternum, which is the floor of the chest.

A good middle

A good middle is desirable as it allows enough room for feed and body organs. The rear flank is where the lower body blends into the rear quarters. All horses should be fairly deep at this point. Horsemen say "well letdown in the flank," meaning that the horse has a good middle, with plenty of room for feed.

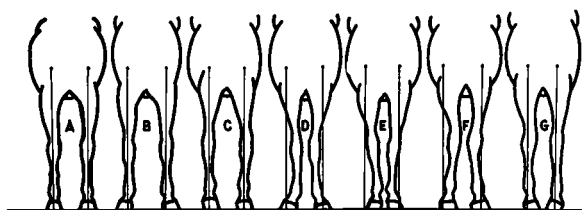


Figure 2. Front view of forelegs. A vertical line downward from the point of the shoulder should fall on the center of the knee, cannon, pastern, and foot. A—ideal position; B—toes out; C—bow legged; D—narrow chested and toes out; E—stands close; F—knock kneed; G—pigeon toed.

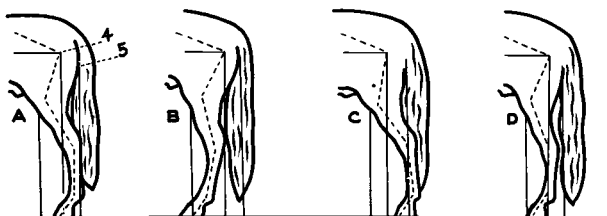


Figure 3. Side view of the hind legs. A vertical line downward from the point of the buttock should touch the rear edge of the cannon from hock to fetlock and meet the ground some little distance behind the heel. A—ideal position; B—stands under; C—camped out; D—hind leg too straight.

Horses that are well letdown in the hind flank seem to stand their work better, eat more regularly when at work, and keep in condition easier. This does not mean the horse just has a big belly.

Race horses are not letdown fully in the hind flank in training. When retired and not in racing condition, they become fat and tend to body down, showing ability to do hard work. Fat makes a horse body down, but a naturally wasp waisted horse does not have much endurance for heavy racing or heavy work.

Position of hind legs and feet

If you are a beginner it will be hard to determine when horses' feet and legs are in proper position. This can be learned by studying the accompanying charts and by watching various horses. Correct position of the legs increases strength in the rear quarters and is essential to the straight forward movement of feet and legs in traveling. Few animals have a perfect set of legs. Preference should be given to those that most nearly approach the ideal.

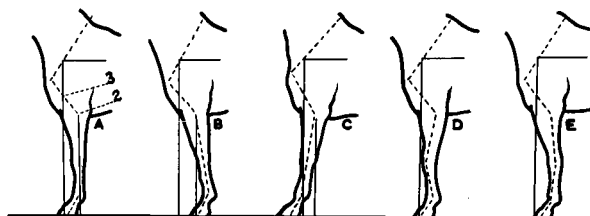


Figure 4. Side view of the fore legs. A vertical line downward from the center of the elbow joint should fall on the center of the knee and fetlock joints and meet the ground back of the heel. A—ideal position; B—camped under, indicating soreness behind; C—camped out, indicating sore feet; D—knee sprung, unsure footed; E—calf kneed, knees will go bad.

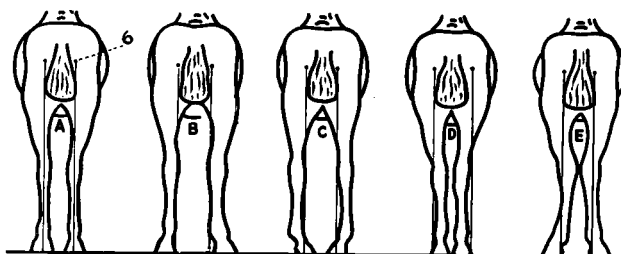


Figure 5. Rear view of hind legs. A vertical line downward from the buttock should fall on the center of the hock, cannon, pastern, and foot. A—ideal position; B—stands wide; C—bow legged; D—stands close; E—cow hocked.

Action

Horses should travel straight with the least amount of swinging or winging of their feet.

Look for action that is free and straight forward. Horses with crooked legs or feet or improperly trimmed feet tend to travel crooked more often than animals that have straight, well-placed legs and feet. Horses, particularly range horses, should show a light, springy step and reach well out. It is desirable for horses to look where they are going. They should carry their heads so their eyes are about level with their withers. Horses with relatively long

legs have more freedom of action and are easier to ride than short-legged horses that tend to travel with short steps and choppy gaits.

Head

The horse's head should be clean-cut with large, prominent eyes, and small ears set wide apart. The teeth should meet squarely. A "parrot-mouthed" horse has a short lower jaw, so the teeth do not meet squarely. This type is discriminated against because he cannot graze properly and you cannot tell his age by his teeth.

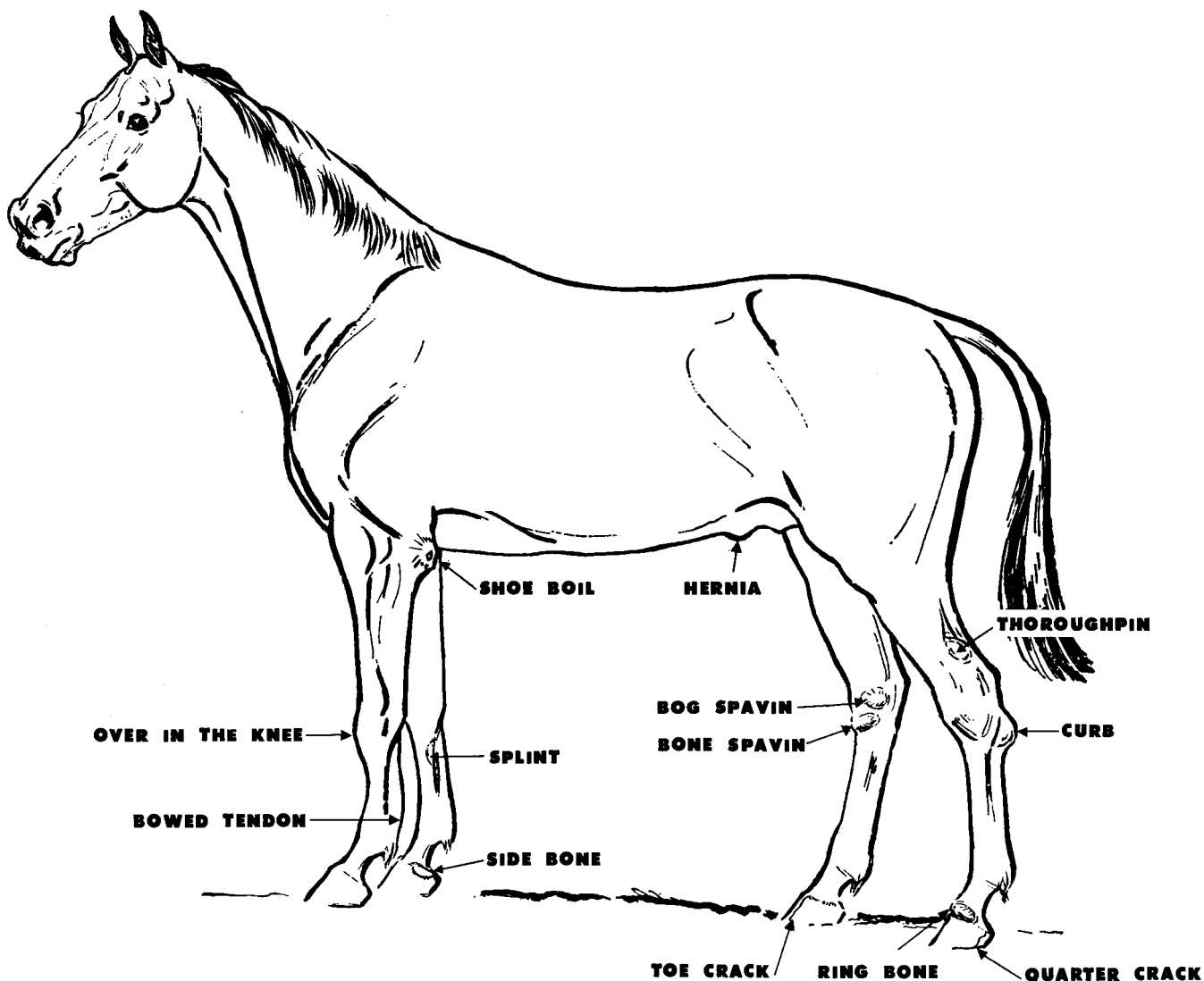


Figure 6. Unsound characteristics of a horse are named on the illustration above.

