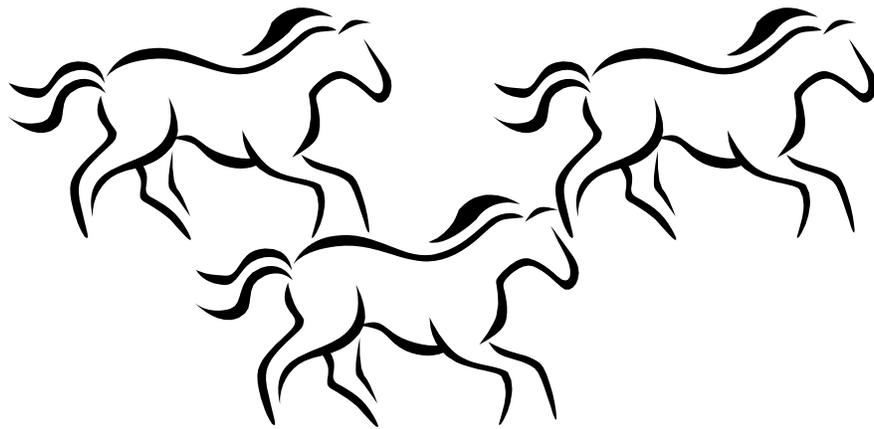


BASIC EQUINE SAFETY MANUAL

Written and Compiled by Merrill Gould

Whispering Canyons Foundation



**GIVING UNDERPRIVILEGED GIRLS THE
CHANCE TO CHANGE THEIR LIVES BY
LEARNING HORSEMANSHIP SKILLS.**

Purpose for manual

Through the ages in many lands, horses have had a key role in sports, recreation, wars, transportation, and work. Because of this, the proper care of these animals was very important to their owners. We don't know what methods they used to train their horses or teach safety to riders, but in today's world, safety for the horse and its rider is paramount. This manual will be used to instill and reinforce safety methods during the student's training in our program. It will be a resource for constant review by the student.

Purpose and History of Foundation

A few years ago I was wondering what I should do with the horses that I owned. I wondered if I should sell them or give them away. As I was in the midst of this deliberation, a friend's daughter asked me to give her riding lessons. It wasn't long before more young girls wanted to join producing the need to find more horses. This proved to be a good experience for these girls, because they learned horsemanship by having to care for their horse each afternoon. They became better students in school, more reliable and happy at home, and gained more self-confidence as they learned horsemanship skills. This increase in character and sense of responsibility is important to nurture in an underprivileged girl.

The mission of the Whispering Canyons Foundation is to increase the self-worth of adolescent girls by teaching them horsemanship skills and responsibilities. We feel that this non-profit foundation will bless the lives of these young women and others as they advance in their dreams of horsemanship there by helping them reach their full potential in life.

Merrill Gould's Credentials

I have been around horses for most of my life. When I was little I would ride with my dad as he checked cattle and fence lines. At age 5, I had a horse named Nancy that I often rode bareback. Later I bought a Quarterhorse gelding named Dooley. Not knowing much about training horses, I thought I could turn him into a roping horse. However, Dooley had a mind of his own. I worked and worked with him making many mistakes but learning from those mistakes. By learning from those mistakes Dooley actually turned out to be a good roping horse. Several years ago a woman gave me her horse because she could no longer afford to keep it. It was at this point I decided to study from Larry Trocha and Clinton Anderson, two of the best clinicians in the United States, to improve my horsemanship skills. I feel it is important to continue to learn. As I tell my students, I know I don't know everything about horsemanship, but what I know I do know.

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Introduction

Riding a horse is a memorable experience; however it can quickly turn into a disaster if you have not mastered basic horse safety and horsemanship skills. From the beginning of time the horse has been a prey animal. His reaction is to run away when he is spooked or danger is near. Man has not been able to breed that characteristic out of him. It follows then, that the wisest thing to remember is to use common sense and ALWAYS practice safety measures. By mastering the following skill sets you will know how to safely approach, saddle, and ride your horse, thus enduring many years of pleasurable riding with your horse.

Approaching

Always speak to the horse before you approach or touch the horse. Some horses are likely to jump and may kick when startled.

Always approach your horse from the front. If the horse's rear is towards you, call to him or entice him with a treat to get him to face you and come to you. Never approach your horse directly from the rear. If you can't approach him from the front then approach him from an angle at the rear.

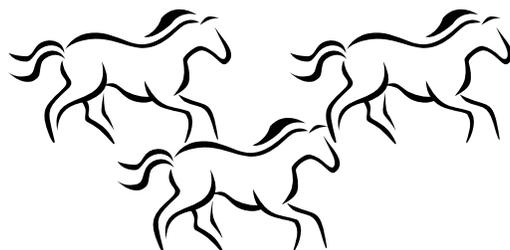
Pet a horse by placing the back of your hand on its shoulder or neck in a rubbing motion. If the horse is facing you, put your hand out palm down. Let the horse sniff and nuzzle your hand. Always notice the horse's expression.

