



## Volunteer Manual

At Hope Unbridled, we affirm that each person is uniquely and wonderfully made.

## Confidentiality Policy

I. **General Principle:** Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program shall preserve the right of confidentiality for all individuals in its program. Riders, their families and our volunteers have a right to privacy that gives them control over the dissemination of their personal, medical or other sensitive information.

II. **Information covered by the Confidentiality Policy:** The staff shall keep confidential all medical, social, referral, personal and financial information regarding a person and his/her family. This includes mailing lists for the organization.

III. **Persons subject to the Confidentiality Policy:** Anyone who works or volunteers for, or provides services to Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program is bound by this policy. This includes but is not limited to:

- a. Full and part-time staff
- b. Independent contractors
- c. Temporary employees
- d. Volunteers
- e. Board members

IV. **Competency and Informed Consent Disclosure:** A rider may not be competent to give consent for disclosure of medical or sensitive information or both (including photographs and videotapes) because of age or mental incapacity. Only parent(s), legal representatives or others defined by state statute have this authority.

V. **Intra-agency access to and disclosure of medical and/or sensitive information:** No access to, or disclosure of medical and/or sensitive will be made without a rider's consent based on a perceived need to protect staff or anyone else from possible exposure through casual contact. Universal precautions will be used with all riders under the assumption that all riders may have been exposed to infectious disease.

VI. **Extra-agency disclosure of medical and/or sensitive information:** Disclosure of information to outside agencies or individuals will be made only with specific written consent of the rider or guardian.

VII. **Written acknowledgement of the Confidentiality Policy:** Each volunteer for Hope unbridled Equestrian Program has signed a written statement.

## **VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS**

Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program (HUEP) seeks to provide a therapeutic, professional, beautiful, safe and peaceful environment for students, visitors, staff members, volunteers and horses. The purpose of this code of ethics is to provide volunteers with an ethical and responsible framework from which to serve.

As a volunteer, I will:

1. Listen carefully to The HUEP staff members and recognize that they follow certain procedures for a reason.
2. Respect my fellow volunteers.
3. Strive to keep the Program Coordinator or Executive Director informed of opportunities in the community for promoting HUEP and potential funding opportunities.
4. Keep well informed of developments and policies relevant to my volunteer responsibilities and HUEP policies. I understand that email is the preferred method of communication.
5. Participate actively in volunteer trainings and assist other volunteers as they join HUEP.
6. Bring to the attention of the Program Coordinator or Executive Director any issues that I believe will have an adverse effect on the organization or those we serve.
7. Help curtail any negative conversations, rumors or gossip.
8. Refrain from bringing in my personal interests or financially benefiting as a result of my relationship with HUEP.
9. Consider myself having a vested interest in the organization and do my best to ensure that it is well maintained-keeping quality and safety in mind.
10. Always strive to learn how to be a more effective volunteer while also assisting the staff in improving the volunteer program.
11. Notify staff if I cannot physically do something that is asked of me.

As a volunteer, I will not:

1. Criticize fellow volunteers and staff members or their opinions.
2. Use the organization for my personal advantage or that of my friends or relatives.
3. Discuss confidential issues with anyone not involved with those issues.
4. Interfere with the duties of staff members or undermine their authority.
5. Mistreat horses or any other animals on HUEP property in any fashion.
6. Take pictures of HUEP students or participants.

Where repeated attempts have been made to rectify a volunteer's non-compliance with the Code of Ethics, or where a severe violation of the Code of Ethics has occurred, prompt action will be taken to remove or suspend the individual. As a HUEP volunteer, I agree to adhere to and to be responsible for maintaining the above Code of Ethics.

## **BARN RULES**

1. No smoking anywhere on the premises.
2. Please drive slowly; we love our children and horses.
3. Direct access to any horse must be supervised by one of our instructors.
4. Closed-toe shoes are required when working with horses.
5. Safety stirrups or boots are required when on a horse.
6. Helmet is required when riding.
7. Observe all “off limits” signs.
8. Only service animals are allowed to be brought to the barn for safety reasons
9. A staff member must be present to bring horses in from the pasture.
10. No “horse play” in the barn (roughhousing).
11. Parents must supervise all students who are not in a lesson.

## **Volunteer Program**

Due to the nature of the work done at Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program (HUEP), children under the age of 10 are not allowed to volunteer, but instead encouraged to participate in camps, special events and the 4-H program that meets on the property. Children 10-13 may volunteer under special circumstances and with the permission of a HUEP staff member. Those 14 years of age and older have several volunteer opportunities. There is something for almost everyone- those with horse experience and those without, those who wish to volunteer weekly or those who wish to volunteer occasionally. All volunteers 19 and older must pass a DHR child abuse/neglect check and all volunteers 18 and older must pass a criminal background check. Every effort will be made to place volunteers in the program of their choice. Volunteers may discontinue their service at any time, but advance notice is greatly appreciated. HUEP has the right to discontinue the service of any volunteer who fails to follow given code of ethics or breaches confidentiality. Attending volunteer orientation is required for all who wish to volunteer at HUEP.

## **Volunteer Position Descriptions**

### **Barn Volunteers**

Individuals seeking to volunteer by doing barn chores will need either significant horse experience or to complete horsemanship training at HUEP. A basic evaluation will be done to test your level of horsemanship skills before you are allowed to volunteer in the barn. Barn volunteers will only be scheduled during times when a staff person is present and available to supervise them, regardless of age or experience. Barn volunteers may clean feed buckets, help feed and water horses, help with turning horses out to pasture or bringing them in, clean tack, muck stalls, or work on projects around the barn.

## **Program Volunteers**

Many of the lessons taught at the barn are taught to children with special needs. For those students and some of our “typical” students, a leader, sidewalker and/or spotter may be necessary. Consistency is so important for the success of our students, so program volunteers are asked to make a weekly commitment of at least one hour at the same time each week.

Horse Handling: When a volunteer is leading a horse, their sole responsibility is the horse which they are leading. They are to always be tuned in to what their horse is doing and, when needed, giving verbal feedback to the instructor as to how their horse is feeling in different situations. A short evaluation will be completed by an instructor prior to anyone being approved to lead a horse.

