



HorseSense Learning Levels

LEVEL UP QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Red HorseSense

QUESTIONS and ANSWERS for each page in the STUDY GUIDE

Page 1 - Equine Behavior

- Is a horse a prey animal or a predator?**

Horses are prey animals - they're hunted by other animals.

- Are you a prey animal or a predator?**

Humans are predators.

- Why is it important to remember that horses are prey animals?**

Since we are predators, we don't have the same survival instincts as prey animals. This means horses don't think or react the same way we do.

- Which will a frightened horse choose first: flight or fight?**

Horses will try flight first; if they can't run away from a threat then they will stand and fight.

- Name five normal human activities that might frighten a horse.**

running; loud voices; loud or unexpected noises; sneaking or moving quickly into his blind spots; waving or flapping objects; unfamiliar objects such as bicycles, toys, umbrellas, etc.; unfamiliar animals

- Your pony has two "blind spots". What are they and where are they located?**

Blind spots are places where his vision is obstructed and he cannot see; he can't see directly in front of his face or behind his tail.

- Can your pony see you if you stand directly in front of his face?**

No. He can only see you if you stand to the side.

- What might happen if I approach a pony from in front of his face or behind his tail and startle him?**

He might get scared and try to kick me.

- What is the safe way to approach a horse's body?**

You should approach him from the side, towards his neck and shoulder. This is the way horses approach each other to show they are friendly.

Page 2 - Equine Behavior

- What does it mean when my pony's ears are splayed and droopy?**
It means my pony is bored or sleepy.
- What does it mean when my pony's ears are pricked forward?**
It means he's alert and listening.
- How does a horse tell you that he is angry?**
When angry he pins his ears back on his head to look fierce.
- What should I do when my pony pins his ears against his head?**
He's warning me that he's mad, so I should move a safe distance away.
- Can your pony tell if you are scared or nervous?**
Yes - horses are very good at reading our body language.
- Why is it dangerous to yell or make loud noises around horses?**
Loud noises could scare them and make them want to kick or run away.
- Why is it dangerous to sneak or run around horses?**
Sneaking and running are predator behaviors, and may trigger your horse's flight-or-fight response.
- If something goes wrong while you're working with your horse, why is it important that you not panic? How can you stay calm?**
Your horse wants you to be the leader to keep him safe, so if you panic he is also likely to panic. Take a deep breath and remember: if you want him to be calm, you must be calm first!

Page 3 - Equine Behavior

- Why are horses unhappy when they live alone, without other animals for companionship?**
Horses are herd animals. They feel safest in a group and usually form deep bonds with their herdmates. Without a herd, a horse will be lonely and fearful, even if he doesn't show it.
- A herd's hierarchy, or pecking order, determines which horses have power over other horses in the herd. Who gets to eat first, the dominant horses or the submissive horses?**
The most dominant horses in the herd usually eat first, while the most submissive eat last and are often picked on by the other horses.
- What is a "mare"?**
A mare is an adult female horse.

What is a "stallion"?

A stallion is an adult male horse that has not been castrated and can sire offspring.

What is a "gelding"?

An adult male horse who has been gelded, or castrated so he cannot produce offspring.

In most herds, which is the leader, a mare or a stallion?

Most herds have a dominant mare, called the lead mare, who decides where the herd will graze and go for water.

In a herd, what role does a stallion usually have?

Most stallions have the role of protector, keeping the herd safe from predators and other stallions.

In what way are horses are "claustrophobic"?

They hate to be enclosed in tight spaces because their instincts tell them to always have a safe route away from danger.

Name two situations that could make a horse feel claustrophobic.

You can trigger your horse's claustrophobic tendencies by crowding him, asking him to squeeze through narrow spaces, or restraining him in some way, such as tying him. Horses also are defensive of their own personal space bubble, and will kick or bite any horse that invades it.

What might happen if you tie your horse right next to another horse?

The horses might kick or bite each other to defend their space bubbles.

If a horse gets too close to you, you can ask him to move away by applying pressure. Describe two ways to apply pressure.

To move the horse away from your space bubble, apply physical pressure, such as pushing gently against his shoulder or hindquarter; or send the horse away using motion.

Your instructor tells you to defend your personal space bubble by using your "chicken wings". What does that mean?

Flap your elbows like chicken wings to make the horse aware of your personal space and drive him away.

Page 4 - Unmounted Safety

When you are working with your horse, you become a "herd of two". Who should always be the leader in this herd?

You should be the leader with your horse, because you are responsible for making sure that everything is done safely.

How should you behave so that your horse respects your leadership?

If you are calm and confident, authoritative yet fair, he will agree you are the lead horse and follow your directions willingly. If you are timid, unsure or inconsistent, the horse will not respect your leadership or trust you to look after him.

What is the best way to prevent accidents when working with horses?

Learn to think critically and ask questions about everything you do.

Is it a good idea to wear sandals or flip-flops when working around horses?

No! You should always wear boots or sturdy shoes that protect your feet in case a horse steps on them.

Why is it a good idea to wear a helmet when you are learning ground handling, grooming, and tacking skills?