Blemishes

A blemish is a mark of injury on a horse. It may or may not hinder his action, usefulness, or soundness, depending upon the injury's location and severity. Blemishes do affect appearance.

Unsound characteristics

A horse is an athlete and must be able to move quickly and easily. To move quickly he must be free of any physical defects that might hinder his action. If he is free of all these defects he is considered a sound horse. Some unsound characteristics are acquired through injury or mismanagement by the owner. Others are inherited.

The principal defects causing unsoundness include ringbones, sidebones, founder, spavins, splints, cracked hooves, and heaves, or broken wind. Crooked feet and legs are the principal inherited weakness. Unsound features will be recognized after practice in judging and after careful selection of horses. Unsound characteristics to watch for are spavins, poor eyesight, imperfect teeth, heaves, ringbone, splints close to the knee or tendons, broken wind, sidebones, fistula, and string halt.

Bad temperament

Temper or disposition of a horse cannot always be readily determined until after you have handled or ridden him. However, you can tell cranky or mean horses in a relatively short time. Usually for your 4-H project a gentle dispositioned horse is desired. Bad temperament qualities to look for are balking, kicking, rearing, biting, shying, halter pulling or hanging back, cribbing, or wind sucking. Nervousness and excitability also are objectionable.

What is "a hand?"

The hand is the unit of measurement for height of a horse. A hand equals four inches. The height of a horse is measured from the top of the withers to the ground. The horse must be standing squarely on all four feet and on level ground or a floor when measured.

A horse 15 hands tall is 15 times four inches, or 60 inches tall. A horse 14 - 1 tall is 57 inches tall.

Horsemen know the height of their own shirt pockets, collar bones, chin, eyes, etc., and in this way learn to measure height of horses by standing on the ground or a floor next to a horse's withers.

Light Horse Breeds

Good type saddle horses are found in all of the light breeds. Popular breeds include the Thoroughbred, Quarterhorse, Arabian, Morgan, American Saddle Horse, Tennessee Walking Horse, Palomino, and Appaloosa. A sound, healthy horse of good saddle type conformation is preferred regardless of the breed. The horse may be registered in a breed association, he may be crossbred, or just plain horse.

A discussion of light horse breeds, with

illustrations, may be found in U. S. Department of Agriculture Farmers Bulletin 2127, *Light Horses*, available free at your County Extension office.

Many excellent grade horses which could never have been shown in any breeding class have shown well in conformation or performance classes. Many of these types will be owned and shown by 4-H Club members. No one breed or type is best for all purposes.

Type, Confirmation, and Breed

A breed is a family of animals of similar conformation, selected for size, color, action, disposition, etc. Individuals in the group are known and registered in records of that breed or association. Type and conformation are two different things. Type refers to the general makeup of a horse, whether he is large or small, leggy or chunky, plain or stylish, just as

automobiles may be sedans, coupes, pickups, etc.

Conformation refers to the details of the horse's makeup, regardless of type. A good horse must be a good piece of horse machinery. Imperfect legs and crooked action, bad middles, plain heads are to be avoided in all horses regardless of type.

Are You a Good Judge of Livestock?

To become a good judge of livestock you must have keen eyes and train yourself to quick and accurate observation. You must also have a good memory and develop reasoning powers and good judgment. Above all you must become familiar through experience and observation with the appearance and characteristics of good animals of the various types, classes, and breeds. Until you have a clear picture in your mind of what is good and what is excellent you will not know what to look for in livestock.

Because of the information needed by a judge it is imperative that you study and learn to know all the parts of a horse, illustrated in the horse diagram on another page. Also you need to know the correct placing of the horse's

legs and feet, and the general conformation of the various breeds. Another thing you must learn is to detect unsound qualities, particularly in feet and legs, as that is the main part—or locomotive part—of this piece of machinery. Some common faults you must learn to detect in judging horses are: weak constitution; narrow chest; long, shallow body; light, shallow flank; long, weak coupling and loins; long back; rough hips; poor action; straight shoulders; straight, short pasterns; crooked legs and feet; short, stubby gait; winging, paddling, and interfering; weak underpinning; shallow, flat feet; light, weak cannons; crooked and weak hocks; long, slight pasterns. Long pasterns should be fairly upright, short ones sloping.

Gaits of a Horse

The usual gaits of a horse are a walk, trot, and gallop or canter. The walk is a four beat gait; that is, the feet hit the ground one at a time giving four distinct hoof beats. The trot is a two beat gait. The right front foot and the left hind foot move together as a pair. Likewise the left front foot and the right hind foot move as a pair. The pace differs from the trot

in that the right front foot and the right hind foot move together and the left front foot and the left hind foot move together.

The gallop is of two kinds which we designate as a right lead or a left lead. In the gallop on the right lead the horse starts by lifting his weight and shoving forward with the left hind foot. Next the weight comes down on the right

hind and the left forefoot together. Third, the weight comes down on the right fore and the horse appears to roll forward on the right forefoot. Meanwhile the left hind comes forward under the horse to begin the next lead. Since the right fore is extended further than the left fore the horse is said to be galloping on the right lead.

When the horse gallops on the left lead the sides are reversed. That is, the lead begins from the right side, then the weight comes on the right fore and left hind and finally on the left fore.

In watching the horse you can tell which lead the horse is using by noticing which forefoot is extended further forward. The rider can see this by looking down over the horse's shoulder. With experience a rider also can tell

by the feel of the horse under him. The canter is a slow, collected gallop. The run is a fast gallop. When a horse is galloping in a circle or turning he can move faster and easier if he gallops with a lead toward which he is turning. Colts will do this naturally. Old horses will form the habit of galloping on just one lead if the other lead is awkward and difficult. Good training and proper care will prevent the forming of this habit.

In the 4-H Club project you will deal mainly with the three gaits—walk, trot, and gallop or canter. Other gaits will be encountered in four- or five-gaited horses. In most cases the additional gaits are developed. Most horses do not have them naturally, except in a few instances, when the additional gaits are the pace, single foot, or rack.

Care of Horses

Stabling

Horse stables should be clean and well ventilated, but horses should not be tied in drafts or drafty stables. You should remove manure from the horse stable daily. All sharp corners, boards, poles, protruding nails, etc., should be removed before any stable or corral is used for a saddle horse. The disposition of a horse is better when the stable is kept clean all the time. Horses should have room for exercise each day in a small pasture or corral.

Feeds and feeding

The value of your horse and the cost of keeping or producing him depend largely upon his hay and other feed. Since the major expense in keeping a horse is for feed, that item should be watched at all times. A variety of feeds of good quality, which can be grown at home, should be fed regularly, frequently, and according to the individual requirements of the animal.

Feed legume hay, alfalfa, clover, etc., if available, as they are rich in protein, vitamins,

and calcium. Criticisms made against alfalfa in eastern states are not necessarily true in Oregon or other western states. However, alfalfa hay should be of good quality and fed in reasonable quantities. Grass or grain hay, such as timothy or native grass hays, are deficient in calcium and protein. However, many horsemen prefer hay of this type for their horses. When such hay is fed it should be supplemented with calcium in some form, such as steamed bone-meal. Young and growing horses, up to 400 pounds, need .8 pound protein per day; young, 600-pound animals need 1.2 pounds. Wild hay will not likely furnish enough total nutrients, so a small amount of grain should be fed to complete the ration. The purpose of supplementing pasture with hay and grain, or supplementing hay with grain is to produce better growth and to cut down the cost of feed. A balanced ration is usually cheapest and gives the best results.

Some grain usually should be fed to colts. It supplies phosphorus and helps to build strong bones. However, many healthy, useful horses receive no grain until they are started in train-

ing. In these cases it usually takes the horse a little longer to get maximum growth than if he had had grain and other supplements during his younger life. The standard grain for horses of all kinds is oats. Oats are rich in protein and minerals, and are a safe feed.

When your horse is being worked little or not at all, good quality hay is sufficient. Grain should be added to a horse's ration when he is used or worked heavily, as a horse has a small stomach and cannot make use of enough hay to supply his maintenance requirements under such conditions. A 1,000-pound horse, at hard work, will use 8 or 10 pounds of oats per day. Preferably the oats should be fed in small amounts, two or three times during the day. Feeding some grain also is a good conditioner for preparing horses for show. You will find oats valuable in conditioning and training young horses or colts.