Sidewalking: When a volunteer is sidewalking, their sole responsibility is the rider to which they are assigned. Their job is to stay tuned in to their rider by watching their balance and expressions. In some situations, the sidewalker may walk with their hands down beside them, or they may walk with a hand hold on the student when requested by the instructor. The ideal position for a sidewalker is to stay between the rider’s knee and hip and about 4-6 inches away. Sidewalkers do not need previous horse experience, but will be required to complete training at HUEP. Sidewalkers must be physically capable of holding the sidewalking position for 30 minutes at a time and walking and/or trotting with their rider for periods of time.

Spotting: When a volunteer is spotting, they are asked to watch a horse and rider team. They could be asked to do so by standing still and watching their team in a certain area of the arena, or they could be doing so by walking with the student from several feet away. They are to verbally inform the instructor of any concerns about the horse and rider team, as well as intervene if the situation becomes hazardous. While this position does not seem “busy” or even necessary at times, if you have been asked to spot please understand that it is very important for the safety of everyone involved for you to remain attentive.

## **Unmounted/Ground Programs and Special Event Volunteers**

When HUEP hosts unmounted/ground activities, we may need quite a few volunteers for a variety of tasks. Typical needs for these events include: grooming horses, help leading horses, assist with attendees, assistance with arts and crafts, generally keeping an eye on children to ensure safety, photographing the day’s events, serving food, and much more. Previous horse experience is not required to assist with these programs.

## **Administrative Volunteers**

When a volunteer assists with administrative tasks, they may be asked to make copies, file paperwork, audit files, complete data entry or do other tasks necessary for operation of the barn’s programs. All information obtained while volunteering is considered privileged and private information should be kept confidential. Administrative volunteers will only be scheduled to come when office staff will be present to supervise.

## **Fundraising Volunteers**

Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program will put on a few fundraisers each year as well as miscellaneous other events, like holiday parties. Each event requires planning, donation solicitation, set up, clean up and evaluation. Volunteers are welcomed and encouraged to volunteer on event committees. Contracts for services should only be signed by Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program staff, and no funds should be promised or spent without prior consent by Hope Unbridled Equestrian staff member.

### **Supply Drive Volunteers**

Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program's current budget does not allow for necessary items like bottled water, paper products, office supplies, arts and crafts supplies, snacks or tack and other equipment needed for the horses. Volunteers are welcomed and encouraged to collect these items in the community for donation to Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program. A Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program staff member should be consulted before approaching any businesses for donations and before embarking on a very large campaign for supplies.

### **Property Maintenance and Special Projects**

Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program staff members welcome volunteer help in lawn maintenance, gardening, stick removal, fixing broken equipment, and special projects. Please be mindful of your own physical limitations and do not cause injury to yourself, others or Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program property while volunteering. Property maintenance volunteers will only be scheduled when a staff member is available to supervise them.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **When can I begin volunteering?**

After completing training, many volunteers are extremely anxious to get started! While we would love to incorporate everyone as quickly as possible, it takes time to process paperwork, run background checks and match new volunteers with students. Please be patient during this necessary process and know that we're doing our best to get everyone involved as soon as possible. We will make every effort to find a time for you to volunteer that accommodates your schedule, but please understand that this may not be possible every term.

### **What do I do when I arrive at Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program the first time to volunteer?**

The gate should be open during program hours and a staff member on the premises. If you arrive and the gate is closed you may call Sherry 662-231-5388 or Terry 552-401-4908.

### **Why do I have to sign in?**

When you come to volunteer, please sign in. Signing in is very important as tracking volunteer hours will help us to secure funding and show potential donors the tremendous community support we have. Plus, you may need a record of volunteer hours for personal use.

### **Can I become friends with the students and/or their parents?**

If you are a tender-hearted person, you are likely to feel quite connected to participants. You are also likely to feel a special connection with a specific participant. Please refrain from giving money or gifts to the students, do not offer rides or other personal favors, and avoid giving out personal contact information. You are cautioned to consider the consequences before connecting with students on any social media site. Be a support person in their lives while they are at the barn, and know that you are making an eternal difference even if you are only with them for a short time.

### **What do I do if I see a significant need in a student?**

Please contact a staff member if you feel like a student and/or their family has significant need. We do have some contacts that can help us meet some needs. We can work together to meet the need.

**Why is the student I'm working with progressing so slowly?**

The session's pace is a bit slower than traditional barns, so do not expect to be preparing beginner riders for showing or the Olympics. This is a low-stress, encouraging, uplifting, peaceful, and educational environment on purpose. Please help us to keep this atmosphere by encouraging the riders, listening when they would like to talk, giving positive feedback, and treating everyone the way you would want to be treated.

**Will I be notified if a student cancels?**

The Program Coordinator will contact you upon hearing a student has cancelled. Occasionally, students will cancel their lesson at the last minute or not show up at all. This is inevitable. If the student you are scheduled to assist cancels or does not show up, please ask a staff person if there is anything else that you can do. Chances are pretty good that there are other tasks to be done! Flexibility and understanding are greatly appreciated.

**What is the weather policy?**

The weather also affects the lesson schedule at the barn. Please do not assume that lessons are cancelled due to rain. We will use the opportunity to do ground work with the students. If it is thundering and lightning, lessons will be cancelled. Generally, we determine whether lessons will take place two hours before the lesson time. If you feel like traveling from where you are to Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program is dangerous, please text the Program Coordinator. Every effort will be made to notify volunteers of cancellations in advance. Again, your flexibility and understanding are greatly appreciated!

**Will someone inform me of the student's reasons for participating in Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program?**

Many of our participants have physical, cognitive or emotional disabilities. They want to be spoken to with respect, they don't want to be questioned or made to feel uncomfortable, they want to learn and have a good time, and they want to spend time with horses! Do not expect to be told the participant's circumstances for being at Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program. Please do not ask prodding or inappropriate questions, and please let a staff member know if you are uncomfortable working with children with a specific disability.

**Can I take pictures of my student?**

A participant must have a signed photo release form and give verbal permission before any pictures may be taken, please ask a staff member.

