



ANIMAL'S HELPING PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION TO EQUINE CARE

Animal's Helping People
Animal Assisted Activities and Learning

An Educational Programme
Improving Animal Welfare in Northern Ireland through Education





Crosskennan Lane Animal Sanctuary

Once upon a time there were two horses called Kim and Candy...

Sadly that was where the fairytale ended. Their story is the story of Crosskennan Lane Animal Sanctuary, or at least the beginnings of it. The failure of the animal welfare system in Northern Ireland to look after Kim and Candy prompted me to apply for charitable status in 1996. The subsequent years have been full of heartache, tears, anger and ultimately triumph. I promised myself that, whilst Kim and Candy had been failed by the welfare system and the ignorance of the rescue centre they were placed in, the horses, ponies and donkeys who came into the care of CLAS would never be denied the love and attention they so desperately deserved.

We, and I stress 'we' as I always envisaged CLAS as everyone's sanctuary. The years certainly have not been easy but have made us all the more determined to improve the situation in Northern Ireland

Ignorance is a great stumbling block and time and time again we have found ourselves up against it. It is ignorance that allows an eight month old terrified and starved filly foal to be walled up in a dark, dirty shed for months. It is ignorance that allows another filly foal to be exhibited at a horse fair event, even though she was so weak with malnutrition and dehydration she could barely stand. And it is ignorance that allows a trotting horse to be driven to his death on a public road. Old habits die hard and attitudes are firmly entrenched but we are determined to fight on to make Northern Ireland a better place for all animals.

In the meantime, however, we will continue with our educational and cross community approach to animal welfare. Through our workshops and training days we hope that the next generation of animal owners will be wiser and more informed than this one.

Our story isn't all doom and gloom though. We have the support of many kind people, friends and volunteers who keep the sanctuary running. We also have many success stories. The filly foal walled up in misery and filth now has a super home and the little foal from the fair is also now a strapping lass in a home. We may have helped these horses but their triumphs are down to them. They are a testimony to the resilience of animals to overcome psychological and physical abuse. Their ability to forgive mankind for the terrible deeds inflicted upon them is surely one of the most amazing phenomena of life.

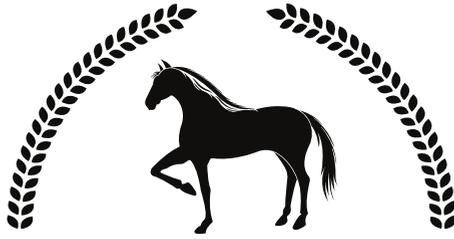
Our work has taught us many lessons, some of them humbling, some of them inspiring, all of them worth learning. Our motto is 'Hope for the future: Help us trust Again' and it will be for as long as it takes to make a difference in Northern Ireland. We realise that we cannot change the world but that doesn't stop us trying.

- Lyn Friel; Founder and Manager of Crosskennan Lane Animal Sanctuary

Charitable Status since 1996

NIC 104 028

Our Mission: *To relieve the suffering and distress of animals in need of care and protection by reason of sickness, neglect or maltreatment, by establishing and maintaining a sanctuary for such animals and to advance the education of the general public in the proper care of animals.*



Responsible Horse Ownership

Owning a horse is a huge responsibility. Horses are demanding and expensive animals with special needs involving time and commitment. They are, however, wonderful creatures to know and work with. They have so much to offer and, treated well, respond well to their owners/riders with devotion and willingness. Sadly, this willingness is often exploited and abused. In many cases, this is because their owners do not understand them and what they need, or are not prepared to commit themselves to the time and expense of owning a horse involves.

With many horses living well into their thirties, they are a lifetime commitment and new owners should ask themselves some serious questions before they consider equine ownership. Responsible horse ownership means being able to get up early every morning, rain or shine, to care for your horse, to put their needs before your own, to provide them with suitable feeding, stabling and turnout facilities and to remain committed to their care in sickness, health and in old age. Worming programs need to be considered and visits from the vet and farrier have to be accommodated. If you don't have your own facilities, a suitable and reputable livery yard where the emphasis is on care and wellbeing, will have to be found.

Sometimes circumstances change. What would you do with your horse if you couldn't afford to feed them? After all they are your friend? It is important that you find them a good home, rather than sell them to the first person who comes along. What would you do with them if you could no longer ride them, perhaps because they have been injured or are too old? How would you feel if you had to consider humane destruction in the event of illness, accident, or degeneration?

These are questions that have to be answered. If you are unsure of any of the answers, perhaps it isn't the right time to consider buying a horse? Of course, you can't predict what will happen, but it helps to be prepared.

Maybe all this sounds very off-putting. Shouldn't owning a horse be fun? Yes, it should, but it can only be fun if you accept the responsibility you have undertaken and acknowledge your horses' needs. Only then will they respond to you as you expect them to. Only then can you call them your friend.

CHECK YOUR FACTS! WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT

First Horses

were domesticated
6,000 years ago
on the grasslands

of Ukraine, southwest Russia and west Kazakhstan

Stallion

is a male horse

Mare

is a female horse



Smallest

horse in the world is

43 cm

(17 inches) tall. She is a
Dwarf Miniature
Mare named
Thumbelina

Pregnancy

in horses last

335-345

Days



The Fastest Horse

was recorded at running at
55 mph (88 kph)



Horses Skeleton

is made up of
205 bones

HORSES?

Learn all about the horses in the world! ■

The Most Expensive

Horse was sold for
£53.7 million

It was an American
Thoroughbred
Stallion named
Fugaichi Pegasus



Tallest

horse ever recorded was

220 cm

(86.5 inches) tall. He was a

Shire

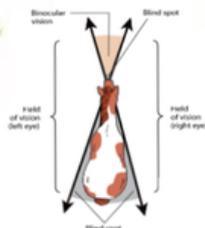
Gelding named
Sampson

Lifespan

of a horse is

20-30

years



Horses Eyes

can see nearly
360 degrees

and have blind spots only
immediately in front and
immediately behind their bodies

In The World

there is believed to be over

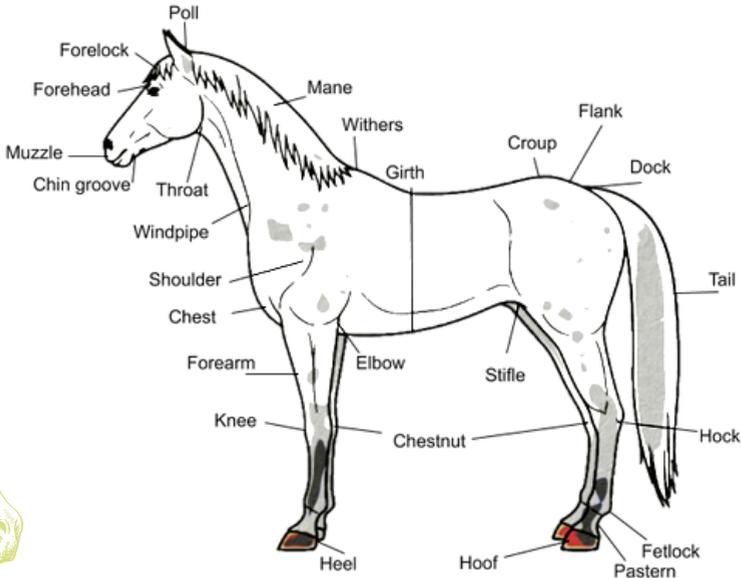
60 million horses



Horses Explained

Conformation refers to the shape of a horse or pony and the way it is made. Although looks are not the most important thing in an all round equine, there are some features that affect its performance, health or temperament. The image below shows the names used for different parts of an equine's body. These are called the "points".