Whenever a horse is on heavy feed and is not used for a day, the grain ration should be cut materially. Otherwise, when the horse is in use again, Azoturia may develop. This disease quite often is crippling or fatal. It usually can be prevented by reducing the feed drastically when a horse is not being used.

If your horse is being fed regularly there is little danger of founder from hay alone, unless there is a drastic change from alfalfa or legume hay to a grass or cereal hay, or the opposite. With grain the situation is different. Grain should always be kept from your horse, except for what he is expected to eat. Many good horses have been lost because they had access to too much grain and became foundered. Wheat is especially dangerous in this respect.

Stock salt, some mineral, and plenty of clean water should be available to horses at all times. In areas where forage is deficient in iodine, it is necessary to feed iodized salt, particularly to brood mares carrying foal. If your horse is kept in a stable, water should be carried to him or he should be led to water every night and morning. The horse will drink what he wants. The horse never should fill up quickly with water when he is warm and sweaty or he may founder. Give him plenty of

time to drink. You may have to restrain him from drinking too fast.

Exercise and conditioning

Horses on the range get sufficient exercise, but those kept in stables and raised under confined conditions must have room to exercise to develop their muscles and strong feet and legs. It takes several weeks to get a horse in show condition, so preparation should start in plenty of time. You do not want to show a horse that is excessively fat, but neither do you want to show a poor horse, particularly with a colt. It is necessary to feed some grain in order to have the colt in good condition unless its mother is giving plenty of milk.

You will learn from talking with experienced horsemen and through your own experience that feeding some grain to any horse you are training will be of help. The horse will learn faster when "picking up" than he will when not in top physical condition.

You may at times ride a well trained but excessively fat horse not accustomed to being ridden under saddle. After such a ride wash the horse's back off with clean, cool water immediately after taking off the blanket and saddle. The horse will appreciate getting the sweat and dirt out of the caked hair on his back. Most horses will stand perfectly still for this treatment following unsaddling. You are likely to prevent galling on the horse's back and prevent unsightly scars or white saddle marks by washing the back clean.

Grooming

You will find proper grooming of your horse to be mostly hard work, as all dirt must be removed from the animal and he must be absolutely clean from his nostrils to the end of his tail. The best way to remove dirt from a horse is by brushing. Washing tends to remove the natural oil from the hair, making it look lusterless and unhealthy. Blanketing in some cases will help bring out the oil and settle the hair.

Continuous brushing of the hair is recom-

mended. In grooming, a currycomb should not be used other than to loosen caked dirt so the brush can take it out. The currycomb should be used to clean the brush occasionally. Washing of the horse is used only to remove stains that cannot be brushed out and should be done at least a week before show time.

The mane and tail should always be brushed and combed thoroughly. Trimming of the mane and tail depends upon the class and breed of horse you own or exhibit.

It is difficult to keep a short, slick coat on horses during winter months. It is possible, however, by stabling and blanketing; but be sure to guard against colds, pneumonia, or distemper in your horse when you use this method.

The tails of stock horses usually are pulled so the end hangs just below the hock joint when the horse is traveling. The tails and manes always should be cleaned of dirt and the hair well separated. As to whether the horse's mane is roached or not depends on your preference and on the requirements of the show or class.

A western stock horse with a full mane usually has it trained to lie all on one side of the neck. This may be done by continual movement of the mane hair to whichever side of the neck you prefer. Most western stock horses do have full manes, and usually their manes are trained to lie on the left side of the neck. Possibly this is the custom so the mane will not interfere during roping, the rope usually being handled by the rider's right hand and passed down the right side of the neck of the horse.

Care of the feet

If you are training a young horse or raising a colt you should be particularly careful to see that the animal's feet are properly trimmed and don't grow improperly, causing imperfect legs and poor action. Horses kept in stables should have their feet trimmed and cleaned regularly. This is particularly true of show animals. To show properly, they must have their feet well trimmed, correctly shod, and clean. You should not leave shoes on your horse



Figure 7. To clean out the feet always work in order—near fore, near hind, then off fore, off hind. With the hoof back, clean out the hoof from heel to toe. Clean around the frog—the triangular growth in the center of the hoof. At the back of the frog is a depression which goes up into the hair. This is called the cleft. The depressions on each side of the frog are the commissures. It is important that both of these areas be thoroughly cleaned, as these places are the seat of thrush, and other foot infections. Inspect the feet for rocks, nails, injuries, loose shoes, and thrush.

longer than two months, but your horse will require shoes all the time you are using him. A tenderfooted or barefooted horse will not be able to obtain maximum efficiency.

Shoeing protects a horse's feet from excessive wear, tends to correct faulty action, and helps to strengthen the animal's natural action. When horses are running on rocky pasture or range, they keep their feet worn or broken off, but in soft land or meadow pastures, horses may need to have their feet trimmed. Wild range horses keep their feet in better condition than tame horses because they travel more. You should watch the feet of your 4-H saddle horse, and if they need trimming you should arrange to trim them or have them trimmed at once.

To Pick Up a Front Foot

Figure 8. Stand on the left side of your horse, facing his rear. Place your left hand on the horse's shoulder. Bending over, run your right hand gently but firmly down the back of the leg until the hand is just above the fetlock. Press against the horse's shoulder with your left hand, thus forcing his weight onto the opposite foreleg. Grasp the fetlock with the fingers.

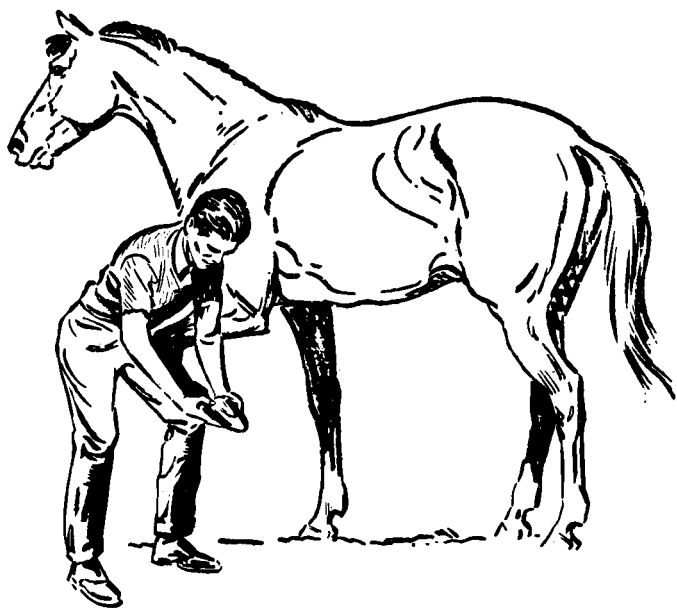
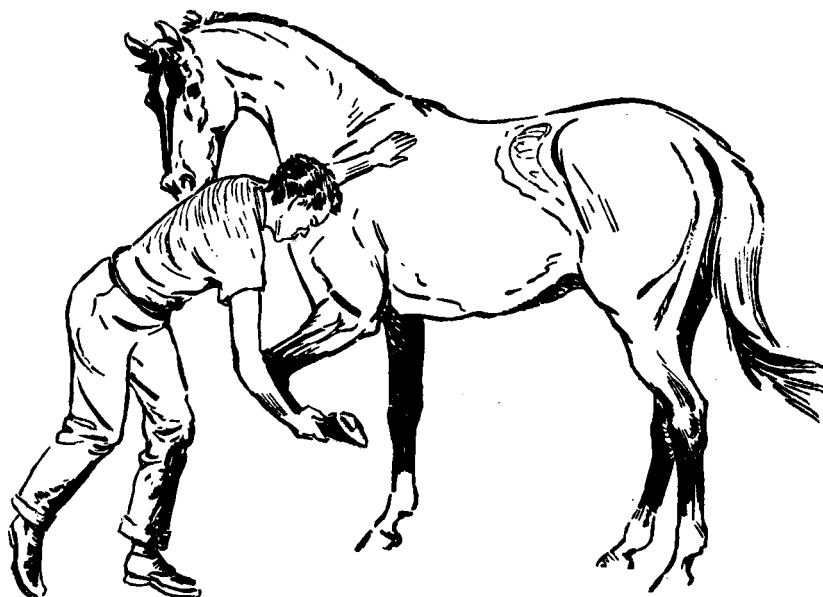


Figure 9. When the horse picks up his foot, place it between your legs, and support it on your left knee.