**Is there a dress code for volunteers?**

Volunteers should not wear open-toed shoes, crocs, or sandals when working at the barn. It is recommended that volunteers wear shoes or boots that offer foot protection. We advise against volunteers wearing dangling jewelry, perfume or loose, long hair. Clothing and overall appearance should be professional, safe and allow duties to be accomplished easily.

**How can I stay informed about Hope Unbridled Equestrian's schedule and upcoming events?**

The best way to stay up to date is to provide an accurate email address on your volunteer application. An email is sent out monthly with that month's volunteer opportunities. The Program Coordinator will also email throughout the month with other requests to help. You are welcome to contact the Program Coordinator through email at any time. Liking us on Facebook is another great way to stay connected.

## Most Common Disabilities

1. **Autism:** Self-absorption and repetitive behaviors are characteristic, and are most often accompanied by profound communication disorders. It is of the utmost importance to gain and keep the rider's attention.
2. **Asperger's Syndrome:** Part of the autism spectrum, but may be highly intelligent and verbal. Often characterized by significant difficulties in social interaction, as well as restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior and interests. Physical clumsiness and atypical use of language are common.
3. **Cerebral Palsy:** A number of non-progressive motor disorders with impairment of voluntary movement. May have restricted movement in one or more limbs.
4. **Down syndrome:** Impaired mental ability accompanied by weak muscle tone.
5. **Mental Retardation/Developmental Delays:** The learning process will be slow and will depend on the severity of the disability. These riders learn by repetition. Consistency is important along with age appropriateness. In other words, treat them as their age dictates.
6. **Muscular Dystrophy:** Progressive degeneration of muscle strength with no mental impairment. Becomes overly tired easily. Muscle strengthening is not possible.
7. **Multiple Sclerosis:** Wide range of symptoms and characteristics. Muscle weakness, lack of judgment or inattention. Avoid over fatiguing.
8. **Seizures:** Seizures can be associated with various disabilities. The rider may appear non-coherent suddenly or appear vacant immediately before a seizure occurs. Call the instructor's attention to the rider **immediately** if this is suspected.
9. **Reactive Attachment Disorder:** Characterized by significantly disturbed and developmentally inappropriate ways of interacting in most social circumstances.
10. **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome:** The main effect of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is permanent central nervous system damage, especially to the brain. Effects can include poor memory, attention problems, impulsive behavior, poor cause-effect reasoning, and distinctive facial features.
11. **Anxiety Disorders:** A mental disorder characterized by excessive feelings of anxiety and fear. These feeling may cause physical symptoms such as a racing heart and shakiness.
12. **Dyslexia:** Characterized by a difficulty learning to read fluently or comprehend the material being read, despite normal intelligence.
13. **ADHD:** A neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by problems with attention, hyperactivity and/or acting impulsively that are inappropriate for the person's age.
14. **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** PTSD may develop after a person is exposed to one or more traumatic events in which they experience intense fear, horror, or powerlessness. The diagnosis may be given when a group of symptoms, such as disturbing recurring flashbacks, avoidance or numbing of memories of the event, and hyper arousal continue for more than a month after the traumatic event.



# READING HIS EARS

The horse's ears and actions are the key to his emotions. He can tell you what he is paying attention to and how he feels by the way he uses his ears and the way he acts. Following are some tips to his emotions.



**Ears forward but relaxed**  
Interested in what's in front of him



**Ears turned back but relaxed**  
Listening to his rider or what's behind him



**Ears pointed stiffly forward**  
Alarmed or nervous about what's ahead; looking for danger



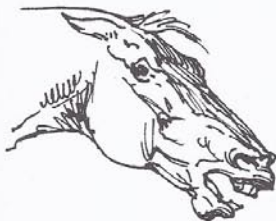
**Ears pointed left and right**  
Relaxed, paying attention to the scenery on both sides



**Ears stiffly back**  
Annoyed or worried about what's behind him; might kick if annoyed



**Droopy ears**  
Calm and subordinate, horse may be dozing



**Ears flattened against neck**  
Violently angry, in a fighting mood; may fight, bite or kick

## OTHER SIGNS YOU SHOULD NOTICE

- **Tucking the tail down tightly.**  
Danger to the rear.  
Horse may bolt, buck or kick.  
Watch out if ears are flattened, too!
- **Switching the tail.**  
Annoyance and irritation at biting flies, stinging insects or bothersome actions of a rider or another horse.
- **Droopy ears and resting one hind leg on toe.**  
Calm and resting, horse may be dozing.  
Don't wake him up by startling him!
- **Wrinkling up the face and swinging the head.**  
Threatening gesture of an angry or bossy horse.  
Watch out for biting or kicking.

## EFFECTIVE SIDEWALKING

By Susan Tucker and Molly Lingua, R.P.T.

Sidewalkers are the ones who normally get the most hands-on duties in therapeutic riding. They are directly responsible for the rider. As such, they have the capability to either enhance or detract from the lesson.

In the arena, the sidewalker should help the student focus his/her attention on the instructor. Try to avoid unnecessary talking with either the rider or other volunteers. Too much input from too many directions is very confusing to anyone, and to riders who already have perceptual problems, it can be overwhelming. If two sidewalkers are working with one student, one should be the "designated talker" to avoid this situation.

When the instructor gives a direction, allow your student plenty of time to process it. If the instructor says "Turn to the right toward me," and the student seems confused, gently tap the right hand and say "Right," to reinforce the command. You will get to know the riders and learn when they need help and when they're just not paying attention.

It's important to maintain a position by the rider's knee. Being too far forward or back will make it very difficult to assist with instructions or provide security if the horse should trip or shy. There are two ways to hold onto the rider without interfering. The most commonly used is the "arm-over-the-thigh" hold. The sidewalker grips the front of the saddle (flap or pommel depending on the horse's size) with the hand closest to the rider. Then the fleshy part of the forearm rests gently on the rider's thigh. Be careful that the elbow doesn't accidentally dig into the rider's leg.