It takes experience to learn how to work around horses safely and to understand the circumstances in which you might be kicked by a horse. Meanwhile, it's smart to protect your head!

Name two ways you could learn more about handling horses safely?

Ask your instructor for more supervised practice; observe horses interacting with their herd and other people; look for further information in the study guide's Suggested Reading list and online.

Page 5 - Unmounted Safety

Why could it be unsafe to leave tack and equipment cluttering up the barn aisle?

Horses are accident prone, and might trip over or be startled by things in their path.

Why should you unplug electrical appliances, like fans or radios, when you are not using them in your barn?

While appliances with heavy-duty cords are usually safe, dust and worn-out wiring account for most barn fires.

Why is it a good idea to keep a tight-fitting lid on any trash bin in your barn?

It keeps horses - and other undesirable critters - from foraging through your trash.

What could happen if your horse finds a candy wrapper in the barn aisle?

Horses like sugar, so he might eat the wrapper and choke or colic.

Why should we repair splintered wood and sharp, rough edges on gates, stalls, wash areas, and all other areas where horses are confined?

Horses are accident prone, and can easily cut themselves on anything sharp.

Name two common pieces of tack or barn equipment with a closed loop that must be kept high off the ground to avoid catching a horse's hoof.

lead rope, reins, hay net, halter, stall guard, blanket strap, hay net

Is it safe for anyone to smoke in your barn?

No! Barns are filled with highly-flammable things (hay and dust in particular) that make fire a very dangerous risk.

Why could glass items - jars or drinking glasses - be unsafe in a barn?

Broken glass - even small shards - could cut horse's feet and cause infections and lameness.

Why are loose dogs in a barn, pasture, or arena considered a safety hazard?

Dogs are predators and exhibit predator behaviors, particularly sudden movements that can spook a horse. Loose dogs that are unfamiliar with horses are a particular risk because they can run up to horse's legs and cause a spook or get kicked.

Where are the fire extinguishers located in our barn?

(fill in the appropriate answer)

Where are the equine and human first aid kits located in our barn?

(fill in the appropriate answer)

Can you name six rules for keeping a barn safe for horses?

No smoking; keep aisles clear; put away tools; no running or yelling; check for nails/broken boards; no glass containers; dogs on leashes; gates latched; electrical appliances unplugged; first aid kits; fire extinguisher; lead & tie safely; pay attention!

Page 6 - Unmounted Safety

Most barns have a list of Barn Rules posted. Name two rules of etiquette that show consideration for other students, boarders, and instructors.

Ask permission before handling/feeding anyone else's horse; use only designated tack and equipment and never borrow without asking; clean up after yourself and your horse; be nice!

Why should you learn about Ring Rules if you don't ride?

It can help you understand that your behavior outside the arena may have an influence on the riders and horses inside the arena - and makes their safety a priority.

Name three rules for keeping riders and horses safe in the arena.

No running, rough-housing, or loud noises near the arena; keep the arena clear of clutter and trash; remove empty metal jump cups from standards and store safely; watch your spacing and where you are going; stop immediately for a spook or a fall.

You are working outside of the arena and someone calls out, "Heads up!" What should you do?

Stop immediately and look for the problem - and stay calm so that you don't make things worse.

- When you are on foot or working a horse from the ground, and there are mounted riders in the same area, who gets the right-of-way?**
Riders on horseback always get the right-of-way, so if you are working on the ground you must watch where you are going, and yield to any riders.
- If your cell phone rings while you are leading your horse or riding, should you answer it?**
No - talking or texting while riding or working with horses can be dangerous because your attention should be on the horse at all times.

Page 7 - Unmounted Safety

- What does it mean to "turn out" a horse?**
Turning out a horse means putting him in a paddock or pasture rather than in a stall.
- Why should beginners always have an experienced person with them when they go into a paddock or pasture to catch a horse?**
Loose horses don't always want to be caught, and may require careful and confident handling; a herd of loose horses can sometimes be protective and aggressive.
- Describe three rules for staying safe when you interact with loose horses in a paddock or pasture.**
Constant vigilance; watch body language; defend your space bubble; defend your ground from a safe spot; avoid carrying food into the pasture; be especially careful around gates; always check that gates are latched securely.

Page 8 - Unmounted Safety

- How often should you check your pastures for safety hazards?**
You should scan pastures every time you go out to catch a horse - or at least once a day.
- What hazards should you look for when inspecting a pasture for safety?**
Check horses and pick feet daily; make sure there is clean water & salt; check fencing; remove trash/dangerous objects; fill holes; poisonous plants.
- What could happen if there are big rocks, fallen trees, or critter holes in your pasture?**
The horse could trip - especially if he's running - and be seriously injured.
- What could happen if your horse eats a toxic plant in your pasture?**
He could get sick, and might even die.
- How tall should fences be in order to keep horses safe?**
Fences should be at least 3'6" tall.

What hazards should you look for when inspecting wooden fences?

Check wood fences for broken or splintered boards and protruding nails or screws.

What kind of mesh wire fencing is safe for horses?

The wire mesh needs to be woven together close enough that a horse cannot put his hoof through it, and it needs to be securely fastened to the posts without sagging.