Points of a Horse



Lifespan: 25 - 30 years

Gestation period: 11 - 12 months

Mass: 380 - 1,000 kg (Adult)

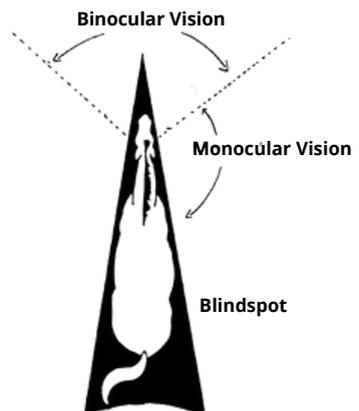
Speed: 88 km/h (Maximum, Running)

Height: 1.4 - 1.8 m (Adult, At the withers)

**Based on Average Horse*

The horse's wide range of monocular vision has two "blind spots," or areas where the animal cannot see: in front of the face, making a cone that comes to a point at about 90-120 cm (3-4 ft) in front of the horse, and right behind its head, which extends over the back and behind the tail when standing with the head facing forwards.

Horse Blind Spots

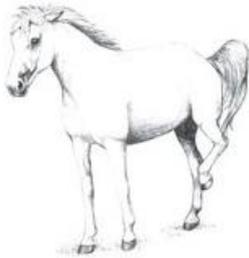


Horse Communication

Horses are known for their multi-sensory alertness. Posture and expression are essential visual means of communication within groups of horses and between individuals. Movements of ears or the raise of the tail are a form of talking! Horses not only communicate through the use of visual aids but also vocally.

Body Language

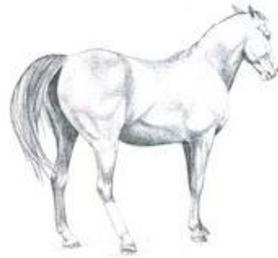
Horses being social prey animals must organise themselves as a group without attracting the attention of predators, to do this they must also be able to communicate through physical means. Ears, nostrils, neck and tails play an extremely important role in equine non-vocal communication.



"Warning: I might kick you.". Lifting or stomping one hind leg (not at flies).



"I'm irritated!" or "My Stomach hurts!". Swishing tail (not at flies).



"I'm afraid!" or "I don't respect you!" or "I'm getting ready to kick you!". Swinging his hindquarters toward you.



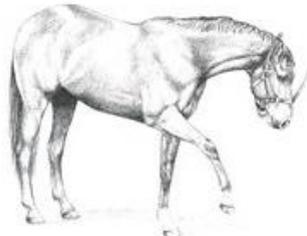
"I wonder what that is over there?". Ears forward, head high.



"Stay back!" or "I'll bite you!". Ears pinned back, head reaching toward you.



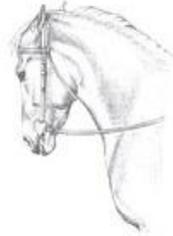
"I'm really concentrating and listening to you.". Ears back when you are riding.



"I want to get out of here." or "I have a bellyache.". Pawing with front feet.



"Hi, Pal.". Ears tilted forward, head reaching toward you.



"I'm getting ready to buck, bite, or kick.". Ears pinned back flat against the head.

Horse Communication

Horse Vocalizations

Whinny: Loud, prolonged call typically 1-3 seconds, beginning high pitched and ending lower pitched. The head is elevated and the mouth slightly open during the whinny. The whinny is associated with alert and approach from a distance usually from an affiliated pair and usually followed by a relatively playful interaction.

Nicker: A Low pitched, vocalization that occurs mostly between a mother and her foal or a stallion to a mare. The character of the of the nicker varies with excitement of the situation.

Squeal: High pitched vocalization of variable loudness and typical of less than 1 seconds. The head can be in a variety of different positions and the mouth is typically closed. These vocalizations are typically during smell investigation, biting, nipping and during mock and serious fighting.

Snort: Sound produced upon forceful quick exhalation of less than 1 second duration. Associated with smell investigation, rearing, boxing, kneeling and circling.

Blow: Sound produced upon strong, sharp, exhalation. In startle situations the blow appears to communicate alarm to heard mates.

Groan: Monotone hum-like sound produced during exhalation typically lasting up to 2 seconds. Groans most commonly occur during discomfort in lying animals, for example during birth. Some individuals also normally emit a short groan or sigh upon lying down.



Identifying Horses

How do we identify a horse?



Breed

There are more than 300 breeds of horses and ponies in the world and all of them can be boiled down into these 5 major categories:

Draft horses

Draft horses were bred to carry and pull heavy loads. They are tall, strong and heavy. The average draft weighs over 1600 lbs, stands over 16 hands tall and can pull over twice their weight for short distances.

Warmbloods

Warmbloods are just as their name implies. They are a middleweight horse created by the cross of a cold blood draft horse and a hot blood light horse. Generations of this refined breeding has resulted in the best of both worlds. You get a tall, strong, athletic horse with a sensible attitude and plenty of get-up-an-go. They dominate the dressage, jumping, harness and equestrian Olympic sports.

Light horses

Light horses are the opposite of their draft horse counterparts. Light horses were bred for speed, agility, endurance and of course riding.

Gaited horses

Gaited horses are also a light horse bred for riding, but they are best known for their exceptionally smooth ride. Horses have three gates; walk, trot and gallop. With gaited horses you get all that and more; the pace, the stepping pace, the running walk, the fox trot, the rack and the slow gait.

Ponies

The definition of a pony is a horse that measures less than 14.2 hands. There are over a hundred breeds of ponies. Ponies are incredibly versatile little horses. Historically they have been bred to do virtually everything imaginable. They are used for pulling, packing, harness, riding, jumping, plowing and even ranch work. Ponies are prized for their intelligence, strength and hardiness in rugged conditions.

There are also Non-horse Equines

Zebras and Donkeys, including cross breeds like the Zorse and Mule.