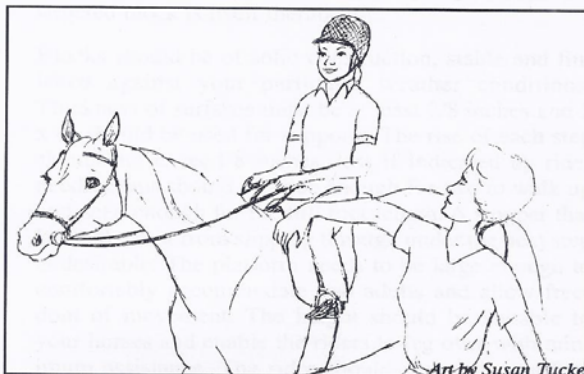
Sometimes pressure on the thigh can increase and/or cause muscle spasticity, especially with the cerebral palsy population. In this case, the "therapeutic hold" may be used. Here, the leg is held at the joints, usually the knee and/or ankle. Check with the instructor/therapist for the best way to assist. In the (unlikely) event of an emergency, the arm-over-thigh hold is the most secure.

Avoid wrapping an arm around the rider's waist. It is tempting, especially when walking beside a pony with a young or small rider, but it can offer too much and uneven support. At times, it can even pull the rider off balance and

make riding more difficult. Encourage your students to use their own trunk muscles to the best of their abilities.

If the instructor chooses to use a safety belt on your rider, be very careful not to pull down or push up on it. As your arm tires it's hard to avoid this, so rather than gripping the handle firmly, just touch your thumb and finger together around it. This way you are in position to assist the rider if needed, but you will neither give unneeded support nor pull him off balance. When you are ready for relief for your arm, ask the leader to move into the center to stop and trade sides, one at a time, with the other sidewalker. (Instructors: if your rider has serious enough balance problems to warrant a safety belt, you should probably be using two sidewalkers.)

During exercises, pay attention to your student. Sometimes volunteers forget that the riders are to do the



exercises and the sidewalkers are to reinforce and assist. The same applies to games. Don't get so competitive that your rider doesn't get to use his skills because you do it for him in an all out effort to win.

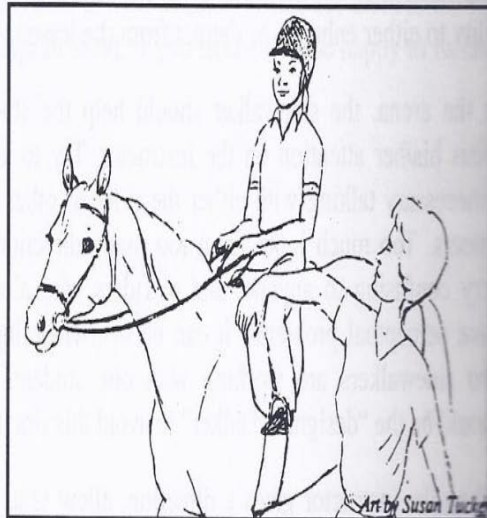
The ultimate goal for therapeutic riding is to encourage the rider to stretch and grow to be as normal as he can possibly be. You are right at his side, so help the instructor to challenge him to the best of his ability.

Without you, these programs couldn't exist. We thank you for all you give and challenge you to be the best you can be.



## SIDEWALKING POINTERS

- Maintain your position by the rider's knee. If you are too far forward or backward, you won't be in position to assist in an emergency.
- When using the arm-over-the thigh hold (see illustration), grip the front of the saddle (flap or pommel) with the hand closest to the rider. Gently rest your forearm on the rider's thigh.
- If the arm-over-the-thigh hold is too uncomfortable for the rider (be sure you don't dig into the rider's thigh with your elbow), try the therapeutic hold. Simply hold the leg at the joint, usually the knee or ankle. Check with your instructor or therapist on which position is best.
- Don't engage in unnecessary talk with either the rider or other volunteers.
- Avoid wrapping an arm around the rider's waist. This can offer either too much or uneven support. You may even pull the rider off balance.



# Volunteer Horsemanship 201

## Steps to Haltering a Horse

1. Approach horse at their chest while verbally letting the horse know you are there. Wrap the lead rope around the horse's neck to let the horse know it is caught.



2. Let the lead rope roll in the crease of your elbow, make sure the slack end of the rope is not touching the ground. (If the horse was to run away, you could simply close your arm by bringing your fist to your shoulder and the crease of your elbow would catch your horse.)



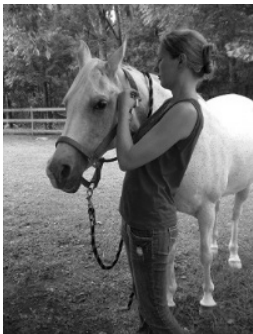
3. Hold your halter in your hand with your right hand holding the crown piece and your left hand holding the buckle. This is how the halter should fit on the horse, with the muzzle going through the small circle at the end of the halter and the crown piece and buckle connecting behind the horse's ears on the left side.



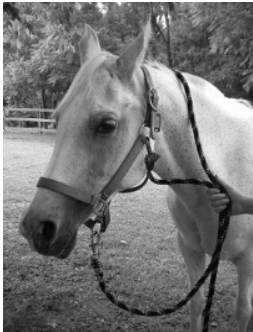
4. With your right hand on the horse's right side and the left hand on the horse's left side, gently slide the halter over the horse's muzzle and bridge of the face.