Is electric fencing safe for horses?

Yes - but it only works if the power is on and makes a complete circuit. This means it should be checked frequently and kept free of brush.

Is barbed wire fencing safe for horses?

No - barbed wire is designed for cattle, whose thick hides can withstand a brush with the wire. The sharp edges can tear a horse's thin skin, and a loose wire can spell disaster for delicate legs!

Page 9 - Mounted Safety

Why is it so important to wear a helmet everytime you ride?

Head injuries don't heal the same way other parts of your body do - and they are the injuries most likely to be fatal.

Helmets that have been certified as safe for riding have a sticker inside. What letters should you look for on that sticker?

ASTM-SEI shows that your helmet has been certified by the Safety Equipment Institute to be manufactured according to safety standards set by the American Society for Training Materials.

How can you tell if a helmet fits properly?

When you put on your helmet, it should sit level on your forehead, resting right above your eyebrows. When you wiggle the brim up and down and side to side, your eyebrows should wiggle with it. The chin strap must be snug enough to touch your skin.

Long hair should be secured with a low ponytail before you put on your helmet. Why is this important?

1. long hair could get caught in your tack, and 2. long hair tucked inside your helmet could affect how your helmet fits

Page 10 - Mounted Safety

What kind of clothing should we wear when we're riding?

long stretchy pants or leggings; close fitting shirts and jackets; boots with a smooth sole and a heel

Describe safe footwear for riding and working around horses.

closed toe; 1/2-inch heel; cover the ankle; smooth sole

- What are "jodhpurs"?**
Stretchy long pants designed for English riding.
- When the weather is very cold, it's important for a rider to wear gloves. Why?**
Wear gloves when riding in cold weather because cold hands can't hold the reins safely.
- Why is it a bad idea to wear loose, dangling jewelry when you ride?**
It could get caught on your tack and hurt you.
- Why must you remember not to eat or to chew gum when you are mounted on your pony?**
If your pony gets startled and moves suddenly you could choke.

Page 11 - Ground Handling

- What term do we use to describe leading or working with a horse when you are NOT riding?**
Leading and working with the horse without riding him is called ground handling.
- What item of tack do you use to lead and tie your pony safely?**
Use a halter to lead and tie safely.
- What makes a halter safer than a bridle for tying your pony?**
Halter doesn't have a bit, which could hurt the pony's mouth if he pulled back.
- When a lead rope is correctly attached to a halter, is it clipped to the halter's cheekpiece or to the ring under the horse's chin?**
The lead rope attaches to halter ring that is under the horse's chin.
- When putting a halter on a horse, what part of the halter buckles behind the horse's ears?**
The crownpiece of the halter goes behind the horse's ears.
- When a rope halter is correctly tied on a horse's head, does the tail end of the crownpiece point towards the horse's eye or towards his neck?**
The tail end of the crownpiece should point AWAY from the horse's eye.

Page 12 - Ground Handling

- Why is it a good idea to organize your halter and lead rope before you approach a horse to catch him?**
If you wait until you are near the horse to put the halter and lead rope in the correct hands, your horse may not wait for you! You should be ready to put the lead rope over his neck as soon as you are close enough to do it.

- True or False: You should always speak to your pony when approaching him to halter and lead him.**
True - talk to him to make sure that he knows you are there.
- You want to get your horse out of his stall, but he's looking out the back window. What should you do?**
Talk to your horse and let him know you are coming. Make sure he turns and at least looks at you before you approach him.
- When catching a horse in his stall, is it a good idea to leave the stall door just slightly open?**
Yes, open the stall door just enough that you can slip through. Leave it ajar so you can escape quickly if necessary.
- When you approach a horse, what part of his body should you touch first?**
His neck or shoulder; this is the place horses first approach each other to show that they're friendly.
- You are going to go catch your horse in the pasture. What should you take with you?**
You should have boots & helmet; halter; lead rope; optional treat.
- You are trying to catch your horse in the pasture, but he turns and walks away when you get close to him. What should you do?**
If your horse turns and walks away, don't chase him! Stop and wait for him to stop moving. Hold out your hand and talk to him as you approach again. If you can't catch him after several attempts, ask for help.

Page 13 - Ground Handling

- When you lead a horse, where should you stand?**
You should stand on the side of the horse, with his head by your shoulder.
- Which side of the horse is his near side? His off side?**
near side = left; off side = right
- On which side of the horse do you normally lead?**
Lead from the horse's near - or left - side.
- When leading your horse, how should you hold the lead rope?**
Hold the lead rope or reins about six inches from the halter ring or bit, and with the remainder carefully folded in your other hand.
- Why might it be a bad idea to wrap the extra lead rope around your hand?**
If the horse spooked and took off, the lead rope would tighten around your hand and you could be dragged.

- When tacking up or leading your pony, is it VERY dangerous to let the lead rope or reins hang down or touch the ground. What could happen?**
Your pony could step on the lead rope or loose reins and get caught or trip; it will hurt his mouth and could scare him.
- When you lead your pony, you should look straight ahead -- not back at your pony. Why?**
Looking ahead tells your pony where to go.
- If you are leading your pony and he gets too close to you, how can you tell him to move away?**
Flap your elbow like a chicken.