Identifying Horses

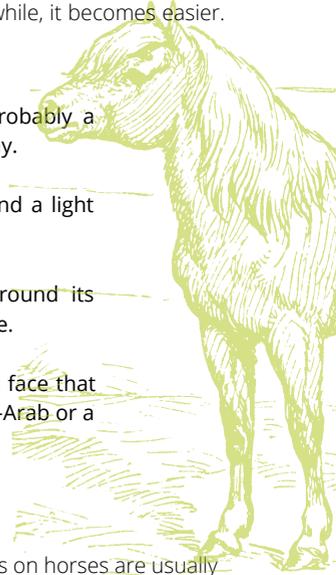
At first, it is difficult to tell what breed a horse or pony is, but after a while, it becomes easier. Here are some clues to help you:

If it is small and sturdy, with a long, rough coat, it is probably a mountain or moorland pony, like a Highland or Dartmoor pony.

If the horse is tall, with long legs, a fine skin and coat, and a light build, it might be a Thoroughbred.

If it is big, heavy and slow, with feather (long hairs) around its fetlocks, it is probably a draft horse, like a Percheron or a Shire.

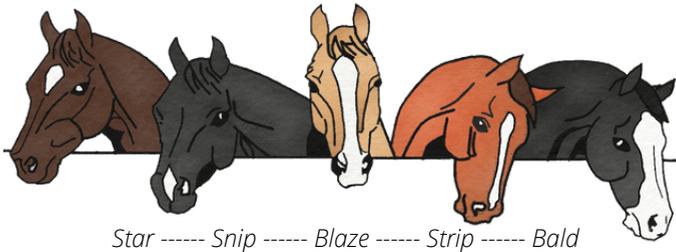
If the horse carries its tail high and has a dished profile (a face that curves in), it probably has some Arab blood, such as an Anglo-Arab or a Welsh pony.



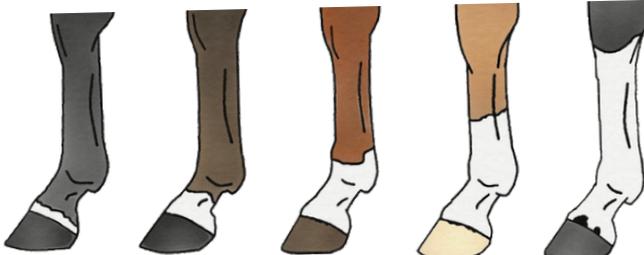
Markings

Horses can have many markings that make them identifiable. Markings on horses are usually distinctive white areas on an otherwise dark base coat color. Most horses have some markings, and they help to identify the horse as a unique individual.

Below are just some of the most common facial markings and leg markings.



Star ----- Snip ----- Blaze ----- Strip ----- Bald



Coronet ----- Half-pastern ----- Sock ----- Half-cannon ----- Stocking

Identifying Horses

Colour

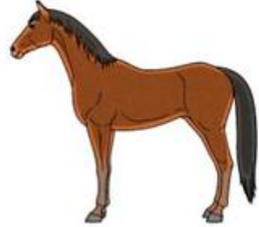
Horses come in many different colours. This is just some of the most common colours.



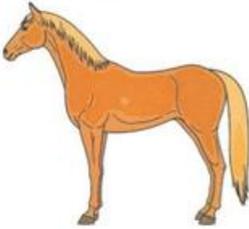
Black



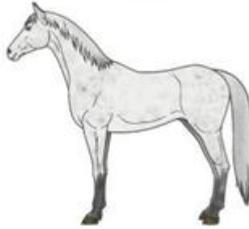
Brown



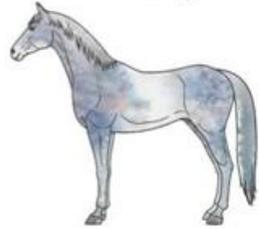
Bay



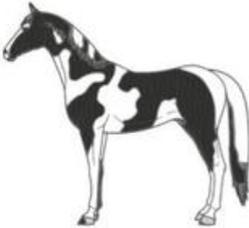
Chestnut



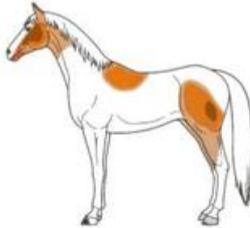
Grey



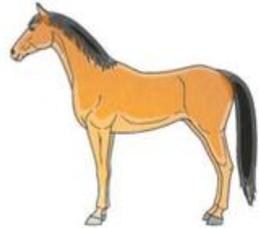
Roan



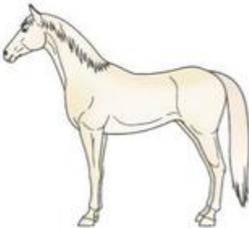
Piebald



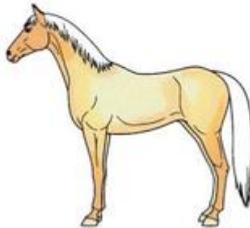
Skewbald



Dun



Cream



Palomino



Appalossa

Identifying Horses

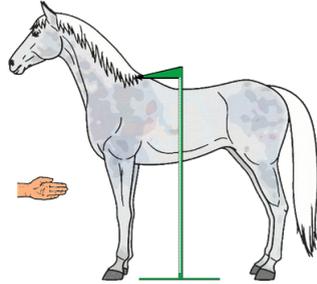
Gender Adult horses are called stallion (male), mare (female) or gelding (castrated male). Young horses are called Colt (male) and Filly (female).

Age If you don't know the year of birth of the horse a veterinarian can estimate by examining the teeth.

Height The height is the distance measured from the ground to the top of the withers.

We measure Horses in 'Hands' which are 4 inches.

A horse is considered a pony up to the height of 14 hands and 2 inches, although there are some breeds of horses that are called miniature horses.



Colour

Horses come in many different colours. This is just some of the most common colours.

Black: Where black pigment is general throughout the coat, limbs, mane and tail. Some White Markings.

Brown: Where there is a mixture of black and brown pigment in the coat, with black limbs, mane and tail.

Bay: Varies considerably in shade between dull red/brown/yellow. The bay has a black mane and tail and usually has black on the limbs and tips of the ears.

Chestnut: Can be any shade of red with no black. Think of the different colors a penny - from brand new to very old and tarnished.

Grey: The body coat is a varying mosaic of black and white hairs, with the skin black. With increasing age the coat grows lighter in colour.

Roan: Permanent colour with a mixture of white hairs and one or two other colours of hairs in the coat.

Piebald: The body coat consists of large irregular patches of black and white.

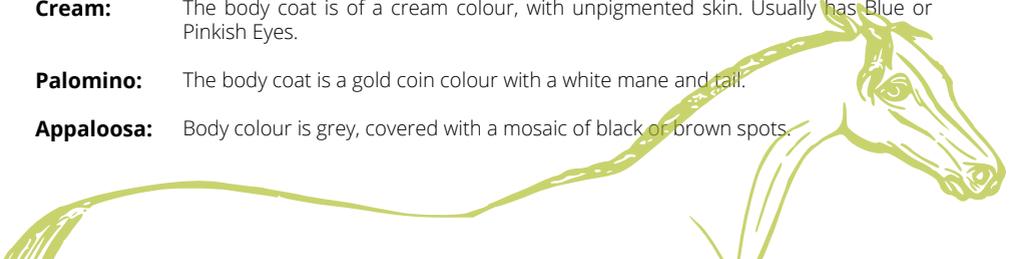
Skewbald: The body consists of large irregular patches of white and of any definite colour except black.