5. Gently bring the crown piece over the horse's head and behind the ears and fasten with the buckle.



6. Take the rope that is around the horse's neck off and hold.



## How to Tie a Quick Release Knot

1. Loop lead rope over post or through post ring.



2. Bring "tail" of rope under attached rope to make a number 4 shape.



3. Twist rope in left hand towards yourself.



4. Make another loop in right hand.



5. Put right loop through middle of left loop and pull tight.



6. Your horse should only have approximately 1 to ½ feet of slack rope between halter clip and tie ring.

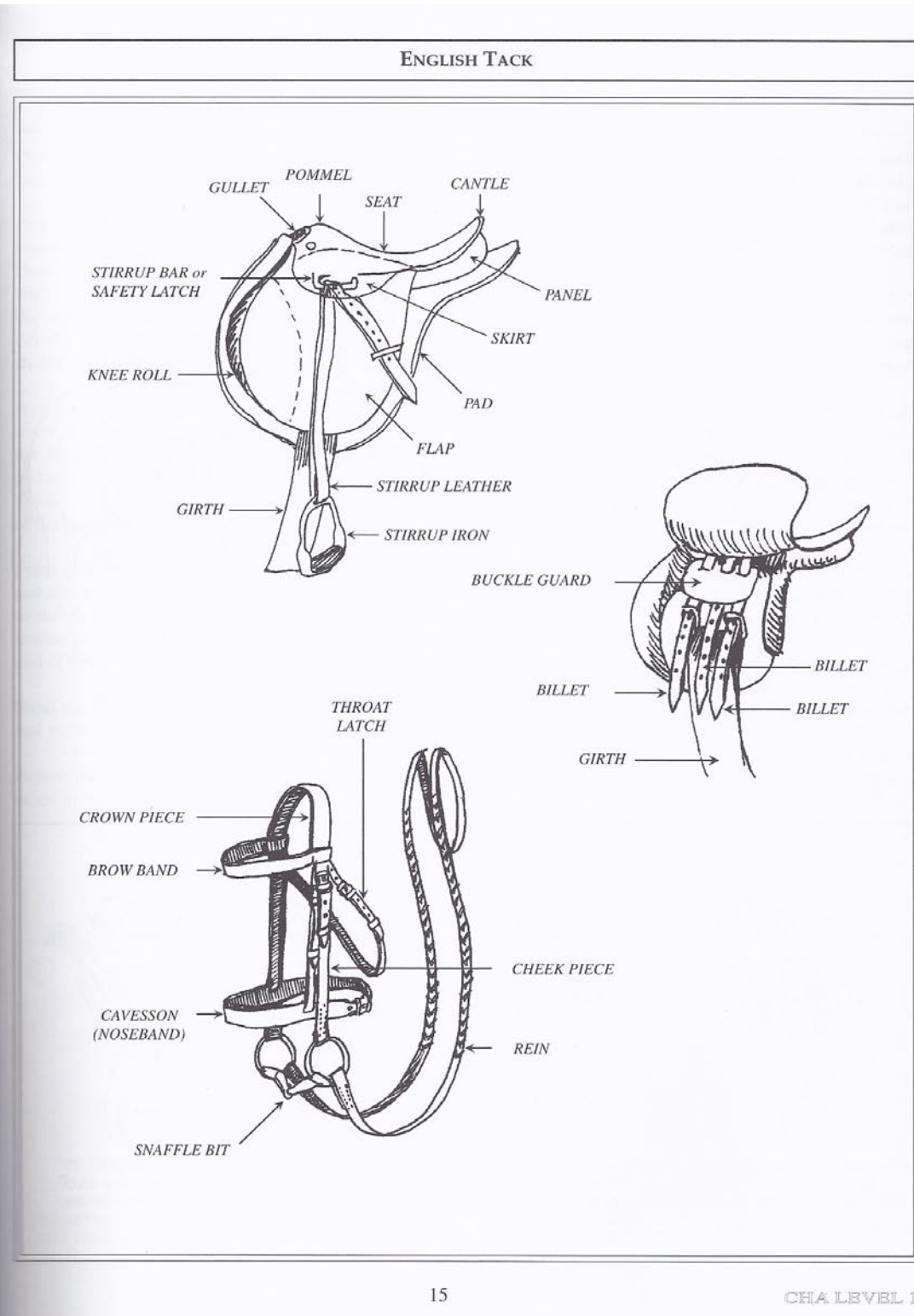


### **To Untie Your Horse**

1. Pull the slack of the rope towards you with one hand (the end of the rope not connected to the horse).



## Parts of the English Saddle and Bridle



## Tacking English



## SADDLING

### ENGLISH SADDLE

Place the saddle pad high on the withers, then slide it backward onto the back to smooth the horse's hair.

Pick up the saddle, making sure the stirrups are run up the leathers and secured. Lay the girth across the saddle. Holding the pommel with the left hand and the cantle with the right, gently place the saddle on the middle of the pad. Pull the pad up into the gullet to allow the air to circulate between the horse's back and the pad. There should be about 2" clearance between withers and the gullet.

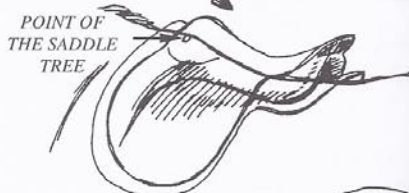
As a general guideline, the front edge of the saddle will often just touch an imaginary line down the center of the shoulder. (This will depend on the type of saddle and the shape of the individual horse). The points of the saddle tree should be 1" or more behind the upper end of the horse's shoulder blade (scapula).

From the right (off side), take the girth off the saddle and check to be sure the pad is smooth. Attach the girth to the right side of the saddle. (The folded edge of a leather girth should be to the front. If there is an elastic end of the girth, it should attach on the near side.)

From the left (near side), pull the girth under the horse and buckle the girth.

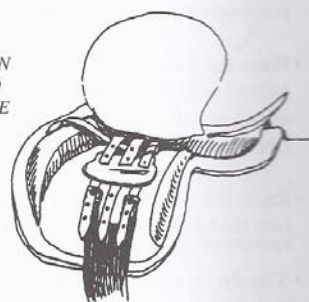
Before mounting, a final check of the girth should be made by you and your instructor.