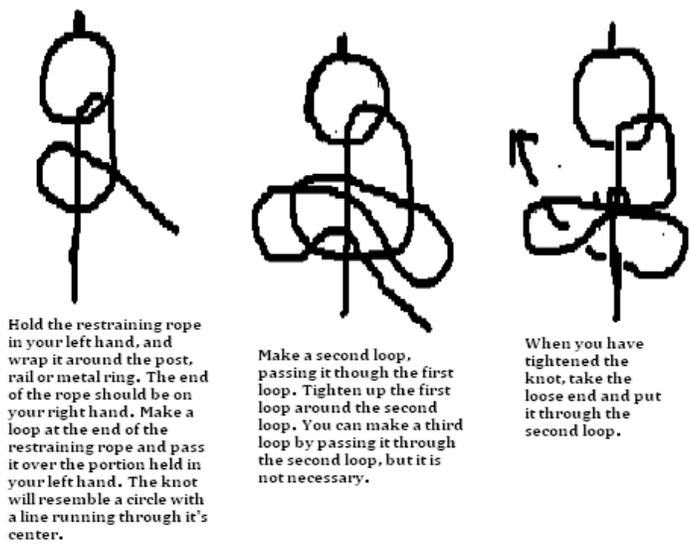
Never approach another person's horse without his /her permission.

Handling

When working around your horse, wear western boots or steel toed shoes with a heel to protect your feet. Never wear tennis shoes, moccasins, sandals, or go bare foot. Wear an ASTM/SEI hard hat when handling horses.

When working around your horse, tie him securely with a quick-release knot, (Fig. 1-1), or have someone hold him with a lead rope.

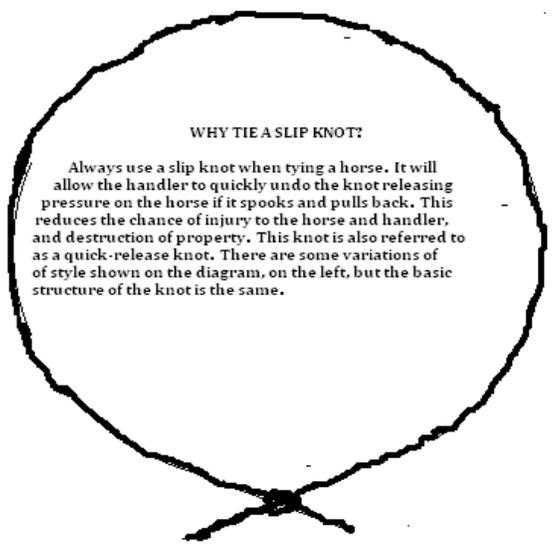




Hold the restraining rope in your left hand, and wrap it around the post, rail or metal ring. The end of the rope should be on your right hand. Make a loop at the end of the restraining rope and pass it over the portion held in your left hand. The knot will resemble a circle with a line running through it's center.

Make a second loop, passing it through the first loop. Tighten up the first loop around the second loop. You can make a third loop by passing it through the second loop, but it is not necessary.

When you have tightened the knot, take the loose end and put it through the second loop.

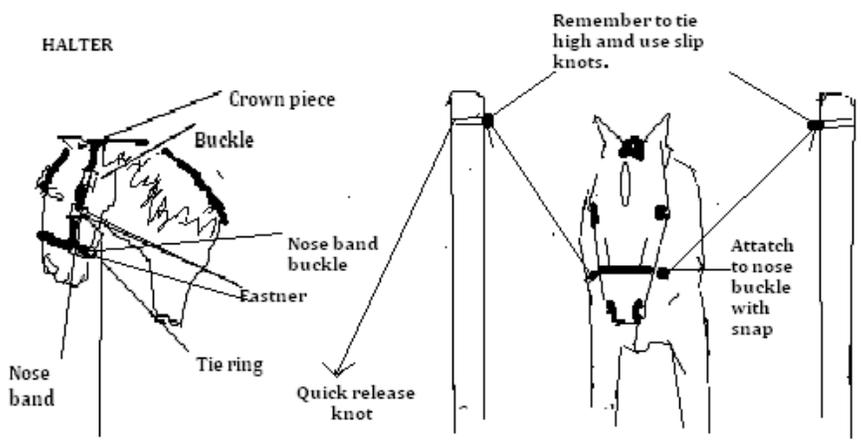


WHY TIE A SLIP KNOT?

Always use a slip knot when tying a horse. It will allow the handler to quickly undo the knot releasing pressure on the horse if it spooks and pulls back. This reduces the chance of injury to the horse and handler, and destruction of property. This knot is also referred to as a quick-release knot. There are some variations of of style shown on the diagram, on the left, but the basic structure of the knot is the same.