Page 14 - Ground Handling

- You are leading a horse in from the pasture and need to open and close the gate, so you ask your horse to "yield his hindquarters". What does this mean?**
The horse swings his hindquarters away from you, crossing his back legs and turning to face you with both eyes as he comes to a halt.
- You are leading your horse through a gate and there are other horses in the enclosure, which is causing your horse to be anxious and pushy. What should you do?**
Insist that your horse waits politely so you can walk through the opening first if you choose. Otherwise, you might get knocked down and hurt. If you can't do this confidently, ask for help.
- What could happen if you don't open a door or gate wide enough for your horse to walk through easily?**
Horses don't like tight spaces, so he could rush or panic and injure himself (or you).
- Why is it very important that you ask your pony to turn and face you before you take off his halter?**
Some horses like to kick up their heels and run when turned loose, and you could be hurt.
- Describe the correct way to turn a horse loose in a stall or pasture.**
Stand at the gate or door, ready to move through the opening, with the horse's head close to you and his hindquarters respectfully turned away. Ask him to turn and face you before you take off his halter. Remove the halter and back away, keeping your eyes on the horse.

Page 15 - Ground Handling

- Name two safe methods for tying a horse.**
Tie him to a tie-post - a solid post with a tie ring - or with cross-ties in a stall, aisle, or wash rack.
- Where would you find "panic snaps"?**
Panic snaps are located on the ends of cross-ties.

- Why should you keep a hand on your pony's body while you're working around him, grooming him or tacking up?**

Move around the horse with your hand on his body so he will know where you are and not be startled.

- How should you safely walk behind a horse?**

To pass behind your horse, place a hand at the top of his hindquarters and walk behind as close as you can get.

- Is it okay to duck under the pony's head to move from one side of his body to the other?**

It's safer to walk around him, but if you must duck under his head, keep your hand on him while you're moving and don't stop and stand under his neck.

- When tying, about how much rope should you leave between your knot and the horse's halter?**

Leave about 18" - long enough for him to move his head, but not long enough for him to put a leg over the lead rope.

- Describe three rules for tying horses safely.**

Tie to solid object; tie with quick-release knot, use halter and lead rope, tie in safe area with plenty of space and no loose horses, knot should be level with horse's eye; 18" between horse and knot;

Page 16 - Ground Handling

- What is a "breakaway device"?**

A breakaway device breaks or releases under extreme pressure, such as when a frightened horse pulls back.

- Describe these three breakaway devices: breakaway halter, hay string loop, breakaway tie rings.**

A breakaway halter has a leather crownpiece, or a leather tab on the buckle; loop of string or twine is tied onto a tie ring and the lead rope is tied to the breakable string; plastic breakaway rings attach to tie-rings.

- Why is it a good idea to tie your horse to a breakable haystring or quick-release ring?**

A horse that panics when tied can be seriously injured - it's safer for the horse if the ring breaks under strong pressure.

- What kind of knot should you use to tie your horse?**

Tie with a quick-release knot.

- Is it a good idea to practice tying a quick-release knot in the barn without a horse or at home?**

Yes! Practice tying the knot at home so you can do it confidently when it comes time to tie your horse.

Page 17 - Grooming

- Name three reasons why grooming your horse is important.**

It increases the horse's comfort and prevents sores while riding; it gives you the opportunity to check your horse thoroughly for cuts or swelling; It keeps the horse's coat healthy; it is a great way to get to know your horse.

- Why is it important to groom our pony before every ride?**

Grooming removes the dirt and sweat that could rub under the tack and cause sores.

- What parts of the horse MUST be clean before you go for a ride?**

The places the tack will touch (face, head, back, belly, etc.) and his feet must be clean before a ride.

- What is always the FIRST step in grooming your horse?**

Tie him in a safe, quiet place.

- Do you need to brush your horse's mane and tail before every ride?**

No, not unless there are big tangles or shavings.

- What do we usually spray on our horse's chest and legs right before we ride in the spring and summer?**

Use fly spray on your horse immediately before you ride to repel any flies that might distract or bite him; this will help him relax and focus on you.

- Do horses need to be bathed frequently?**

No - washing your horse with shampoo too often can dry out his coat.

Page 18 - Grooming

- Name five grooming tools.**

Hoof pick, curry comb, dandy brush, body brush, grooming mit, mane/tail comb or brush, sweat scraper, sponges, rub rag, shedding blade, mane pulling comb, etc.

- What grooming tool would you use to loosen mud and dirt from your pony's body?**

currycomb

- How should you move a currycomb so that it loosens dirt on your pony's body?**

Move the currycomb in small circles.

- Why is it a bad idea to use a currycomb on your pony's face or legs?**

Those places are sensitive and the currycomb might hurt him.