PLACE THE SADDLE AND PAD FORWARD ON THE NECK THEN SLIDE BACK INTO PLACE



POINT OF THE SADDLE TREE

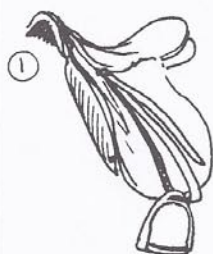
THE SEAT (BETWEEN THE POMMEL AND THE CANTLE) IS THE CENTER OF THE SADDLE AND SHOULD BE THE DEEPEST POINT



THE SADDLE PAD LOOP ATTACHES TO THE BILLET STRAPS ABOVE THE BILLET/BUCKLE COVER

THE ENGLISH GIRTH USUALLY BUCKLES ON THE FIRST AND THIRD BILLET STRAPS, BUT MAY FASTEN ON THE FIRST AND SECOND BILLETS FOR BETTER FIT OF THE SADDLE

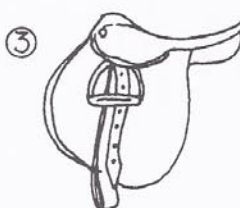
### HOW TO RUN UP ENGLISH STIRRUPS



THE STIRRUP IRON IS SLID UP UNDER THE SKIRT ON THE UNDERNEATH PART OF THE STIRRUP LEATHER



THE STIRRUP LEATHERS ARE THEN PULLED THROUGH THE IRON



BE SURE THAT THE STIRRUP IRON IS RUN UP SO THAT IT IS SNUG UNDER THE SKIRT AND WILL NOT COME DOWN



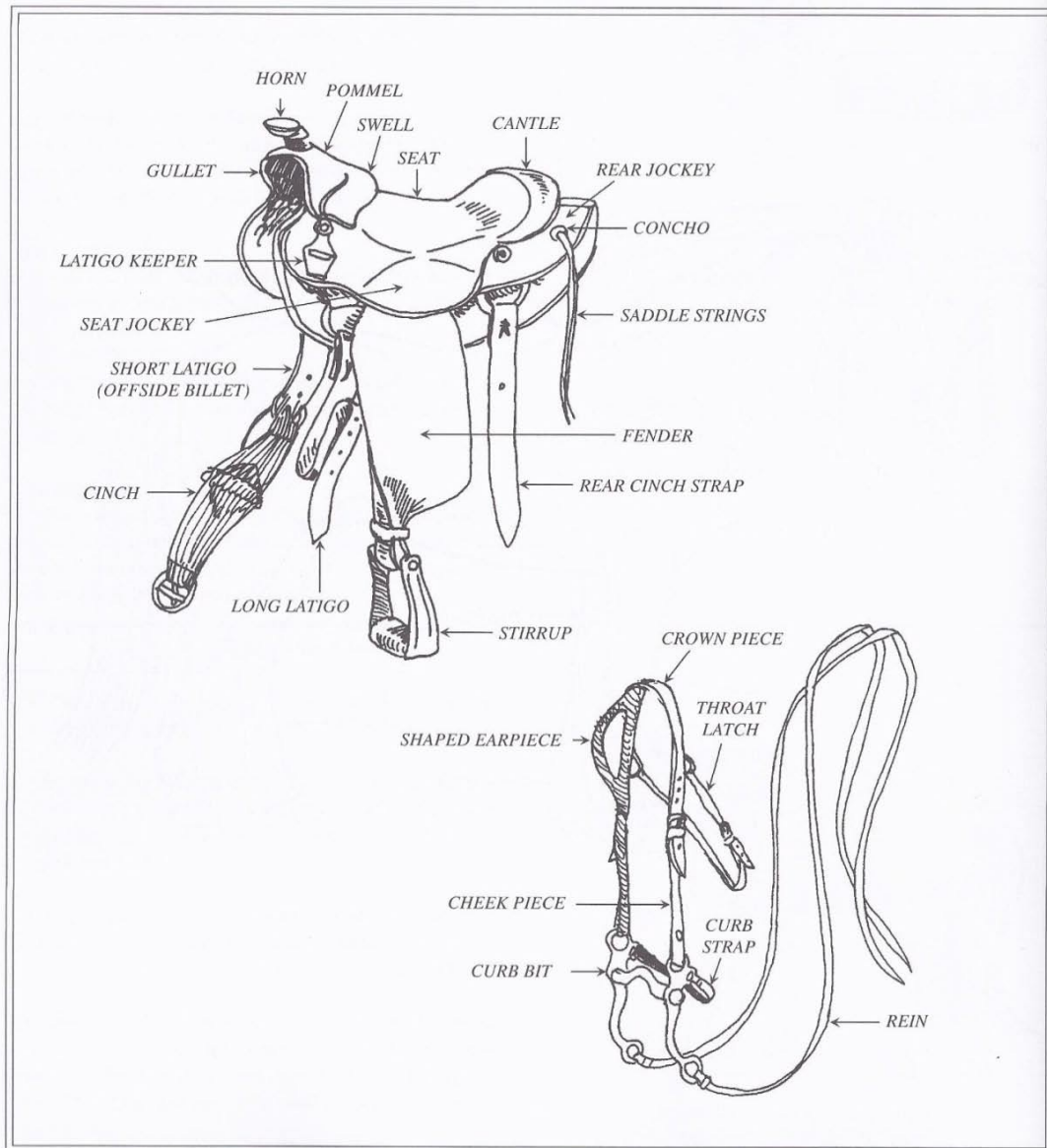
STIRRUPS IRONS ARE PULLED DOWN QUIETLY FOR RIDING

## Parts of the Western Saddle and Bridle

## PARTS OF THE TACK

Your tack (the equipment you use for riding) should be fitted to you and to your horse. It need not be fancy or expensive but should be safe and well maintained. The way you take care of your equipment, your ability to talk about it and use it properly, will show if you are a horseman or not. Tack comes in a variety of forms. Be familiar with the names and how to use the kind of tack you have.

## WESTERN TACK



## SADDLING

### WESTERN SADDLE

Place the pad or blanket high on the withers, then slide it backward onto the withers and back. If a blanket is used, always place the folded edge toward the horse's withers. The front folded edge should align with the middle of the horse's shoulder.

Pick up the saddle and bring the right stirrup and cinch over the seat. Holding the gullet in your left hand and the cantle in your right hand, gently place the saddle on the horse's back.