To Pick Up a Hind Foot



Figure 10. Again working from the left side, stand well forward of the horse's hind quarters, facing his rear. Gently stroke the back as far as the point of the hip, against which your left hand is placed. Stroke the leg gently but firmly with your right hand down as far as the middle of the cannon. Press against the horse's hip, forcing his weight onto the opposite hind leg. Grasp the cannon just above the fetlock with your right hand, lifting the foot directly toward you so that the leg is bent at the hock.

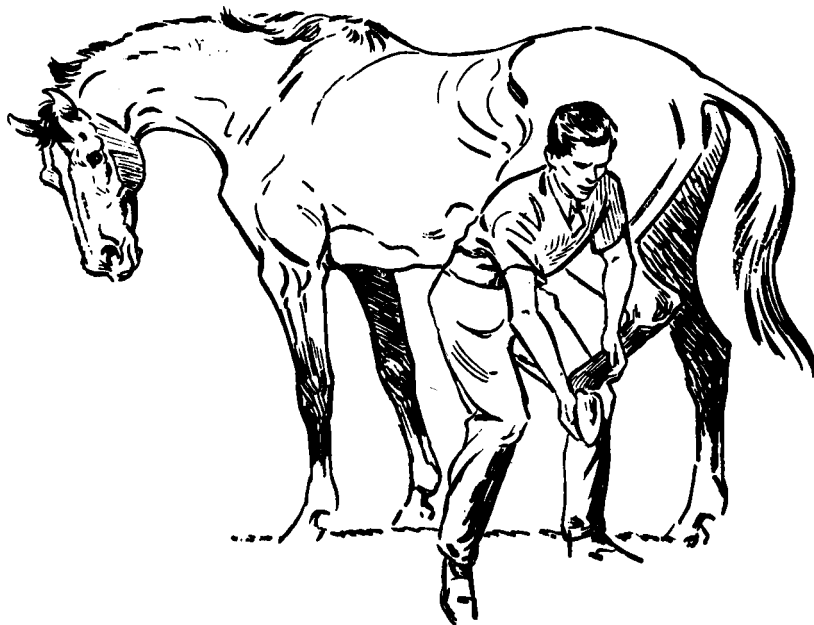


Figure 11. Then move to the rear, keeping the hind leg next to your thigh. Avoid holding the foot out to one side of the horse. The discomfort of this position will make him resist. Swing your left leg underneath the fetlock so as to support the leg firmly.

Accidents and Diseases

General

Prevention is the best remedy for accidents and injuries. Remove all loose wire, protruding nails, sharp corners, and farm machinery from horse lots and stables. Take every precaution to prevent accidents, but be ready with equipment and medical supplies when needed to treat injuries.

Treatment of cuts and abrasions

Cleanliness is very important in the treatment of cuts and abrasions. Wash the wound thoroughly with mild soap and clean water as soon as possible. Use a good disinfectant. Tincture of iodine is good, but may cause burning and irritation if used repeatedly for several days. Use a fly repellent on open wounds during fly season. A mild antiseptic ointment can

be used on scratches and rope burns. Rope burns, especially under the pasterns, are serious wounds and should be treated carefully.

Call a veterinarian if the wound is deep, severe, or fails to heal readily. Follow his directions.

Keep your injured horse in a clean lot or pasture. Check the wound daily.

Diseases

Horses must be guarded against infectious diseases. One of the most common is distemper. Take your own feed and water buckets when you go to fairs and shows. Do not allow your horse to drink from a watering trough that might be contaminated.

Diseases should always be cared for by a veterinarian. Follow his instructions for management and care.

Equipment

Saddles

There are many kinds of saddles, so you should be able to get just what you wish. The saddle must not hurt the horse and it must be comfortable to you. It must also stay in place on the horse. A soft, free-swinging stirrup leather is necessary. Other equipment is a matter of use and personal preference. Most riders prefer to be in style and to use what is popular in their group or community.

English saddles are used for pleasure riding and for dress-up occasions or show. They are comfortable. When jumping, the rider can lean forward without bumping the saddle horn. The rider is close to his horse. These saddles are good for many kinds of fast work because the rider can use his legs to good advantage.

The Western saddle has a horn to which one can tie a rope. It is too wide in the front

for comfort but width is necessary if it is to be strong enough for roping. Makers of Western saddles have developed free-swinging stirrup leathers that are as comfortable as the English stirrup.

The seat with either type should be selected to fit the rider. This may mean a fit-to-order saddle.

Bridle

The bridle or headstall serves only to hold the bit in place. It should be light but strong.

Bits

For western use for horses to be ridden with the lightest possible reining, nothing is better than a light curb bit with chains. Chains keep a very light pressure on the bit and

thereby serve to develop a responsive soft mouth. Lightweight reins made of soft leather are best for both man and horse. A bit must be used as lightly as possible. The way the bit is used is far more important than the bit itself. Riders who have bit trouble are usually those who depend too much on the reins and not enough on weight and balance to control their horses. Young horses usually are started with the snaffle bit or a hackamore. When they become well trained they may be switched to a stiff or port bit, or in some cases to the spade bit.

Blankets

Saddle blankets must meet two requirements. They must be thick and soft; soft enough to protect a horse and thick enough not to wrinkle under the saddle.

Spurs

The choice of spurs is a matter of personal preference providing they are not too sharp. Like bits, they are most useful when used sparingly. The beginning rider should be well accustomed to riding before he uses spurs.

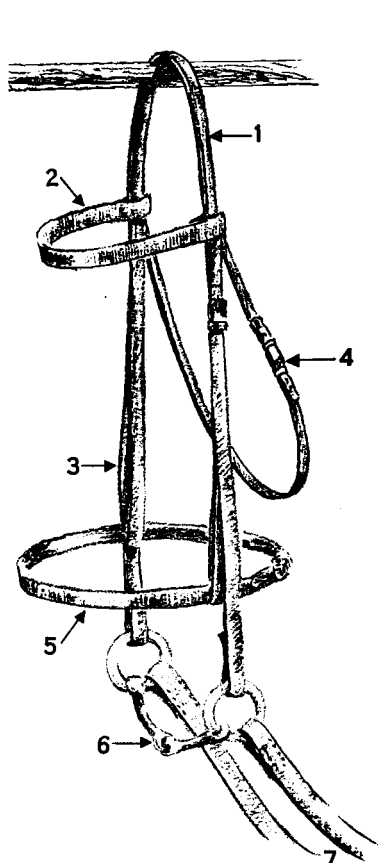


Figure 12. Single-reined bridle with snaffle bit.

1. Crown-piece, or headstall
2. Browband
3. Cheek pieces
4. Throat latch
5. Noseband
6. Snaffle bit
7. Reins

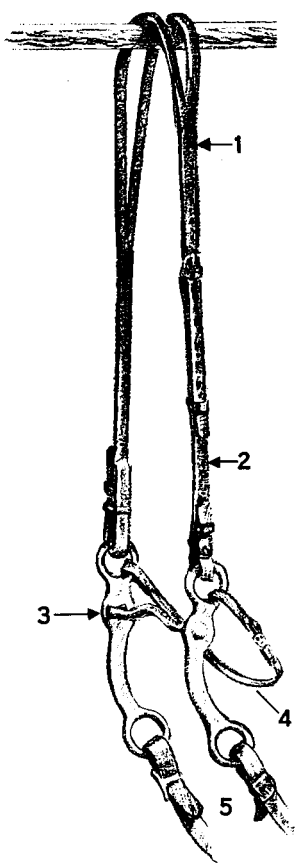


Figure 13. Split-eared bridle with curb bit.

1. Crown-piece, or headstall
2. Cheek pieces
3. Curb bit
4. Curb strap
5. Reins

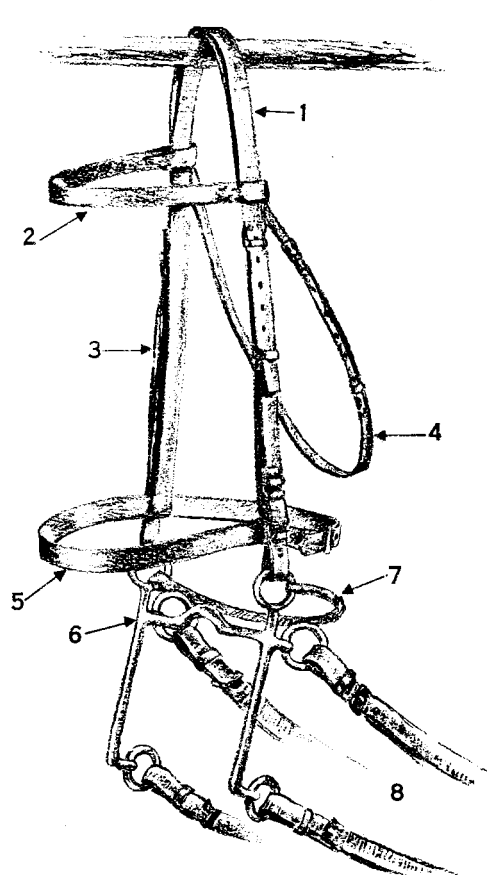


Figure 14. Pelham, double-reined bridle.