- What grooming tool has stiff bristles to sweep away loose dirt and dust from your horse's body?**
The dandy brush has stiff bristles.
- What grooming tool with soft bristles would you use to make your horse's coat clean and shiny?**
The body brush makes a horse's coat shine.
- Which has harder bristles, a dandy brush or a body brush?**
The dandy brush has harder bristles than a body brush.
- Which brush is soft enough to use on your pony's sensitive face and legs?**
The body brush is soft enough for sensitive areas.
- Your horse's grooming kit has a small aluminum comb. What is this used for?**
A pulling comb is used for thinning and shortening the mane.
- Your pony comes in hot and sweaty after a ride. You've hosed him off with cool water. What grooming tool should you use to remove that sweaty water from his coat?**
Use a sweat scraper to remove water from the horse's coat.
- Your pony has been a wooly mammoth all winter, but his winter coat is finally loosening up. What grooming tool can you use to remove all that loose hair from his body?**
Use a shedding blade - but NOT on sensitive areas like face and lower legs.
- Your horse's grooming kit has several sponges. What are the small sponges used for? What about the large sponges?**
Small sponges used for cleaning the face or the dock should be clearly marked to avoid spreading germs!
Large body sponges are used for bathing and cooling off a hot horse.
- What grooming tool would you use to clean dirt and rocks from your pony's feet?**
Use a hoof pick to remove dirt and rocks.

Page 19 - Hoof Care

- Name two reasons for picking out your horse's feet on a daily basis.**
Check feet for stones; thrush; cracks; loose shoes.
- What part of your body grows like a horse's hoof?**
The hoof grows like your fingernail or toenail.
- What is a "farrier"?**
A farrier is an equine professional who makes a living trimming and shoeing horse hooves.

Where is the "frog" located?

The frog is a spongy triangle of tissue located on the bottom of a horse's feet.

Name and locate three parts of the hoof.

heel, hoof wall, toe, heel bulbs, bars, frog, white line, sole

What is "thrush"?

It's a nasty, smelly disease which infects the frog, usually when the horse's feet stay wet and dirty.

Why is it important to clean your pony's feet before every ride?

To make sure there are no rocks lodged in his feet that would make it difficult for him to carry a rider.

Page 20 - Hoof Care

What do we mean by "picking out" a horse's hooves?

Using a hoof pick to clean the horse's feet.

Where should you stand when you are picking out the horse's front feet? Should you turn around to pick out the hind feet?

Stand with hoof pick in hand, facing the horse's tail - when picking both front and hind feet. Don't turn to face his head.

Is it safe to kneel down while picking out your horse's feet?

No. Keep your legs straight and your head up so that you will stay safe if the horse pulls his foot away.

Why can gently squeezing a horse's chestnut help you clean his feet?

Ask him to lift his hoof by gently squeezing or twisting the chestnut, or knobbly growth on the inside of his leg. The chestnut is mildly sensitive, and most horses will lift their foot when you squeeze it between your fingers.

What part of the hoof should you hold while you are using the hoof pick?

As he lifts his hoof, run your hand down and grasp the hoof firmly by the toe.

What can you do if your horse doesn't want to lift his foot for cleaning?

If your horse doesn't want to lift his hoof, he may have all his weight on that foot. Lean against his shoulder to help him adjust his balance.

Why is it a good idea to wear your helmet when picking out feet?

It will protect you from being kicked and from a tail in the face!

Page 21 - Pony Parts and Anatomy

- Why is it important that we learn all of the correct names for the parts of the horse?**
We refer to those parts many times when explaining how to ride, groom, tack up, and care for horses. It's also important to describe the exact location of an injury or lameness.
- What do we call the front section of the horse's body?**
The "fore" refers to the front part of the horse's body.
- What do we call the back section of the horse's body?**
The "hind" refers to the back of the horse's body.
- Is the horse's barrel located on the sides of his body, or underneath?**
The barrel is located on the sides of the horse's midsection.
- Which are on the forelegs: knees or hocks?**
Knees are on the forelegs.
- What do we call the three body parts along the horse's spine between the withers and the dock?**
The back, the loin, and the croup are located on the horses back between the withers and the dock.
- TRUE OR FALSE: The dock is right behind the poll.**
False - way behind! The dock is the area around the tail; the poll is the joint at the top of the horse's skull and spine.
- On what part of the horse would you find the gaskin and hock?**
The gaskin is located on the hind legs.
- What is the name of the part of the horse between the fetlock and the coronary band?**
The pastern is located between the fetlock and the coronary band.
- Which is a big bony joint, much like your ankle: the forelock or the fetlock?**
The fetlock is a joint similar to your ankle.
- What do we call the big muscular area behind the horse's back and barrel?**
The hindquarters.
- Tell me the correct name for at least 20 of the parts of the horse's body.**
[see Pony Parts Worksheet or Red Level HorseSense Study Guide for answers]

Page 22 - Tack

- What does the word "tack" mean?**

The equipment we put on the pony for leading and riding.

- Name three items of tack that we use when we are tacking up our pony for a ride.**

halter; saddle pad; saddle; girth; bridle; reins; stirrups; stirrup leathers; riser pad; protective boots; fly mask or ear bonnet

- Why is it important that your tack is carefully fitted to both you and your horse?**

Improperly-fitted tack can cause a horse discomfort or pain. It can make him lame, sour or cause him to act out!