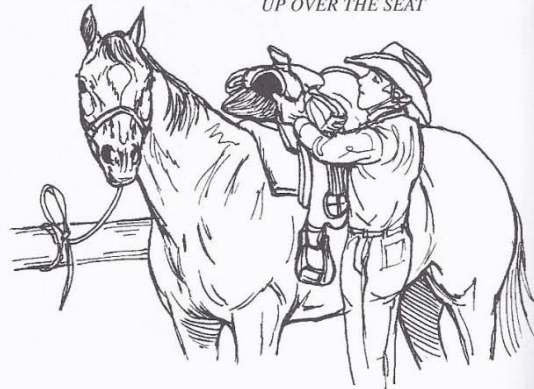
The front edge of the pad should be in line with the center of the shoulder. The saddle should be centered and placed about three inches behind the front edge of the pad. Place your hand under the blanket, pulling the blanket into the gullet of the saddle so it does not wear on the withers and back.

Go to the right (off side) of the horse and gently lift the stirrup and cinch down. Check the saddle and pad to be sure the pad is smooth and the cinch is not twisted.

Then from the left (near side), hook the stirrup over the horn and pull the cinch under the horse. The cinch is tied with a special knot (latigo knot).

Before mounting, a final check of the cinch and your tack should be made by you and your instructor.

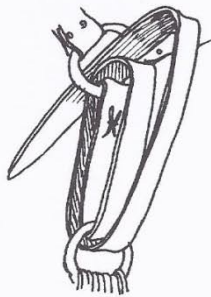
*FOLD THE STIRRUP  
UP OVER THE SEAT*



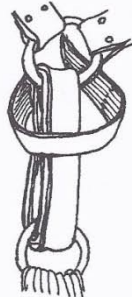
*THE FRONT FOLD OF THE BLANKET  
COMES TO THE CENTER OF THE SHOULDER*

*SET THE SADDLE GENTLY IN PLACE*

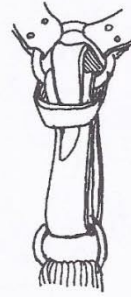
#### THE LATIGO KNOT



*THE LONG LATIGO  
GOES AROUND THE  
CINCH RING AND THE  
SADDLE RING TWICE*



*WRAP THE LATIGO  
AROUND ITSELF  
MAKING A LOOP*



*PULL THE END (TONGUE)  
THROUGH THE BACK  
OF THE SADDLE RING  
AND THEN DOWN  
THROUGH THE LOOP*



*TIGHTEN BY  
PULLING THE END  
OR TONGUE DOWN*



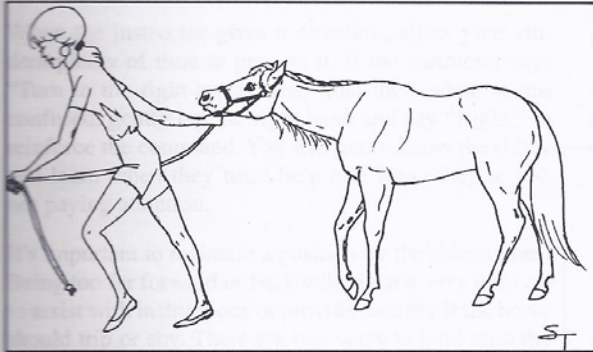
# FOLLOW THE LEADER

By Susan F. Tucker, NARHA Accreditation Committee

As a volunteer, one of the most challenging duties you could be assigned is the position of leader. A leader's first responsibility is the horse, but you must also constantly be aware of the rider, instructor and any potential hazards in or around the arena. In addition, you must also consider the sidewalkers, making sure there is enough room along the fence, and around obstacles for them to pass.

An effective leader pays close attention to the rider's needs as well as to where the horse is going. This reinforces the rider's attempts to control the horse.

**Figure A**



However, you should not execute an instruction for the rider before he has time to process the information and make an effort to comply. Sometimes it may be appropriate to walk into the corner and stand until the student figures out what to do.

Avoid the temptation to talk to the rider and/or sidewalkers. A rider may get confused by too much input and not know who's in charge. (Instructors often make terrible leaders because they can't keep their mouths shut!)

Figure A depicts a few faults common among leaders. Here is a leader grimly marching along-head down, one hand on the lead snap, the other inside the coiled end of the rope-dragging a strung-out horse. In a battle with a horse, you lose. You must get the horse to cooperate. Walk alongside the horse, about even with his eye. This helps keep him

in a proper frame, which is more beneficial for everyone.

Talk to the horse; most of them know "whoa," "walk," and "trot," or can learn the words. Watch where you're going and what's happening around you. Do not walk backward to look at the rider. It's dangerous for everyone and the horse isn't eager to follow someone who can't see where he is going.

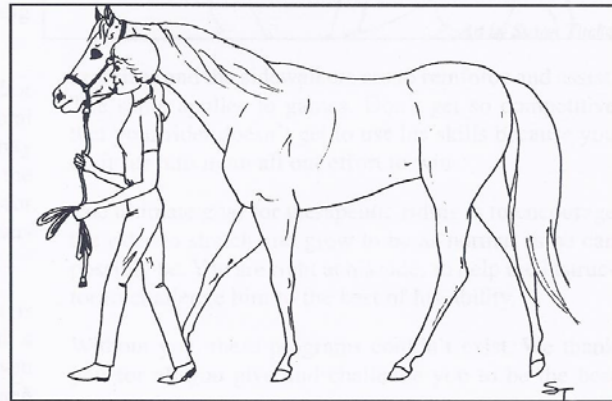
**Figure B** shows the correct position for leaders. The lead shank is held with the right hand 6-12 inches from the snap, allowing free motion of the horse's head. This is more therapeutic to the rider and less irritating to the horse.

The tail end of the lead should be looped in a figure-eight in the left hand to avoid tripping on it. Never coil the rope around your hand. That could end a close relationship with your fingers!

Use short tugs rather than a steady pull to keep a lazy horse moving. The horse can set himself against a steady pull, but tugs keep him awake. Move out, about 1,000 steps per 15 minutes, to provide the most therapeutic benefit.

When you halt for more than a few seconds, stand in front of the horse with your hands on the halter's cheek

**Figure B**



## **Jobs within the Mounting Process**

**Leader:** When mounting, the leader's job is to align the horse's body as close to the mounting ramp as possible without rubbing the saddle against the wood, as well as keeping the horse still and calm throughout the entire mounting process.