Figure 1.1 Quick Release Knot

If you cross-tie (Fig. 1-2) be sure you have panic snaps or are secured with a breakable tie.



WARNING

Cross-ties can be very dangerous. Beginners should be supervised until they fully understand how to do them. A number of things can go wrong. Beginners can easily forget where to correctly hook cross-ties. If a horse fights the ties at all it can become very dangerous very quickly. Horses can break snaps, lunge forward, flip over backward, or turn around quickly. To compound this situation, one's first response is to try to control the horse. This is impossible under these circumstances. It is important that the beginner avoid cross-tying a horse until the instructor feels they are experienced enough to safely handle the horse in a variety of situations.

Cross-tying was very common with the cavalry soldiers. It was used primarily for grooming and working with the hoofs of their horses. This practice is continued today in many stables throughout the United States and is practiced to a greater extent in European countries.

Figure 1.2 Cross-Tie

Always work close to your horse keeping some part of your body touching the horse. If you are by his shoulder, you won't be struck with the full force of his feet if he strikes, nor will you receive the full force of a kick if you stay close to the body when you work around the haunches or pass behind your horse. By keeping your body or hand on the horse, you will be able to feel his movements thereby moving out of the way if necessary. This prevents you from losing your balance and falling.

Never stand directly behind a horse or directly in front of him. Standing in these areas leaves you vulnerable to getting struck with either the hind feet or front feet. To work with its tail, stand off to one side at about a 45 degree angle near the point of the buttock. Facing towards the horse's rear, grasp the tail and draw it towards you.

Always be calm, avoid being nervous, exuberant, or jerky. A nervous handler can make a nervous horse.

Avoid dropping grooming tools under or around the horses while grooming. Place them where you will not trip on them and the horse will not step on them. The best place to put them is back in the grooming bag or container.

Don't tease your horse. Teasing may cause the horse to develop dangerous habits for the rest of its life. Don't tease or bother other people around you, and always pay attention to what you are doing. Avoid the frequent feeding of horse treats from your hand.

Punish a horse only at the instant it disobeys. If you wait, even for a second, the horse will not understand why he is being punished. Punish without anger, or your punishment may be too severe. Never strike a horse about its head. Punish only as firm as needed to correct the behavior. Never abuse or beat a horse to correct its behavior. If physical reprimand is needed, it should be instant and appropriate. The horse may need just a jerk on the halter rope or a light tap with a whip. One short application is enough. Most horses understand one swat or jerk. After all, in a herd situation, one bite or kick is adequate to keep a member in line. They do not understand beatings or continual punishment. Excessive punishment makes a horse lose respect for the handler, replacing trust with fear. Any punishment should be short, immediate, and forceful enough to fit the circumstances.

Be sure that the turn-out area or pastures have been checked for broken boards and nails, fallen branches, poisonous plants and other hazardous obstacles that can cause accidents or injuries to the horse or rider. Fences should be checked for loose nails, broken sections, and loose or broken strands of wires. If using steel t posts, use protective caps on the top of each post.

Avoid leaving a halter on a horse in the stall or out in the pasture. If it is necessary to leave a halter on, the halter must be a breakaway type. You can make a breakaway halter by using a piece of baling twine or by replacing the crown piece with a section of an old lightweight leather belt.

It is important to make sure that the halter is neither too loose nor too tight. If it is too loose, the horse's foot may get caught if he is trying to scratch his head with a hind foot. Also, a loose halter may catch on a fence post, broken fence rail, or other objects. A tight halter can cause skin irritation creating raw sores. This may lead to infections and soreness that can affect the horse's temperament. Be sure to check the fit often. Some halter materials will shrink if they get wet.

Leading

It is important when leading a horse to walk beside him, not in front or behind. The safest position is even with the horse's head or halfway between its head and shoulder.

When leading a horse it is customary to lead from the horse's left side using your right hand to hold the lead rope. When holding the lead rope, grasp the lead rope with the palm of your hand resting on the lead rope. Allow yourself to have an elbows length from the snap on the halter to where you are holding the lead rope. The excess portion of the lead rope should be in the left hand loosely. This will allow you to release some of the rope if the horse should bolt on you. When leading, extend your right elbow slightly toward the horse. If the horse should make contact with you, its shoulder will hit your elbow first moving you away from the horse. By having your elbow towards the horse it can be used on the horse's neck to keep the head and neck straight as well as to prevent the horse from crowding you. A horse should be workable from both sides, even for mounting and dismounting.

Remember the horse is bigger than you-----So don't try to out pull him.

Never wrap the lead rope or reins around any part of your body, especially your hands and wrists. Also never drape the lead rope or reins across your shoulder or neck while you are handling a horse.