Dun: The body coat is of a cream colour, with black mane and tail.

Cream: The body coat is of a cream colour, with unpigmented skin. Usually has Blue or Pinkish Eyes.

Palomino: The body coat is a gold coin colour with a white mane and tail.

Appaloosa: Body colour is grey, covered with a mosaic of black or brown spots.



Essential Care

Horse care takes time, and you should have a routine of daily, weekly, monthly and yearly tasks to properly care for your horse. The best way to keep track of what must be done and scheduled is to keep a calendar. You will find that you will develop your own.

For example, not all horses must be trimmed every six weeks. You may need trimming every five weeks, or every two weeks. Some horses need their teeth checked more than once a year, and some vaccinations may have to be given more than once.

Daily Horse Care



A visual check at very minimum once a day, and more often is essential. You'll want to check for any sign of injury, illness and check fences and other structures in your horse's home for damage that could cause problems. Access to plenty of food and water is not to be neglected.

Provide your horse with fresh clean water. Clean, readily available water is essential for good horse care.

Provide your horse with adequate fodder and concentrates. If feeding hay, your horse will eat approximately two to three percent of its body weight every day.

Provide adequate shelter and blanketing according to the weather. The design of your shelter, whether run-in shed or stable is very important for proper care. Horses need a place to get out of the wind and wet.



Do a visual check for scrapes, cuts, bruises and puncture wounds on your horse's legs, head, and body. Treat any injuries promptly. You should have a horse first aid kit on hand.

Do a visual check for signs of illness such as runny eyes or noses, or sounds of coughing or wheezing. Clean your horse's hooves and check for bruising or cracks, or loose shoes.

Muck out the stall if your horse is stabled. Ammonia from urine and manure is harmful to horses' lungs and hooves and can cause problems like thrush.



Essential Care

Feeding

1. Provide fresh clean water at all times

Water is the most important nutrient in your horses' diet. It's used by every cell in their body, they can't survive without it. An idle, 500kg horse, will drink approximately 25 litres of water per day and hot weather/exercise, will increase requirements.



2. Always weigh feeds

Horses should be fed by weight, not volume and feeds have different densities, so a scoop of one feed may weigh more/less than the same scoop of another.

3. Feed little and often

Horses are naturally trickle feeders and have pretty small (about the size of a rugby ball), inelastic stomachs which work best when 2/3 full.



4. Use quality feeds

Dusty or mouldy feed isn't good and can lead to respiratory problems or colic. Store feed in cool, dark places, within containers furry pests can't get into.

5. Feed according to bodyweight

Your horse's nutrient requirements are determined by their bodyweight.



6. Make changes gradually, including forage!

Specialised microbes in your horses' large intestine need time to adapt to changes in feedstuffs. If changes are made too quickly, your horse may be at risk of colic or, at the least, loose droppings!

7. Exercise and feeding

Exercise should be delayed for an hour following cereal based meals, however exercise can be commenced after fibre based meals; this is especially beneficial for gastric health, reducing the risk of gastric acid splashing up and damaging the stomach lining.



8. Feed at the same time each day

Horses are creatures of habit and like routine.

9. Feed according to work done

Although you may think it's only fair to offer more feed when workload is increasing, actually this can cause excess weight gain, excitability and conditions including colic and tying up.



10. Feed plenty of forage

Fibre is essential for maintaining digestive health, providing energy/calories and the absorption of nutrients.

Essential Care

Equipment

Gather and arrange your tools and tack in a convenient, safe place to reduce risks of losing them, damage occurring, or potential injury to you or your horse.

Ensure your equipment is always back where it belongs after use and check that it is in good order and clean. Clean equipment between uses to ensure its life and to decrease risks of cross contamination between animals.



For Grooming and Tack Cleaning

- A Rubber/plastic/metal Curry Comb
- A Body and a Face Brush
- A Dandy Brush
- A mane and tail comb
- A Hoof Pick
- A clean Sponge
- Saddle Soap and Oil for Tack
- Scissors and/or clippers
- Grooming Spray
- Hoof Ointment/Disinfectant



Headcollar

A headcollar is what you use for catching and leading your horse or pony. It can be leather, nylon, rope or cotton. You need to have a leadrope with a clip fastening to attach.

Headcollars come in three main sizes; Pony, Cob and Full. A Headcollar must be fitted to the horse or pony to ensure safety when working with the animal. It should be loose enough for the equine to chew and move freely, but not so loose that a horse can get a foot potentially caught if they lower their head.



For Handling and Riding

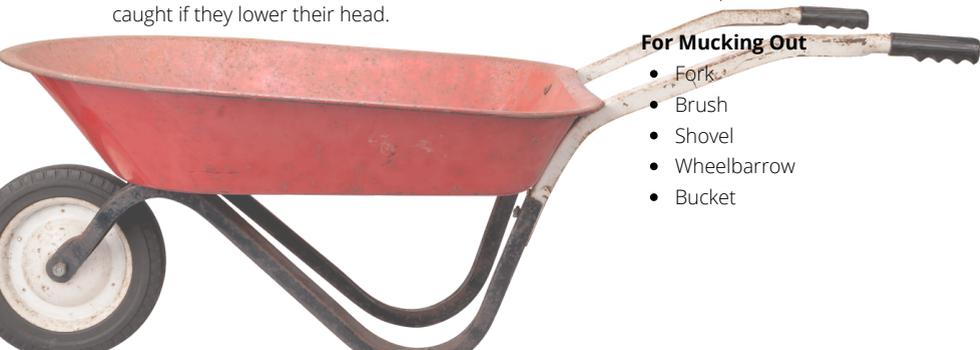
- Headcollar
- Lead Rope
- Bridle and Reins
- Saddle and Girth
- Saddle pad

For Feeding

- Vermin proof feed bins
- Buckets
- Feed Skips
- Haynets or buckets
- Scoop

For Mucking Out

- Fork
- Brush
- Shovel
- Wheelbarrow
- Bucket



Mucking Out

If your equine lives in for part or all of the time you need to muck out the stable once a day. This means clearing out all the droppings and dirty bedding. You will also need to skip out once or twice a day. Skipping out is the term given to the removal of droppings only from the horse's bed. For the health of each equine, it should be done regularly throughout the day. This also helps make mucking out faster and easier.

Your horse or pony will produce a lot of droppings in a day, so it is very important to skip out regularly. This only takes about five minutes and you can leave the pony in the stable while you do it. Just move them over to one side.