1. Hold horse outside of ramp until instructor has performed a safety check and given you permission to enter the ramp.
2. Lead the horse in the ramp while keeping his body close to the ramp (2-4 in.)
3. Facing the horse, keep him quiet and still while instructor mounts the student.
4. Once given verbal permission by the instructor, walk horse straight out of the ramp. Reason being, the instructor/side walker will have a handhold on the student the entire way out of the ramp.
5. After approximately 4-6 steps the instructor will ask you to halt the horse. They will then adjust stirrups and give you further instructions.

**Offside Guide:** During the mounting process, the side walker's job is to stand on the offside of the horse (right side), either on the ground or on the ramp. You will act as a barrier to the horse as well as assist the instructor in mounting the student.

1. Before the horse enters the ramp, the instructor will ask you to take your place standing on the offside ramp.
2. Once the horse is standing quietly in the ramp, the instructor will begin mounting the student. Your job is to assist her by supporting the right leg as it comes over the back of the horse.
3. After the student is seated, the instructor will ask you to use a hand over thigh hold, and will ask the leader to exit the ramp. You are to walk down the ramp with a handhold on your student.

# Volunteer Horsemanship 401

## Emergency Procedures

Although the staff at Hope Unbridled Equestrian Program does their best to keep any danger from coming to any students, there is always the possibility that something may happen. During an emergency, there are a few things to remember. Above all else, please stay calm.

- **Leaders:** Your job is to take care of your horse. In any situation you are to never let go of your horse. If ever there is an emergency with your student, you are to halt your horse and calm him.
  - In the situation that your rider is still mounted, stop the horse and calm him. Your side walker will notify the instructor of an emergency and will care for your student. The instructor will give you further information once the student is dismounted.
  - If your student has fallen, the side walker will notify the instructor and you are to move the horse out of the way with the horse's hindquarters pointing away from the student.
  - If you do not have a side walker present, stop your horse, verbally notify an instructor, and try to support your student. If the student has already fallen, move your horse away from the student and call on the instructor.
- **Sidewalkers:** Your job is to care for the student. In any situation you are to verbally notify the instructor and take charge of your student. Two possible ways is to do this is by either holding your student on the horse or performing an emergency dismount (you will receive training on this at a later time).

If ever there is an emergency situation with another horse and rider team in the arena or on the trail with you, all other horse and rider teams should stop their horses, remain calm, and wait for further instruction from your instructor.

**Leaders** – NEVER let go of your horse's rope for any reason!

**Sidewalkers** – NEVER leave your students for any reason!

***There is a phone to dial 911 in the feed room on the counter to the right.***

## FITTING THE RIDING HELMET

The way that a helmet fits is important. Helmets fitted incorrectly can cause unwanted changes in posture and balance for the rider, and it can adversely affect the very areas that therapeutic riding aims to correct. Things to consider include:

- Does the helmet sit too far back on the rider's head?
- Does the helmet twist to either side? The brim should be straight in the middle of the rider's forehead.
- Does the helmet fall down over the rider's eyes?
- Is the helmet too big or too snug?
- Is the chin strap bothering the rider?

Now do the following:

- Place the helmet on the rider's head and slide it front to back, allowing it to rest so that there are two fingers between the eyebrows and the edge of the helmet.
- Check to make sure that it is centered correctly before fastening the chin strap. If there is a laced harness at the back of the helmet, undo it before fitting the helmet. Readjust it appropriately after the helmet is on the rider. Look to see that it fits correctly, and ask the rider how it feels.
- The helmet should fit snugly, but not so tightly that it is uncomfortable for the rider.
- For riders whose heads are difficult to fit, try placing self-adhesive sanitary napkins inside the helmet at the troublesome spots.
- Try fitting a hat on a colleague to get feedback regarding your technique.

Remember that no matter what type of helmet is chosen for your rider, a properly fitted, comfortable helmet will provide the ultimate in safety and will give your rider a "head start" on his/her lesson!



TOO FAR FORWARD



TOO FAR BACK



BRIM TWISTED TO ONE SIDE



TIPPED TOO FAR TO THE RIGHT



PROPERLY FITTED



## GROOMING

Grooming is a very important part of your horse's health. A good work over with a curry comb and brush will remove unsightly dandruff and dirt which causes saddle sores. Grooming also gives your horse's coat a shine, and makes your horse feel good.

### Curry Comb

Used on horse's body in a circular motion to bring the dirt to the surface. A hard curry comb should not be used on the face, legs, or any bony area on the horse.

### Hard Brush or Dandy Brush

Used in the direction of hair growth to remove the dirt. Brush in firm short strokes to remove deep down dirt. Be careful on the face with this brush.

### Soft Brush

Used on the face and body to remove surface dirt and put a shine on the horse's coat.

### Mane and Tail Comb

Used on the mane and tail to remove tangles. Start at the bottom and work towards the top, removing tangles as you go.

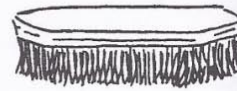
### Hoofpick

Used to remove dirt, rocks and manure from the horse's hooves. The hoofpick is held in the palm of your hand with the point away from your body. Always clean the hoof working away from yourself.

#### GROOMING TOOLS



CURRY COMB



HARD OR DANDY BRUSH



SOFT BRUSH



MANE AND TAIL COMB



HOOFPICK

## HOW TO STAND AND MOVE

- When grooming, start at the front of the horse and work your way back.
- Stand facing the rear of the horse so you can see his feet. It's a good idea to keep one hand on the horse to keep him a safe distance from you and so that you can feel him move.
- As you move around the horse's hind end, stay close and keep one hand on his rump, speaking to him as you move, so that he is always aware of where you are.

Pay attention to your horse as you groom him. He should be calm and relaxed and aware of you. If he becomes irritated, fidgety or distracted, you may be brushing too hard or too fast and you may need to get his attention back on you.



GROOMING • KEEP ONE HAND ON THE HORSE WHILE YOU WORK