- Your horse's tack is designed for which riding discipline: English or Western?**

[as appropriate]

- For which type of riding is an English saddle appropriate?**

English saddles are built for forward-seat riding, which helps the rider jump and gallop in balance with the horse.

- Name two types of English saddles and describe their purpose.**

Dressage saddles help the rider maintain a classical position, with a long leg and deep seat. Close-contact saddles are designed for jumping, with forward-cut flaps and knee rolls. An all-purpose saddle supports both a jumping and dressage position.

- What are Western saddles designed to do?**

Western saddles are designed for all-day comfort and ranch work, and are often used for recreational trail riding.

- Your Western saddle has a saddle horn - is this designed to give you something safe to hold onto when you are riding?**

No. The horn on a Western saddle is not really meant for the rider to hold onto - it provides a place to tie off a rope when working cattle.

Page 23 - Tack

- Why should you learn the correct names for all of the parts of your horse's tack BEFORE you start to saddle up?**

You will find it much easier to understand instructions for tacking up once you know the basic parts of the saddle and bridle.

- What is the name of the saddle part on which you sit?**

The rider sits in the seat of the saddle.

- Which is the front part of the saddle: the cantle or the pommel?**
The pommel is on the front of the saddle.
- What does the saddle's gullet do?**
The gullet and the pommel keep the saddle off the horse's spine.
- What is a "stirrup"?**
The stirrup is piece of tack that attaches to the saddle to hold our feet.
- Name two common types of English stirrup irons.**
Fillis irons and peacock irons.
- What do the stirrup leathers do?**
The stirrup leathers are used to adjust stirrups to the correct length for your legs.
- Some English saddles have a safety catch on the stirrup bar that prevents the stirrup leather from sliding off. Why should this catch be left open when you ride?**
You want to make sure the catch is always open when you ride so that the stirrup leather will come loose if you fall with your foot caught in the stirrup - otherwise you could be dragged.
- Is a "fender" part of an English saddle or a Western saddle?**
The fender is part of a Western saddle.
- What do we call the big strap that buckles around the pony's belly and holds the saddle on his back?**
The English girth - or the Western cinch - holds the saddle in place.
- What is the name of the straps that attach the stirrups to the English saddle?**
The stirrup leathers attach the stirrups to the saddle.
- What do we call the part of the English saddle that connects the girth to the saddle?**
The billet straps connect the girth to the saddle.
- What does an English saddle's buckle guard do?**
The buckle guard protects the flap and the rider's legs from the buckles.
- What do we call the part that connects the cinch to a Western saddle?**
A Western cinch buckles to the latigo strap and is secured with a special knot.

Page 24 - Tack

What is the purpose of a bridle?

The bridle is used to help you communicate and control your horse while riding.

What is a "bit"?

The bit is the bridle's primary communication device, used to gain control of the horse by exerting pressure on the horse's mouth, lips and tongue.

Name two different kinds of bits.

snaffle; kimberwicke; pelham; curb

Name three parts of the English bridle.

crownpiece, throatlatch, cheekpiece, bit, noseband (cavesson, flash), browband, reins

Name three parts of a Western bridle.

crownpiece, throatlatch, cheekpiece, bit, curbstrap, browband, reins

Do the reins attach to the bit or to the cheekpieces of the bridle?

The reins attach to the bit and run to the rider's hands.

Why do the cheekpieces have buckles if you don't have to unfasten them to take the bridle off the horse?

They can be adjusted to raise or lower the bit in the pony's mouth.

What does a bridle's throatlatch do?

The throatlatch helps to keep the bridle securely on the horse's head.

What part of the bridle keeps the bridle from being pulled over the horse's head?

The throatlatch keeps the bridle on the horse's head.

What does the English bridle's cavesson noseband do?

The noseband can provide additional control by encouraging the horse to keep its mouth closed around the bit.

Page 25 - Tack

What do we call the tack that cushions the horse's back and absorbs sweat?

The saddle pad for an English saddle; the saddle blanket for a Western saddle.

- What part of the English saddle pad do we attach to the saddle to keep the pad in place?**
The saddle pad attaches to the saddle with girth loops or Velcro tabs.
- Why is it important to check the saddle tabs before you mount?**
Loose tabs trapped under the panels of the saddle can cause a painful pressure point.
- Where would you put a half-pad or riser pad?**
Corrective pads sit between the saddle pad and the saddle to help the saddle fit the horse's back.
- Why might your horse need to wear boots when you ride?**
Properly-applied boots or bandages can provide warmth and support to the tendons, and protect the horse if he steps on himself or catches his legs on a jump.
- Why is it important that you learn how to use leg wraps and protective boots correctly?**
Leg protection can cause more harm than good if not used correctly, so make sure you get a lesson in applying boots or bandages before using them yourself!