1. Crown-piece, or headstall
2. Browband
3. Cheek pieces
4. Throat latch
5. Noseband
6. Pelham curb bit
7. Curb strap
8. Reins

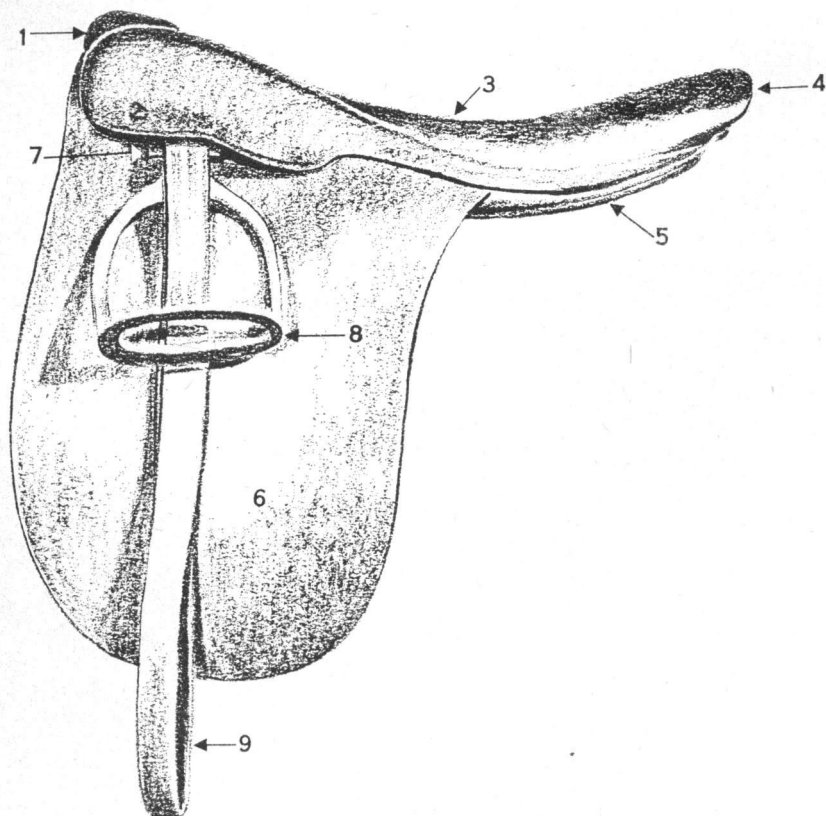
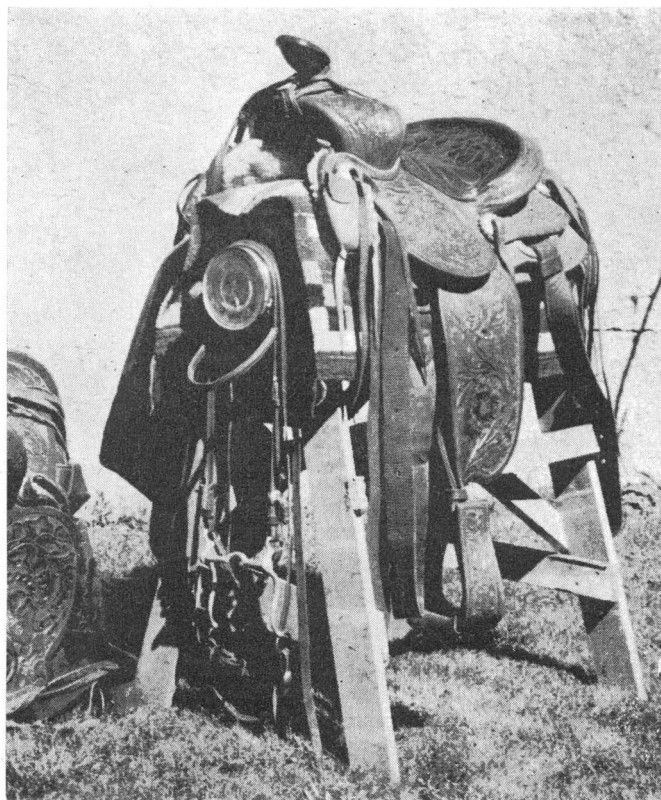


Figure 15. English saddle.

1. Pommel
2. Skirt
3. Seat
4. Cantle
5. Panel
6. Flap
7. Stirrup bar
8. Tread of stirrup iron
9. Stirrup leather

Figure 16. The illustration at right shows a saddle rack. When removing a saddle from a horse, stand the saddle on its front end or lay it on its side.



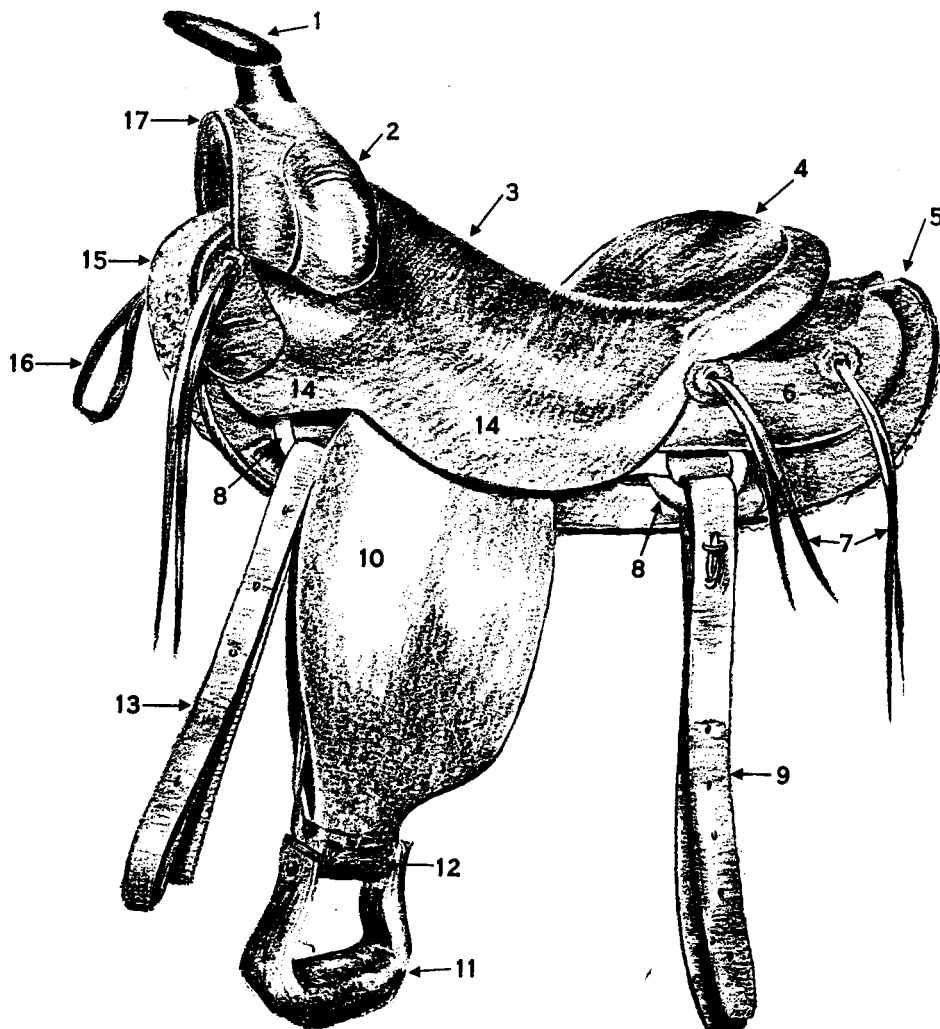


Figure 17. Western stock saddle.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Horn | 9. Leather flank girth |
| 2. Fork | 10. Fender |
| 3. Seat | 11. Stirrup |
| 4. Cantle | 12. Stirrup leather |
| 5. Skirt | 13. Front tie strap or cinch strap |
| 6. Back housing or back jockey | 14. Front jockey and seat jockey, one piece |
| 7. Lace strings | 15. Wool lining |
| 8. Dee rings | 16. Rope strap |
| 17. Pommel | |

Horsemanship

Horsemanship and horse training are much the same. What a horse does is the combined result of the skill of the rider and of the previous training of the horse. A green rider can do very little with even a well trained horse. A skillful rider does not expect much from a green horse.