Tools you Need

- A Wheelbarrow to carry manure to the muck heap
- A shavings fork for mucking out shavings
- A four pronged fork for mucking out straw
- A brush with plastic or fibre bristles for sweeping the floor clear
- A rubber or plastic bucket for skipping out
- A large shovel for scooping up piles of dung
- A hose for washing out



Mucking and Skipping Out

1. Remove obvious piles of manure. Using a fork, lift any large manure piles into your wheelbarrow. **Do not overfill your wheelbarrow.**
2. Shake out the fork over the bucket or wheelbarrow so that the muck falls off with as little of the clean bedding as possible.
3. Rake up and remove wet shavings if mucking out.
4. Top up shavings if needed after mucking out.
5. If skipping out on a solid surface use a combination of the brush and shovel to collect the dung.

TIP Change the hay and water before you leave the stable. That way you know that each stable is ready for the horse to go in once you've finished it.

Ideally, you should take your horse/pony out of the stable when mucking out. If you can't do this, make sure that they are securely and safely tied and out of your way. **Tie the horse securely and safely with a quick-release knot.**



Handling

Approaching and Catching Do's and Don'ts

Familiarize yourself with basic horse body language. It's very important to be able to tell the difference between a happy, inviting horse and an alarmed or frustrated one when you approach the animal. *Look for the following signs:*



Comfortable signs (if you see these, proceed):

- *Having relaxed, "soft" eyes that aren't staring at you*
- *Turning his head or front quarters toward you*
- *Licking his lips*
- *Ears pricked towards you*
- *Having a peaceful, relaxed overall body position*

Uncomfortable signs (if you see these, back off and do not approach):

- *Moving or running away from you as you approach*
- *Having, intense, wide eyes or eyes that are staring at you*
- *Pinning his ears (moving them back against his head)*
- *Baring his teeth or trying to nip at you*
- *Rearing up on his legs or kicking*
- *Flicking tail repeatedly in aggressive fashion, often with back legs stomping.*



Always be aware of where the horses are.

It takes only a moment for a horse to run up behind you and possibly rear up on you. Make sure you can see where the horses are and keep watch. Horses can get startled by almost anything. If a horse seems to be running towards you, to make sure you don't get trampled raise your arms to appear larger and say in firm calm, voice "whoa" or "get". This will help with getting the horse to head another direction.

Create an inviting rather than demanding presence before you approach.

With horse behavior, there is an idea of pressure and release. Horses are herd animals, and will most likely not stand in an area waiting for you to approach them. Simple things, such as making eye contact, is actually putting pressure on the horse, cueing him to move away from you.

Approach the horse diagonally from the front whenever possible.

The number one rule for approaching horses is to make sure that they know you're coming. This is easiest (by far) if you come at the horse from the front and slightly to the side (to avoid the blind spot right in front of it). If you can, approaching from the front-left of the horse is even better: many horses are trained specifically to work with humans on their left side and as a result are most comfortable with this.

Use a gentle, even walking pace.

Try to stay relaxed, as horses are good at picking up on subtle signs of tenseness. Make no effort to hide yourself or the noise of your feet.

Don't stare the horse in the eyes.

This can be interpreted as a threat. Instead, look at its knee as you approach.

Handling

Use your voice to let the horse know you're approaching.

To first-time riders, hearing an experienced horse handler talk to her horse constantly can seem unusual. However, this serves an important purpose: it lets the horse know where the human is at all times. As you approach the horse, call to it at a gentle volume. You can say basically anything you want here as long as it's in a non-threatening, even tone.

You should do this no matter what direction you approach the horse from, but it's even more crucial if you're forced to approach the horse from a direction besides the front. Since the horse may not see you right away, it's important to let it know you're coming with your voice.

Let the horse smell you.

Like dogs and many other animals, horses use their powerful sense of smell to identify other animals and detect threats. When you reach the horse, hold your hands out for it to smell. Don't thrust your hands right into its nose — instead, stand a step or two in front of it and gently move your hands (palms pointing down and held flat and open) to about a foot in front of it. **If the horse doesn't seem to want to smell your hands, don't continue to bother it. Instead, just withdraw your hands and continue to the next steps.**



Pet the horse.

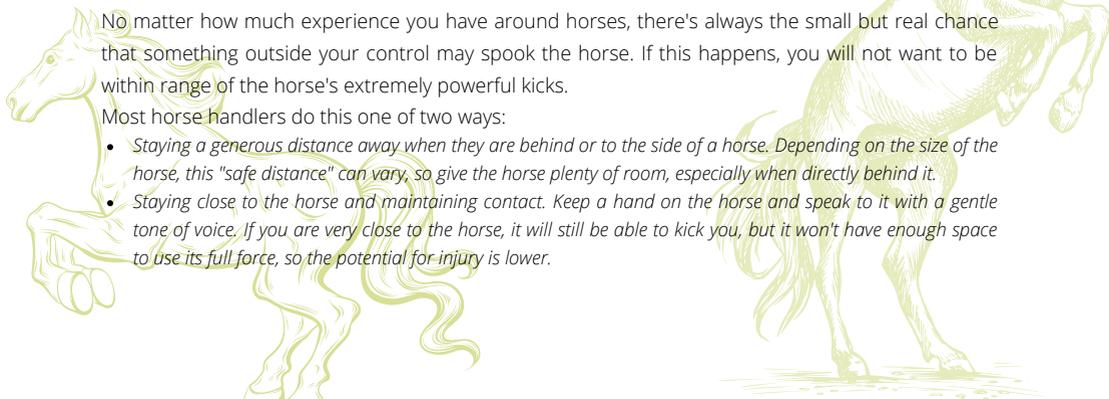
Before proceeding to whatever task you have planned for your horse, take the opportunity to show your affection and get it comfortable with you. Move to the horse's shoulder, talking to it as you do so. Make sure it can see you and that it is displaying soft, peaceful eyes. Gently nuzzle it around the neck, shoulder, and mane. You can move down the body to the rump once the horse is comfortable with you. Stay away from sensitive areas like the eyes, nose, and mouth. **Use a rubbing or a gentle scratching motion — never a slapping or patting motion, which most horses do not like.**

Stay out of the horse's kicking range.

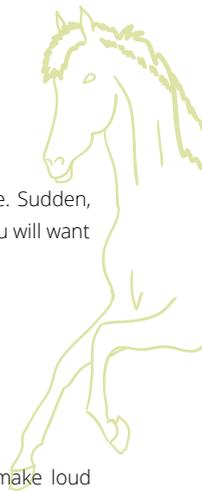
No matter how much experience you have around horses, there's always the small but real chance that something outside your control may spook the horse. If this happens, you will not want to be within range of the horse's extremely powerful kicks.

Most horse handlers do this one of two ways:

- *Staying a generous distance away when they are behind or to the side of a horse. Depending on the size of the horse, this "safe distance" can vary, so give the horse plenty of room, especially when directly behind it.*
- *Staying close to the horse and maintaining contact. Keep a hand on the horse and speak to it with a gentle tone of voice. If you are very close to the horse, it will still be able to kick you, but it won't have enough space to use its full force, so the potential for injury is lower.*



Handling



Don't make sudden movements around a horse.

Keep in mind that it's possible to startle a horse even if it knows exactly where you are. Sudden, violent motion can make a horse think it's in danger and provoke a spook response, so you will want to avoid it at all costs.