Page 26 - Tack

- Can you name three good reasons to clean your tack regularly?**
Tack is expensive to purchase and repair; dirty tack can hurt your horse; neglected tack can break, putting you in danger; neglected tack is stiff, making it uncomfortable for both you and the horse and difficult to buckle or adjust.
- What is the correct way to hang a bridle in your tack room?**
Hang it by the crownpiece, with the reins off of the ground.
- What is the correct way to store a saddle?**
Saddles should be placed gently on a level saddle rack, with the flaps hanging freely.
- What should you do with the stirrups when storing your English saddle after a ride?**
The stirrups on an English saddle should remain rolled up at all times when not in use.
- If you need to set your saddle down temporarily, and there's no handy saddle rack or fence rail nearby, what can you do?**
If you have no choice but to place your saddle on the ground, rest it on the pommel, with the cantle supported by a wall or solid object.
- What should you do with your saddle pad or blanket after you ride?**
Completely remove saddle pad/blanket and girth/cinch, especially if sweaty. Hang pads and girths upside down so they can dry.

How often should you clean your tack?

Ideally, tack that is used daily should be wiped down after every ride, and thoroughly cleaned every week or two. If your tack is used less frequently or you are very busy, you may just clean it once a week or once a month.

Page 27 - Feeding and Nutrition

Why is it so important that EVERYONE who works with horses knows how to feed them safely?

Horses have surprisingly delicate digestive systems, and must be fed carefully to avoid serious illness - and that includes horse treats!

What are horses designed to eat?

Horses are grazing animals. This means they are designed to eat small amounts of high-fiber plants, such as grass, all through the day.

What is "roughage"?

Foods that have a lot of fiber, like grass or hay. Roughage keeps things moving in the digestive tract.

If a horse needs more energy or nutrients than he can get from grass and hay alone, what else can we feed him?

For additional energy or weight gain you can add concentrated food such as grains and supplements. Riding horses are often fed grain so they have enough energy to work.

Do all horses need to eat grain?

Not all horses need grain, but all horses need roughage in their diet. In general, the more natural the diet, the happier and healthier the horse will be.

Why do horses need salt in their diet?

Working horses sweat a lot, and like people, lose salt in their sweat.

What is a "free choice salt block"?

A big block of salt you can put in his stall and pasture. He will lick it whenever he feels like he needs extra salt in his diet.

What is the MOST important nutrient that your horse MUST have?

Clean water.

How many gallons of water will a horse drink in a day?

Horses usually drink 5-12 gallons per day - or more when the weather is hot.

Why is it a good idea to have two 5-gallon buckets of water in your horse's stall?

If one bucket gets contaminated, the horse will still have fresh water to drink.

- How often should the water buckets in your horse's stall get refilled? How often should they be cleaned?**

Buckets should be refilled 1-2 times each day, and should be cleaned whenever they start to look slimy.

- If your horse lives in a pasture, how can you make sure to provide enough fresh water?**

Pastured horses will need a large water trough (usually 50 gallons or more).

- How often should you check/refill/clean pasture water troughs?**

Troughs should be checked daily, cleaned weekly, and refilled whenever they start to run low.

- Is it okay for your horse to drink out of a creek?**

A clean, flowing creek can be a safe natural water source for a horse if you make sure that nothing toxic is being dumped into the water upstream and that the water is continually moving.

- Is a pond a good water source for your pastured horses?**

Stagnant water, such as a pond with no flowing water, is full of bacteria and not a safe water source for a horse.

Page 28 - Feeding and Nutrition

- Name three signs of poor-quality hay.**

Bad hay is damp and limp; has mold; smells bad; has dust; has weeds; is coarse with thick stems.

- Name three signs that your grain is safe to feed.**

Grain should smell sweet and clean; should be dry; should be free from mold, insects, dirt and debris.

- What could happen if your horse eats spoiled hay or grain?**

Since horses cannot throw up, the bad food will stay in his digestive system for 3-4 days, and could cause him to colic.

- What is "colic" and why is it dangerous?**

Colic is an equine bellyache. When a horse colics, he experiences severe pain from gas or an intestinal blockage. Sadly, colic can cause serious complications and not all horses survive it.

Page 29 - Feeding and Nutrition

- What might happen if a loose horse has access to an open bag of grain?**

Horses have poor impulse control when it comes to sugary food such as grain and treats. If they can access a bag of grain, they can literally eat themselves to death.

- Name three critters other than horses that must be kept out of your horse's grain and hay.**

rats, mice, squirrels, opossums, weevils, blister beetles

What is a good strategy for safely storing grain?

Grain should be kept in storage bins made out of metal or heavy-duty plastic. These bins should be strapped shut or kept in a cool, dry room with a door.

What is a good strategy for safely storing hay?

Hay should be kept in a dry storage area, preferably in a fireproofed building separate from your horse's stalls.

What is the difference between a "hay bale" and a "flake"?

A flake is a thick, compressed slab of hay. A bale of hay is made up of many flakes held together with baling twine to form a 30-50 lb. block.

Name two different methods of feeding hay.

Hay can be fed on the ground, in hay nets, or in special pasture feeders designed to keep hay fresh and dry.

Name two different methods of feeding grain.

Grain is usually fed in ground feed tubs, heavy-duty buckets, or corner mangers.

Why is it dangerous to stand inside a stall or paddock while feeding horses?

Horses can be aggressive at feeding time. Even a well-behaved horse may lunge or kick at other horses, causing a dangerous situation.