Horsemanship means getting the horse to do just what the rider wishes with the least possible effort of both rider and horse.

The horse does not care whether the rider wears a jumper, ordinary pants, or Levi's, or whether the saddle is Western, English, or Mexican. These items are a matter of personal preference. For good control of the horse the less leather between the rider and the horse, the better. A heavy, stiff saddle may be a handicap to young riders and may be uncomfortable. If you are just learning you may want to ride for some time with no saddle. You may become a better rider if you first learn to ride well bareback. When bareback you ride more by balance than when using a saddle. You are closer to the horse and learn to stay with, or "follow the horse." A young rider often tends to let the saddle move him off-balance, putting the horse in awkward positions. If you use no saddle there is no danger of being caught, hung up in the stirrup or on the saddle.

The fundamentals of horse control are the same regardless of style of riding or equipment. If you are accustomed to one type of equipment you may feel uncomfortable when trying something different, yet in a few hours you may feel entirely at ease. This is especially true in changing from English to Western or from Western to English. The fit of the saddle is important. A saddle that fits one rider may not fit another, regardless of type. Fit is especially important with the Western saddles since the seats are hard and unyielding.

Riding aids

Horses are managed by the reins, your legs, and your weight. Management by legs means any movement from the slightest pressure with

the calf to a sharp dig with the spurs. The reins, legs, and weight together are known as "the aids."

With a green horse the aids are used with such vigor that the horse is more or less forced to do what is wished. As horse and man become more accustomed to working together, the aids are applied with less and less force until eventually they become a mere signal and are almost unnoticeable. These aids are mostly just the natural impulse of the rider which in time the horse learns to follow, just as a woman follows the lead of a man in dancing.

It may take much patience and urging to get a green colt to lead with a halter, but in time he learns to lead with no more than the weight of the lead rope. The training of a horse is always done one step at a time. One thing is taught until it becomes a firmly fixed habit. Then training is used to get the horse to do something else.

It is usually impossible to do much forcing of a horse, but some is possible. The forcing may be by actual power or by putting the horse in a position where his resistance is useless. This leads to two vital rules in horse training. First, never expect a horse to do anything new until you are in a position to see that he does it. Never give in until he does. Second, when a horse has been induced to do something new, repeat the lesson until the habit is firmly fixed so that forcing of any kind is no longer necessary. Thus, bit by bit, you can have a well trained horse.

Gathering the horse

If a horse is to respond to the aids promptly and without jumping, it is necessary first to get his attention. In the army this is called "gathering the horse." It is brought about by a slight lift on the reins and, if necessary, a slight closing of the legs or even a touch of the spur. If the horse is standing in a bad position he must get his legs under him ready to go. Practice will enable the rider to get the horse into position without actually starting him forward.

Starting, stopping, and backing

A horse is started forward at a walk by leaning forward slightly, squeezing with your legs, and “giving” with the reins to allow the horse to extend his head.

To stop, squeeze your legs together, pull the reins back a few inches, and “fix” your hands. A quiet, firm “whoa” will help teach a green horse to respond to your leg and hand aids. Release the tension on the reins as soon as your horse has stopped. With practice, a horse will learn to start and stop easily with so little use of the aids that they cannot be seen.

To back, pull the reins back a few inches, “set” your hands and squeeze with your legs. The leg pressure tells your horse to move. When he extends his head to move forward, he comes up against the bit so he backs. Propulsion backward is maintained by leg pressure, not by pulling on the reins. A steady “back” will help teach your horse to respond to the aids.

A green horse should be started or stopped with the least possible use of the reins and spurs. To learn to start and stop is the basis of all good horse training and the green horse should be stopped and started very carefully a number of times in every lesson. If a horse learns to stop and start quietly and smoothly with the minimum use of the aids, and especially with the reins, he will astonish you when you put him into fast work. Starting and stopping are dull work but you cannot do too much of it. An essential part of this training is to make the horse stand quietly when stopped. He should stand whenever placed without moving or fretting. These things are not hard to teach a horse but many riders never try.

Voice commands

Voice commands given in a gentle voice may be used. These are especially good in training a green horse. You may train your horse to come to you by whistling or calling. This may be done best by giving the horse a handful of grain or a cube of sugar each time he responds. The voice command of “whoa” is standard for gaining attention of any horse

you are passing near and also for your horse to stop and stand still. Also your horse may be trained to back at the “back-up” or to move to one side by “move over” or just “over.”

Teaching a horse to back should be done when first starting training. At first a horse can be induced to take one or two steps backward. Then with proper encouragement, petting or speaking to him, the horse can be made to back further. Probably the first time the horse backs you should try for no more than one step. Occasionally teaching a horse to back can be done best from on the ground. Stand in front of your horse with the reins held close to the bit and slowly push him backward. It will help to push on the center of the chest with the hand or with a stick or with a spur held in the hand. Once started backward the horse should move from the pressure on the chest rather than from continued pull on the reins. Finally, the reins should become merely a signal to go backward and not be used for forcing. He should be backed dismounted until he backs freely, is not nervous or afraid. Sometimes horses cannot be taught to back unless this training is started early. A young horse learns much more readily than an older animal.

Shying and scaring

A horse is naturally timid and easily frightened and startled, but he can learn and get used to almost anything if he isn't hurt or frightened during the training.

As soon as a green horse is progressing well with his training he should be introduced to as many alarming things as possible, always providing the horse is not harmed. The general plan is to walk the horse back and forth past the thing of which he is afraid, keeping him far enough away that he does not rebel. As he gets used to the situation he may be taken closer and closer and finally made to stand and look at the object until he loses all fear. Since the purpose is to relieve fear he must not be given any unusual whipping or spurring. Never put a green horse into a frightening position where he must either go forward or

balk. Take special care to avoid letting him be hurt unintentionally, or letting a fast moving car splash water or gravel on him. The object of this training is not merely to get the

horse used to alarming things but to fix the habit of having him go wherever you ask him to and teach him that you are not going to put him where he will get hurt.

Showing

Showing under saddle

Mature horses may be shown either in pleasure or stock horse classes, which are both under saddle. Or they may be shown at halter. Regardless of class the saddle horse should be thoroughly groomed and cleaned before show time. This preparation should start at least a month previous to the show.

Horses shown in riding classes usually are required to go both directions around the outside of the show ring some distance from the judge. They should change gaits at the request of the judge or the ringmaster. They should travel with the correct lead at the canter, stand quietly, and back well. Horses should start the canter from a walk, then reverse and continue at the walk until the judge calls for another gait. When showing horses under saddle it is important for you to have equipment properly adjusted and placed on the horse.

Showing at halter

Horses shown at halter should lead well up beside the leader; that is, the horse's head should be even with and to the right of the leader's shoulder. The horse should be led straight away from and back to the judge so that the action may be studied. The judge may request that the horse be shown at both the walk and trot. The horse should be stopped squarely before he is turned. The leader should

turn the horse so the showman is on the outside of the circle. When leading your horse away from or back toward the judge you should have your horse trained so you can lead him at your side, at least so you will not be directly in front of him thereby obstructing the view of his action by the judge. You should have your horse trained to stand properly and in one place during the judging. Be sure your horse is standing squarely on all four feet, not on three and loafing on the other. In saddle horse classes do not stretch your horse. This no longer is required. Also your horse should be trained so the judge can feel his legs and feet.

In some at-halter classes a horse may be disqualified if shown with a bridle, so it is important for you as a 4-H member to show your horse with only a halter in those classes.

Horsemanship contests

There are numerous horse-riding games and contests to participate in at your club meetings, at fairs, picnics, etc. Some of these are individual, one rider and horse competing with other individuals. Others may be with pairs of boy and girl, or two boys and two girls, competing against other sets or pairs. In any of these the better you have your horse trained the better show you will be able to put on and the further up the line you should place in competition.

Catching Your Horse

Always approach your horse quietly and confidently. Be sure to speak to him so he will know you are approaching. Well trained horses can be approached easily and with safety if they know you are approaching. Even a very

gentle horse is likely to kick if startled by a person approaching. It is best to walk up to the left side of the animal, stroking him gently on the shoulder or side of the neck or possibly on the nose. When you first walk up to a horse,

touch him where he can see your hand. If you happen to touch him first under the chin or under the jaw you may cause him to strike or rear on the hind legs. This is dangerous and always should be guarded against.