Specific things to avoid include:

- *Thrusting anything into the horse's face (remember that it has a blind spot in front of its nose)*
- *Running towards the horse*
- *Slapping or striking the horse in any way*

Avoid loud, startling noises.

Just like unexpected noises can frighten humans, they frighten horses as well. Don't make loud noises around horses, especially if they're not used to hearing the noise you're about to make. If you do have to do something that makes a loud noise, move away from the horse before doing it.

Specific things to avoid include:

- *Loud clapping, yelling, or screaming*
- *Guns being shot*
- *Loud music*
- *Loud machines (chainsaws, dirt-bikes, etc.)*
- *When possible, loud natural noises (e.g., thunder)*



Don't surprise or harass a horse when it is eating.

Like many animals, horses can be very defensive about their food. However, this is more of a personal tip for a particular horse than a part of a general guideline. If the horse is sensitive about eating, give it plenty of space when it is feeding — even a horse that is normally very docile may get agitated if you interrupt it while it is eating. You should especially avoid putting your hand or anything else near the animal's face or mouth, as this can be interpreted as you trying to steal its food.

REMEMBER!

If it's not your horse and the owner is not with you and/or has not given you permission, it's polite to stay away.

Don't underestimate the importance of horse safety. The suggestions above aren't just casual tips — they're safety instructions that can save your life. A spooked horse is extremely dangerous. He may start running uncontrollably, lunge suddenly, rear up, or kick. Since **adult horses can easily weigh over 1,000 pounds (453 kilograms), any of these things can result in serious injury or even death for you, the horse, and others.**



Stay out of a horse's blind spots. These include in front of their nose, underneath their head, under their belly, and directly behind them. If you do have to move into one of these blind spots, make sure the horse knows where you are. Talk to it in a gentle voice and keep one hand in contact with it.



Handling

How to Halter your horse

Once you've approached a horse and gotten it comfortable around you, you may want to be able to move it where you want. This is easy with a Headcollar that goes over the horse's nose and mouth. A headcollar helps you to control a horse's head, leading it where you want it to go.

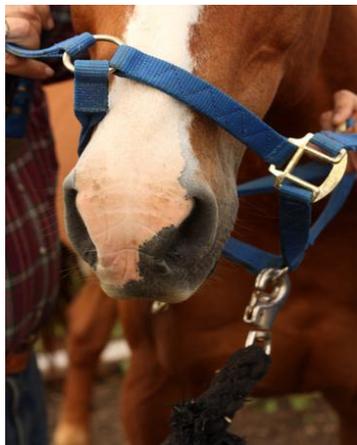
Most headcollars have a small loop that slips over the horse's muzzle with a larger loop that latches either behind the horse's ears or underneath its jaw. Slip a lead rope around the horse's neck before you get started so you'll have something to hold on to if they won't cooperate.



1 - Stand to the left side of your pony.

2 - Allow the pony to sniff your hands as well as the halter.

3 - Put a lead rope over the pony's neck so that should he start to wander off before the halter is on, you can hold him back.



4 - Start with the halter ready to be put on the horse.

5 - Hold the nose band in one hand.

6 - Put the pony's muzzle through the loop meant for the nose, making sure not to let the halter get twisted.

7 - Put the top of the halter carefully over the pony's ears.

8 - Buckle the Headcollar in place and check fit.



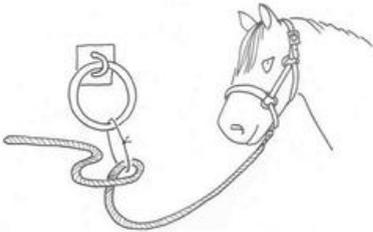
MAKE SURE THAT THE HALTER ISN'T TOO TIGHT ANYWHERE ON THE FACE.

Handling

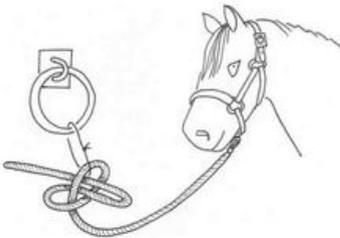
Tying Up Safely with a Quick Release Knot

Tying a horse means securing a horse to a fixed object by means of a halter and lead rope. This may be done to restrict the horse's movement for grooming, tacking up or simply to stop the horse from wandering around. Learn to tie up your horse properly and securely to avoid injury to your horse or yourself, and to prevent escape.

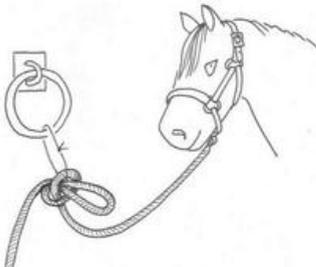
- *Always tie your horse/pony up in an enclosed place, so that if they do pull free they can't escape.*
- *Never tie them directly to the ring/fence/gate/etc.*
- *Attach a small loop of string to where you want to tie them and fasten the rope to this. This means if they panics and pulls back, the string will break.*
- *Make sure the wall or rail is sturdy and won't give way with pressure.*
- *Use a quick release knot whenever you tie up, so that you can untie your horse/pony quickly in an emergency.*



1 - Pull the lead rope through the safety string and make a loop with the end of it across the rest.



2 - Fold the remaining rope, take it behind the part that is attached to the pony and pull it through the loop.



3 - Pull down on the folded part, making sure the end doesn't pull through, To undue quickly pull on the loose end.





Handling

Leading

Chances are the very first thing you'll ever do with your horse is lead it somewhere. This is a basic skill that everyone who owns a horse or pony will need to know. Walking quietly beside you is also something your horse must learn. *Although it is traditional to lead on the left side, you should be able to lead from the right (offside) as well. Walking obediently beside you is the basis for many other things you'll ask your horse to do such as loading on a trailer and lunging.*

Begin with your horse haltered with a sturdy lead rope snapped to the ring on the underside of the halter. *You may wish to wear gloves to protect your hands. If your horse pulls away suddenly, the gloves will protect your hands and fingers.*



Walking

1. Standing on the left-hand side (near side) of the horse, hold the lead rope about 8 inches from the snap with your right hand.
2. Hold the end of the lead rope folded to fit comfortably in your left hand. Hold around the middle of the folds so that there are no loops around your hand.
3. Stand at the horse's shoulder.
4. Cue your horse to walk with a slight forward motion of your right hand (not a tug or pull) on the lead rope. Say "walk on". Walk forward yourself.



Stopping

Stop by asking the horse to "whoa" (or whatever word you choose to mean "stop"), stopping yourself and pulling lightly on the lead rope. The horse should stop and stand beside you and not swing out or try to face you.



Backing up

1. Ask your horse to back up by turning around to face it.
2. Take the lead rope in your left hand, and with your right-hand point at or press on the horse's left shoulder.
3. Ask the horse to "back" and pull down and back slightly with the lead rope. Step forward yourself to stay with your horse as it steps back.