Page 30 - Feeding and Nutrition

Why should horses be fed many small meals throughout the day rather than one big meal?

Horses are grazing animals, with small stomachs that are designed for constant small amounts of food. If they get too much food at once, they may not be able to digest it properly. And if they go long periods without grazing, they could develop stomach ulcers.

Why is it important to have a written feed chart for every horse in the stable?

The feed chart tells everyone exactly what kind of food, and what amount, should be given to each horse. This prevents mistakes that could cause digestive problems, and helps people who are unfamiliar with the feeding routine.

You just fed your pony - is it okay to ride him right away?

No. Just like you can get cramps from running after a big meal, your horse needs his food to settle for a while before you exercise him. Allow at least an hour after feeding grain before riding, more if he's going to be worked hard.

You just finished riding your hot, sweaty pony - is it okay to feed him?

No. After riding, make sure your horse has cooled out completely before letting him eat, or it could make him sick.

- If you run out of your horse's brand of feed, is it okay to give him a different kind of feed?**
Probably not. Horses' digestive systems get used to one particular type of food. If you suddenly change the food, they won't be able to digest it easily and may get sick.
- Your vet tells you to change to a more nutritious type of grain for your horse. How long should it take to safely switch over to the new feed?**
Changes in feed should be made gradually over a period of at least ten days.
- Why should horses be fed around the same time every day?**
Horses have delicate digestive systems that can be upset when they are nervous or stressed, and they will worry about not getting fed if you don't feed them at the same time every day.
- Is it okay to give horses treats?**
In general, a small amount of healthy treats, such as carrot pieces or packaged horse cookies, are fine if you ask permission AND if you have been shown how to feed those treats safely.
- Why should you always ask permission before giving someone else's horse a treat?**
Most horse owners have very specific rules when it comes to treats - and some horses may not be allowed to have treats at all.
- What could happen if a horse gets too many sugary treats?**
Randomly handing out goodies can turn a horse into a pushy, biting cookie monster!
- Name three feeding rules - and explain what could happen if someone didn't follow each rule.**
Feed little meals often; let it settle; make changes gradually; follow the feed chart; stick to the schedule, ask before giving treats; always provide fresh water.

Page 31 - Stable and Facility Mgmt.

- Our ponies can't take care of themselves - they need us to take care of them. Can you name three things your pony needs us to do every single day?**
He needs to be fed every day, with grass or hay and a little bit of grain. He needs fresh, clean water at all times. He needs a salt block in his stall and paddock. He needs his stall and paddock cleaned EVERY day.
- What does "mucking out" mean?**
Cleaning a horse's stall by removing manure, urine, and soiled bedding.
- Name three reasons why your horse's stall should be cleaned at least once a day.**
Dirty stalls attract flies, increase your horse's chances of getting worms, and can damage your horse's lungs and hooves.

- If your horse lives outside in a paddock or pasture, do you still have to clean up after him?**
Paddocks and run-in sheds should be mucked at least once a week, and you still may need to muck around gates and feeding areas; pastures need regular mowing to break up manure.
- What makes a stall a safe and comfortable place for a horse to live?**
Plenty of ventilation, access to clean water and salt, hay for forage, and bedding he can lay down on.
- Describe the two main types of bedding for a horse stall.**
There are two main types of bedding: drainage bedding, which allows urine to drain through into the floor, and absorbent bedding, which soaks up moisture.
- How deep should the bedding be in a horse's stall?**
The thickness of the horse's bedding can range from one to six or more inches. This depends on the type of flooring used and the length of time the horse spends in the stall.
- Your barn manager tells you to "bank" the bedding in your horse's stall so that the horse doesn't get "cast". What does this mean?**
Some barns leave the bedding higher against the walls of the stall. This is called banking, and prevents the horse from getting cast, or trapped against the walls of his stall when he lays down.
- Name two different types of bedding used for a horse's stall.**
Wood shavings or sawdust; pelleted bedding; straw.

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- Is it safe to clean your horse's stall while he is inside it?**
It is much safer to clean your horse's stall while he turned out or tied outside. If you do need to clean with the horse in the stall, put on his halter and lead rope and lay the rope over his neck. Leave the stall door ajar so that you can escape if necessary.
- There are 5 steps in thoroughly cleaning a stall. Describe them in the correct order.**
1) Remove all of the visible manure from the surface of the bedding; 2) remove urine-soaked bedding; 3) rake bedding back across the stall several times to find hidden manure; 4) add fresh bedding; 5) clean and refill water buckets or check/clean automatic waterers.
- What tools do we use to clean stalls?**
A manure fork (also called a stable fork or stall pick) and a wheelbarrow or muck bucket.
- Your barn manager asks you to "pick" a few stalls. What has she asked you to do - and why?**
"Picking a stall" is making a quick pick-up of manure throughout the day. Picking will save you time and bedding when you are ready to do a thorough cleaning.



- Your barn manager tells you it's time for your horse's stall to be "stripped". What does this mean?**
Every once in a while, the stall may need to be stripped. "Stripping a stall" means hauling all of the bedding away and letting the floor air out before rebedding.