Haltering

Once you have had your hands on the horse, quietly slip a rope over his neck and hold onto the ends of the rope. Then proceed to halter or bridle. Usually you hold the halter in your left hand while holding the rope loop, and stroke the horse's neck with your right hand. Slip the halter over the horse's ears with your left hand.

Bridling

Approach the horse from the left side, passing the reins of your bridle over and around the horse's neck, holding the ends of the reins. In this manner you may unhalter the horse before the putting the bridle on, if you want to. Now you can either drop the reins or tie a knot in them around the horse's neck, as you will need both hands for bridling. Now hold the top of the headstall with the right hand over the horse's forehead with the bit resting on the fingers of your left hand. Use the little finger to move the curb strap back under the horse's jaw and your thumb to pry open the horse's mouth on the side back of the front teeth. Press the horse's lip between your thumb and the horse's teeth if he refuses to open his mouth. Once the horse's mouth has started to open slip the bit between his teeth and at the same time pull the headstall up with the right hand.

Be sure your headstall and bridle are properly adjusted. Most bits should be in the horse's mouth without pulling the lips too far on the side, or so the bit will rest on the bars on the sides of the horse's mouth back of the front teeth. How tight the curb strap should be depends on the type of bit you use and also on the training your horse has had.

Saddling

The next step is saddling. Put your saddle blanket further ahead on the horse than it will

be when you saddle, then slide it back. This smooths the hair under the blanket and helps prevent sores on your horse. Never put your saddle blanket further back on the horse than it should be or slide it forward over the hair. This turns the hair the wrong way, ruffles it, and will, in many cases, cause saddle sores or galls. Put your saddle on over the blanket and cinch it just tight enough so the saddle will not fall off. Lead your horse a few steps, then tighten the girth further. Take it slowly in tightening your saddle girth. That is, take about five minutes before the saddle is finally cinched securely. Many young horses have been cinch-bound by tightening the saddle girth too quickly. A cinch-bound horse rears backward when the cinch is tightened.

In your 4-H contest either tie the horse or hold the bridle reins or halter rope while you are saddling and unsaddling. You never know when you might be left afoot unless you have hold of your horse's lead rope. With your bridle adjusted and your saddle adjusted and properly cinched, you are ready to mount.

Mounting

Be sure you know how to stop a horse before mounting. Inexperienced riders have "froze" to their saddles, failed to stop their horses, and suffered serious accidents.

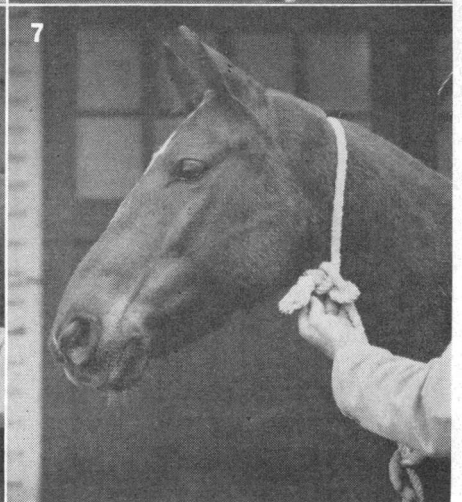
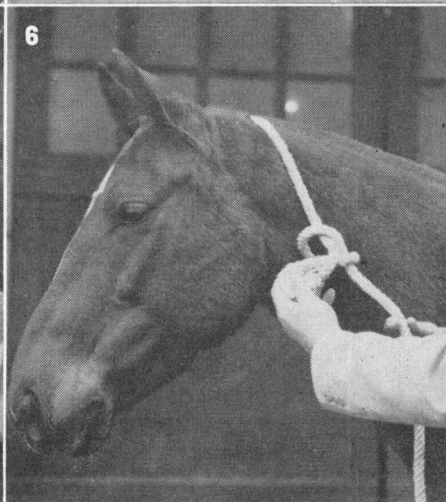
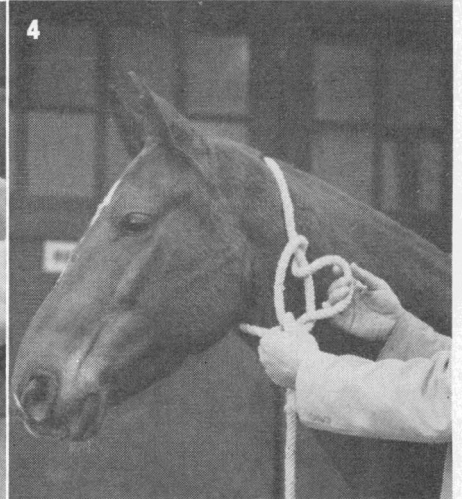
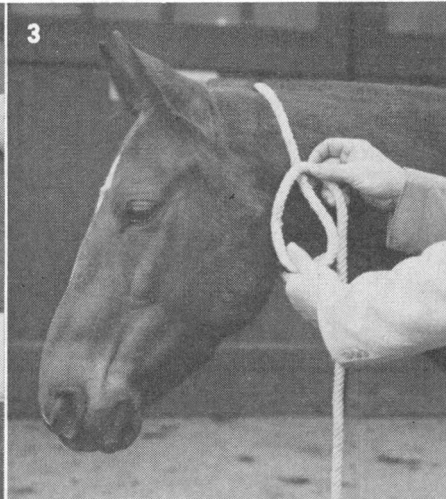
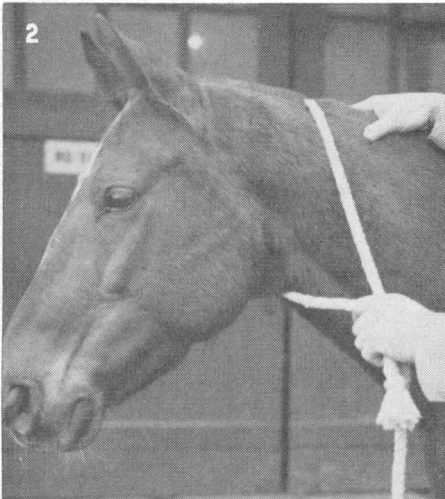
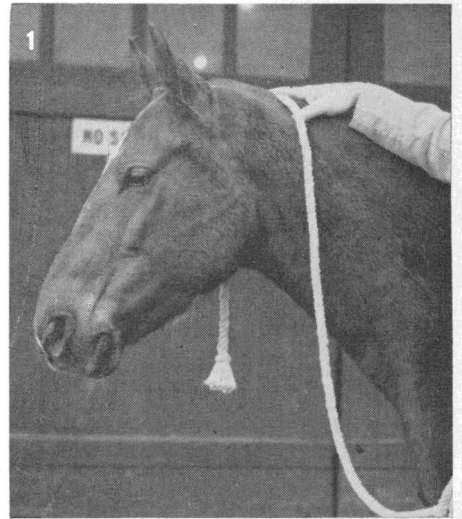
To mount, stand by your horse's left shoulder and gather your reins over the horse's neck in your left hand with the left rein gathered shorter than the right. Take the stirrup on the left side of your horse in your right hand and place the toe of your left foot in the stirrup. While you are still standing at the front of the animal, by his shoulder or neck, reach for the saddle horn with your right hand and with your left knee next to the animal's shoulder, swing up. By having the left rein tighter in your left hand than the right rein, you tend to swing the horse around with you and this throws you on around into the saddle. If you are swinging the other way, or the horse is turning the other way, it will tend to throw you away from the horse.

Always ride in an upright position, bearing

Tying a Rope Around a Horse's Neck

Figure 18. This is one way of tying a bowline knot.

1. The end of a rope is placed over a horse's neck.
2. The end of the rope is caught in the hand and the horse is under control.
3. The short end of the rope is held in the left hand, so the horse still is caught, and both hands are used in starting to tie a bowline knot.
4. The short end of the rope is held in the left hand and a loop of the long end of the rope is drawn through with the right hand.
5. The short end of rope is drawn through the loop.
6. The short end of rope is held with the left hand, so it won't slip back. The long end, or lead rope, is pulled with the right hand.
7. The bowline knot is complete. It will not slip and choke the horse. The knot can be untied even though the horse may pull hard on it.