TIPS

- **Do not try to haul your horse along.** The harder you pull, the more resistant the horse may become. The horse should be taught to walk and trot with you on cue without any pulling.
- **Don't get left behind,** but stay at your horse's shoulder.
- **Stay close** enough alongside that you can see what your horse is doing. But, don't go so far away that your horse is off on the opposite side of the lead rope.
- **To get your horse to move forward** try pulling the horse slightly to the right so that it has to take a step with its left forefoot to re-balance. Pull the horse gently back towards you so it then has to move its right foot forward to again re-balance. Sometimes this is enough to unstuck a reluctant horse.

Grooming Horses

Grooming serves many purposes. It cleans your horse's coat by removing dirt, sweat, dead skin cells, and loose hair. It warms your horse up mentally by letting them grow used to your touch. It warms them up physically by increasing their circulation. It brings natural oils from the skin to the surface to make their coat shine. It lets you check their body for nicks, bumps or sore spots. It helps you accustom your horse to overall body handling so they aren't ticklish. Finally it helps to strengthen your relationship with your horse.

Currying Your Horse or Pony

Use a rubber or plastic curry comb to loosen up the mud and sweat on your horse's coat and to get shedding hair to fall out.

The soft rubber "nubbins" stimulate the skin to release hair oil to make a shiny coat. Use a curry in a vigorous circular motion. Curry in circular sweeps all over the horse's body, but be careful over the bony areas of the shoulders, hips, and legs.

Many horses are sensitive about having their bellies and between the back legs brushed (although some love it). If your horse reacts by laying back his ears or swishing his tail in agitation, he is telling you that the brushing is too vigorous.



Comb out the Tangles

A flowing, shiny mane and tail are a joy to behold. Get that full, healthy look by being gentle and patient as you groom your horse's mane or tail.

Start with a mane comb or brush at the bottom of the strands and brush downward in sections until you can smoothly comb from the top to the bottom. When brushing the tail, stand to one side and pull the tail gently over to you, making sure you are out of the way should the horse kick. A grooming spray that detangles hair is nice to have, as it makes brushing out the long strands easier while cleaning, shining and protecting the hair.

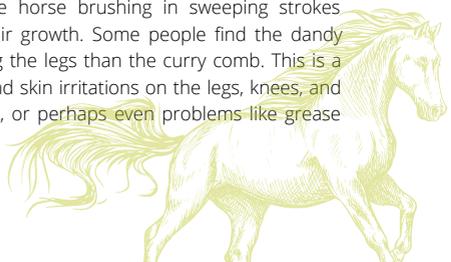
A grooming spray may also help prevent the hairs from tangling too much between groomings.



Use the Dandy Brush to Whisk Away Dirt

After currying the body to get rid of the coarser dirt, it's time to go to work with a dandy brush. This longer-bristled, stiff brush will get rid of what the curry comb missed.

With the dandy brush, whisk out the dirt brought to the surface. Start on one side and move around the horse brushing in sweeping strokes following the direction of the hair growth. Some people find the dandy brush is more useful for cleaning the legs than the curry comb. This is a good time to check for lesions and skin irritations on the legs, knees, and pasterns like small cuts and nick, or perhaps even problems like grease heel.





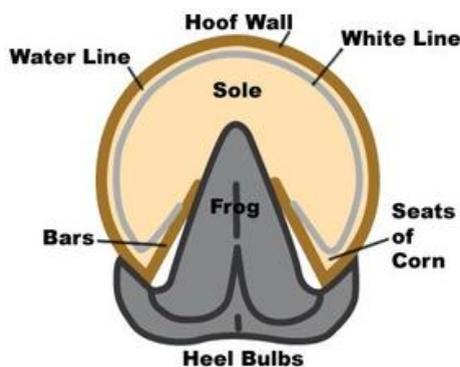
Grooming Horses

Using the Body Brush and face brush.

A finishing brush, which has shorter, softer bristles, helps to bring out the shine on your horse's coat. Gently whisk away dust from the broader areas on your horse's face, ears, and throat. With sweeping strokes, whisk away any dust missed by the Dandy brush. The finer bristles help smooth out the body hair and leave your horse looking more finished and glossy.

Clean the Ears, Eyes, Muzzle, and Dock Area

So far, you have cleaned up your horse's body, mane, and tail—now it's time for detailing. With a damp sponge or soft cloth, wipe around the horse's eyes and muzzle and clean away any dirt or chaff.



Clean Your Horse's or Pony's Hooves

Slide your hand down the left foreleg. Squeeze the back of the leg along the tendons just above the pastern and say "up," "hoof," or whatever word your horse responds to. Hold the hoof and with the hoof pick pry out any dirt, manure, or grit lodged in the frog or sole of the foot.

Check for any injury and signs of thrush, grease heel, or other problems, and take note of any cracks in the wall of the hoof, so you can consult with your farrier as to what should be done. Gently place the foot back down on the ground and continue until all four feet are done.

Don't set your bucket or box too close to your horse where he could knock it over, or where you might trip over it as you move around your horse.

TIE THE HORSE SECURELY AND SAFELY WITH A QUICK-RELEASE KNOT.



Health

Your horses' health is important. Make sure you keep your horse in good health by getting into the routine of doing a simple daily, quick and easy, horse health check.

A Horse health check makes a happy horse

Don't worry – a good horse health check only takes a few minutes.

But, to make it work it's important that you know the signs of a healthy horse, as well as the signs of an unhealthy horse.

How is Your Horse Standing?

Horses who are relaxing often stand with their heads down and one hind leg resting. This is a completely normal posture. However, if your horse is standing in his pasture or stall with a front leg resting, further investigation is probably needed. Trot your horse up to see if there are any signs of lameness. If you aren't sure, call your vet and have him do an evaluation. As a general rule, horses don't stand with their front legs resting.

Check Your Horses' Expression.

You can often tell if your horse is feeling under the weather just by looking at his expression. You see your horse every day, and you know what to expect. If your normally alert, curious, ears-forward horse is hanging his head with dull eyes, then he probably doesn't feel well. Watch him carefully, and if his expression doesn't improve, check with your vet.

How is Your Horse Laying?

All horses lie down. Sometimes to rest, and other times just to bask in the sun. If your horse is sunning himself, peacefully in his paddock, with other horses, then leave him alone. Chances are, he's just enjoying some down time and although every horse enjoys a good roll now and then, if your horse rolls repeatedly and seems agitated or restless, it's possible he has a tummy ache. Restless, agitated, rolling is a sign of colic, so if he doesn't stop and resume normal behavior within a few minutes, call your vet.

Check Your Horses' Legs

This is a good thing to do every day, even if you haven't ridden your horse. Horses can injure themselves just about anywhere, including in their paddocks and their stables. Run your hands down each leg, looking for wounds, feeling for heat, bumps, and swelling. It may take a while, but at some point you should know the difference between your horses normal leg temperature and an elevated temperature. If you notice anything abnormal, trot your horse up and check for signs of lameness. If your horse seems stiff, limps, or bobs his head when he moves, check with your vet.