Tying a Horse to a Tying Ring

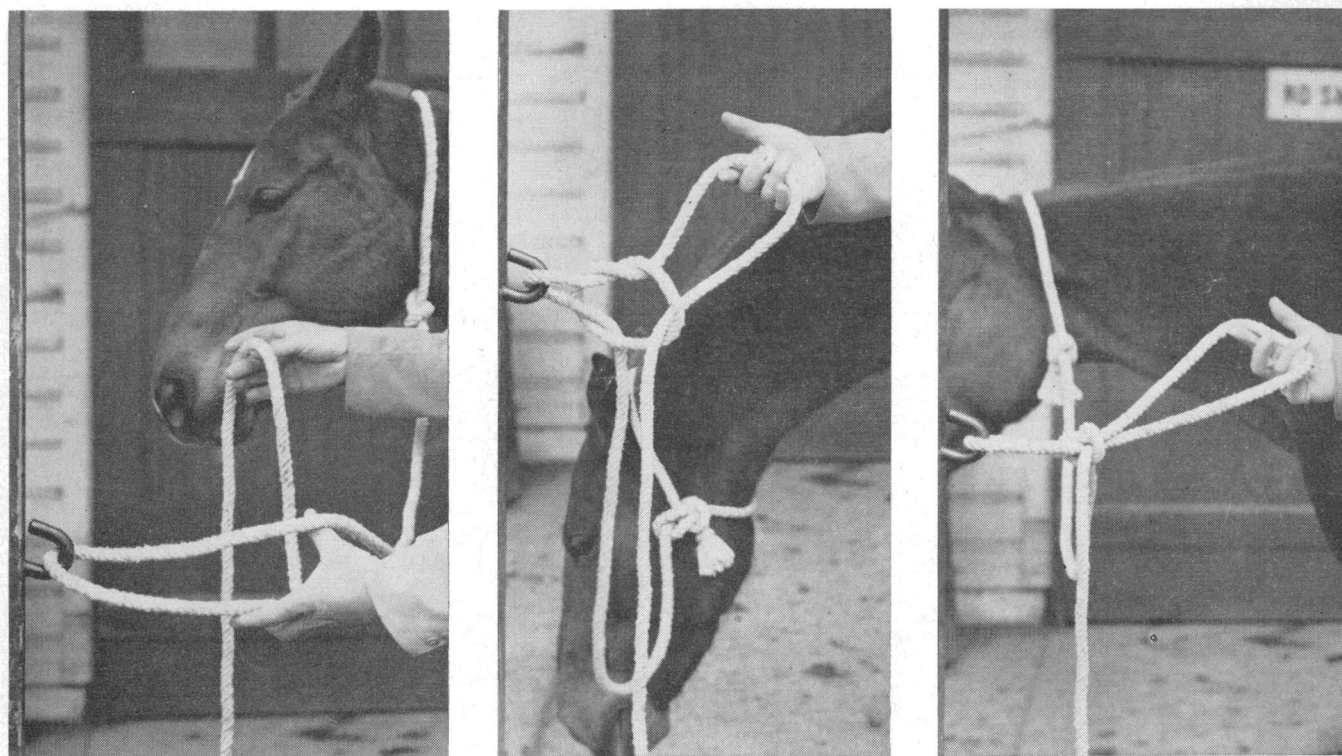


Figure 19. A single bow slip knot is used to tie to a ring or post. The loose end of the rope can be dropped through the bow to keep the knot from coming untied.

even weight on each stirrup. If you ride on one side, or in a careless position, you soon will cause sores on your horse's back. It is much easier to prevent sores on horses than to cure them. When riding with a group of horses, on trail rides or at your club meetings, allow ample room for your partner and also watch for the possibility of other horses kicking, striking, or biting. Even gentle horses may show disapproval of strange horses by biting and kicking. When riding you should keep far enough away from strange horses so they cannot kick you.

Managing your horse

Always tie your horse securely. Tie him so he can reach his feed, but with a rope too short to get under a front foot. Until a horse is thoroughly trained he should always be tied with a

rope and halter he cannot break. This usually means at least a half-inch rope. After a horse is thoroughly trained he may be tied with only a $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch rope or smaller. Then, if there is real need for a horse to break loose, such as during a fight or in case of fire or flood, he can break the rope.

When riding your horse always consider his footing. Never run or trot him on pavement. Be careful of turning him on grass sod. Always be careful in winter when on frozen ground or ice. A horse can lose his footing and fall because of improper handling by the rider. Should your horse fall try to be in a position to free yourself so you will not be caught under him. To help keep yourself free from the horse you should never ride with your foot entirely in the stirrup, unless you are wearing boots that will pull off. It is safest to keep only the toe in the stirrup.

Bridling a Horse

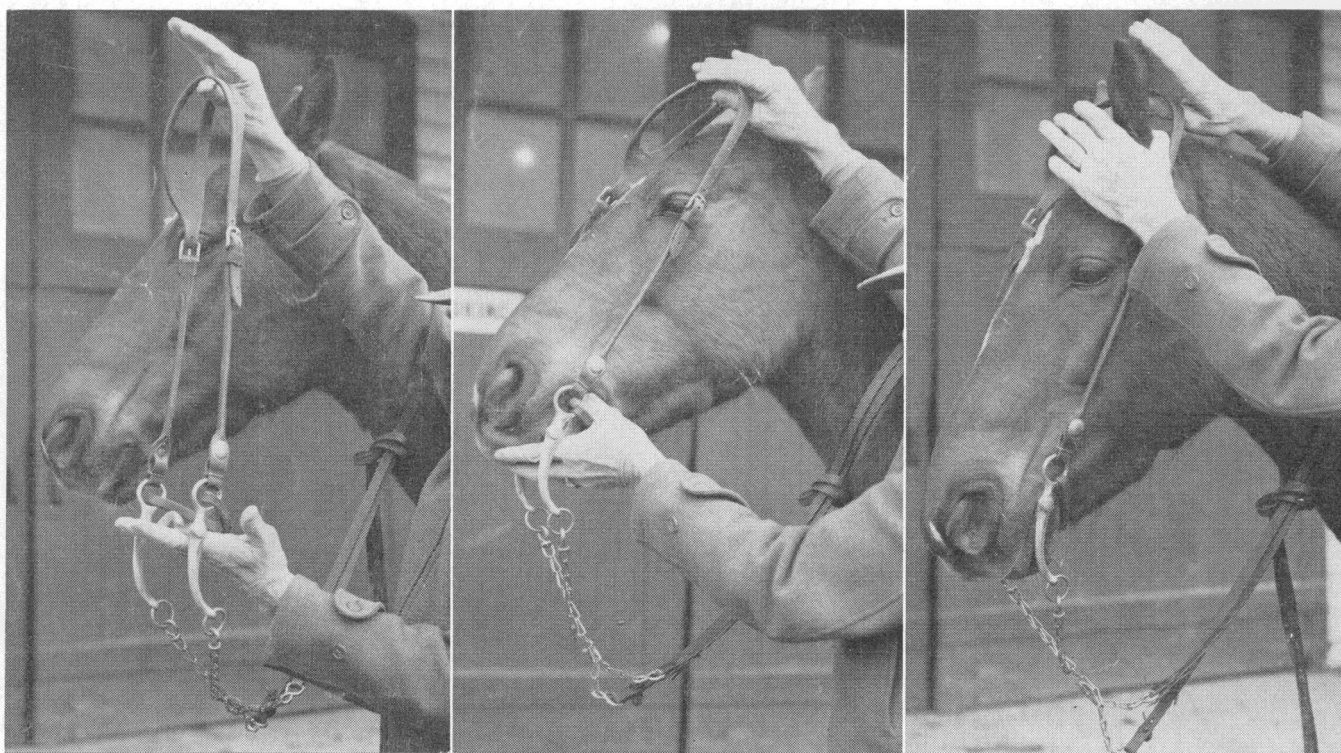


Figure 20. Tie bridle reins around the horse's neck. Hold bit on fingers of left hand. Gently press horse's lip against teeth at side of mouth, compelling the horse to open his mouth. Place the curb strap under the horse's chin with little finger of left hand. Be gentle in handling the horse's ears.

Safety Notes

1. Always let a horse know you are approaching.
2. Tie horses with right length of rope. Don't stake them out.
3. Ride with plenty of space between your horse and the next horse, usually a horse's length.
4. Watch the footing of your horse on ice, green turf, and pavement.
5. Never trot or gallop your horse on pavement or concrete.
6. Travel single file and on the right side of the road.
7. Know how to stop your horse at a run before you start to ride alone.
8. Ride with only your toes in the stirrups so you can free yourself if your horse should happen to fall.
9. Tie your horse far enough away from strange horses so they cannot fight.

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