Monitor Your Horses' Appetite.

Most horses love to eat. If your horse falls into this category, you'll know something is wrong if he leaves his food alone. A horse who isn't feeling well may lose his appetite, and could also stop drinking. If you notice a change in your horses eating or drinking patterns, watch him closely for a few feedings. If he doesn't regain his appetite, call your vet.

Check Your Horses' Droppings

Your horses manure is a good sign of his health. You probably know what your horses normal manure looks like. The balls should be well formed but easy to break in half. If the balls seem extremely dry or hard, check that your horse is drinking enough water. Loose manure can mean a couple things: Either your horse is eating a diet that is too rich for him, or he has some sort of bug that is giving him diarrhoea. Regularly check the droppings for worms. Worms in your horses manure mean that he is carrying dangerous, sometimes deadly parasites. Time for a deworming.

Health

Your equine can't tell you if they are feeling ill, so it is important to recognise the signs. The main thing is to get to know them well, including all their favourite habits, so that you notice any unusual behaviour. Make sure you check them over carefully at least once a every day.



	Good Sign	Bad Sign
Head	Looking up. Watching you approach.	Hung Low. Barely notices you approach.
Ears	Pricked up. Feel Warm.	Drooping or laid back. Feel Cold.
Eyes	Bright and Shiny. Salmon Pink Membrane.	Dull. Sad - looking
Nostrils	Pink and Clean.	Full of Discharge
Coat	Lying flat. Looking Glossy.	Dull and patchy. Standing on end.
Skin	Loose and Supple.	Tight and dry. Sore or rubbed patches.
Ribs	Can't be seen. Can be felt.	If you can see them = thin. If you can't feel them = Fat.
Appetite	Eating up. Chewing well.	Refusing Food. Having trouble chewing.
Droppings	Soft balls that break as they hit the ground. Passed about 8 times a day.	Sloppy like a cow's. Not passing any at all.
Legs	Check that they are standing square. (resting a back leg is usual but a front one is odd)	Lame or limping. Cuts and grazes. Heat or swelling.

Pulse

A equine's pulse rate should be 36 to 42 beats a minute, at rest. Use two fingers to feel it under their jaw or just above their eye, You may need help finding it at first.

Respiration

Respiration is their breathing rate. At rest, it should be 8-12 regular breaths a minute. To count them, watch their flanks go in and out or put your hand near their nose.

Temperature

A equine's temperature should be 38°C (100.5°F). It is taken by putting the thermometer in their bottom and should only be done by an experienced person.



Health and Welfare



Farrier

A farrier takes care of your horses feet, and if your horse is shod (wears shoes) they will fit the shoes to their feet too.

Have your farrier in to trim hooves or reset horseshoes. Leaving hooves to grow too long is hard on your horse's legs, and unhealthy for their hooves.



Dentist

Just like people horses have to see a dentist to check their teeth for any problems.

Have teeth checked and floated by an equine dentist or veterinarian. Some horses may need checking and floating every six months.



Vet

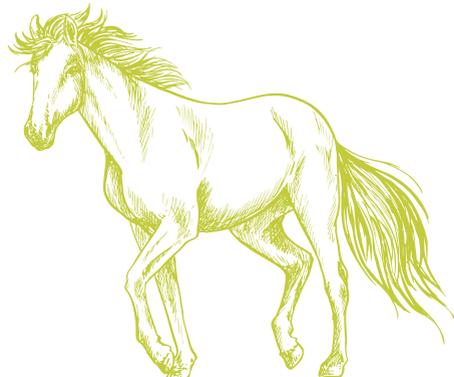
The types and frequency of vaccinations you'll give your horse will depend on the diseases prevalent in your area. Your veterinarian is the best resource to help you decide on a schedule. Administer deworming medication. It's important to have a deworming schedule to keep your horse healthy.

Have immunizations administered by a veterinarian.

Common Equine Health Problems

There are many illnesses and conditions a horse can suffer from. Some can be chronic and others can be caused by simple changes in routine or feed. Common symptoms of a sick horse is;

- Runny Poo
- Heavy Breathing
- Excess Sweating
- Lying down a lot
- Not lying down
- Stiffness
- Not standing on on foot or repeatedly shifting weight.



#niequines

Horse Concerns

NORTHERN IRELAND GUIDANCE



"Hi, there's a a Horse in a feild..."

Many of our reports are from members of the public regarding a horse in a feild. For Welfare concerns we need to gather as much information as possible in the initial contact; it can take days to gather enough informaiton for us to make an informed assessment and reccomendation. For many the sooner we can act the better!

Establish the Facts

Is the horse;

- Underweight (can you see ribs or other bones?)
- Injured (is it limping or have visible wounds?)
- Safe (is it enclosed in a field or paddock where it cannot access dangerous areas ie. roads, railways etc.)

Does it have:

- Shelter (trees, hedges or stable, etc?)
- Water (there may be a drinking trough or buckets somewhere)
- Enough food (not every equine needs the same amount - some horses need very little to no grass, others need extra food. Establish what food is available if you can)
- An Owner (if you don't know for sure look for signs of care, ie. a rug, or feed buckets etc.)

If you are concerned

Take Photos - Take down address or as much detail as you can about the location - Note the Date and also how long the animal has been there (if known).

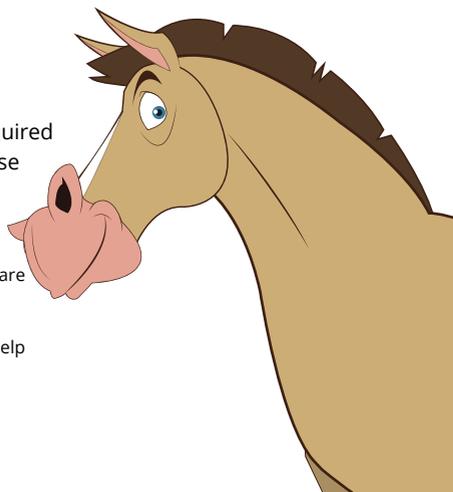
Contact your local **District Council for Welfare Concerns** - or **PSNI for Horses loose on the road.**

All Animals need;

- a suitable environment
- a suitable diet
- to be housed with or apart from other animals as required
- to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease
- to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns

Crosskennan will do all we can in offering aid and advice but if you are concerned please contact the Council or the the PSNI.

If in doubt email crosskennan@hotmail.co.uk and we will help signpost you to the relevant body.



This booklet has been produced by Crosskennan Lane Animal Sanctuary as an aid for working with Equines at the Sanctuary and in other areas. All information is general and may not apply to every equine and every situation.

Thank you for supporting **Crosskennan Lane Animal Sanctuary** and their work.

If you would like to learn more please check out our website **www.crosskennanlane.co.uk**

*This Training booklet was only possible thanks to funding by **Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council**.*

Designed and Published 2020
With Thanks to Scribble Studio NI



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