Don't wear jewelry around horses. Rings can cut deeply into fingers, and bracelets can get caught in reins or lead ropes lunge lines. Dangling earrings are particularly dangerous. Avoid wearing very loose or baggy clothing.

You should be extremely cautious when leading a horse through a narrow opening such as a door or gate. Be sure you have a firm grip and are in control before stepping through. When you step through, step quickly and to one side to avoid being crowded or stepped on.

When turning a horse loose it is extremely important to use good judgment. Lead your horse completely through the gate. Once you are through the gate, turn your horse around facing the direction from which you just entered or to where you want to go. This will allow you to move forward to your exit point or to where you want to go. Before releasing the horse step to the side and slightly turn towards the horse allowing you to safely release the shank or remove the halter or bridle. Avoid letting the horse bolt away from you when released. When ready, move straight towards where you want to go. **GOOD HABITS PREVENT ACCIDENTS.**

Avoid the use of excessively long lead ropes so as to prevent you from becoming entangled. When using the lunge line or lariats watch the coils on the ground to avoid getting your feet tangled up in any excess rope or strap.

Tying

Know and use the proper knots for tying a horse. There are two basic knots every horseman should know.

Quick release knot—(Fig. 1-1) This knot should be used whenever you tie a horse with the halter rope thus allowing you to release the horse quickly if the horse should get in trouble.

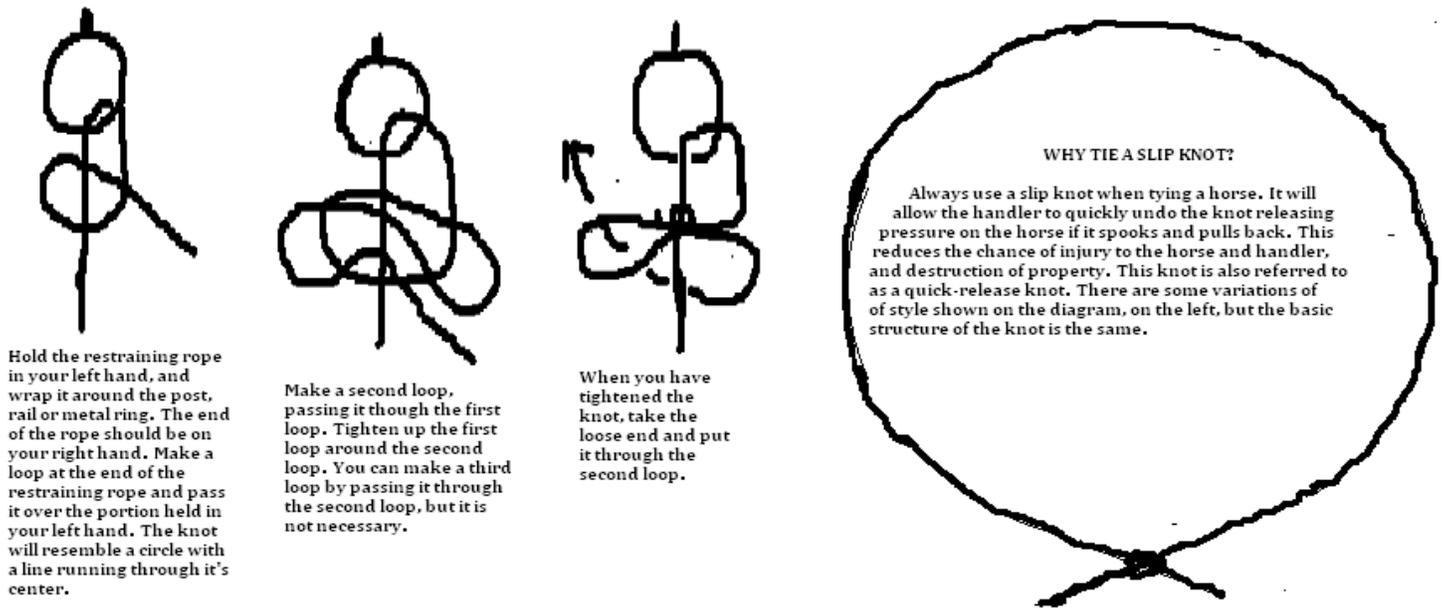


Figure 1.1 Quick Release Knot

Bowline knot— This knot should be used when tying a rope around the horse's neck. The loop will not tighten up and the knot will not slip.

Make sure you tie your horse far enough away from a strange horse so they cannot fight. Also avoid tying horses close together that you know don't get along.

When tying a horse around tree limbs or brush, tie him a safe distance to prevent him from becoming entangled.

Tie your horse with a rope long enough to allow a comfortable movement but short enough to avoid becoming tangled or getting a foot over the rope. An elbows length should be sufficient.

Never tie your horse by the reins. He may pull back and break the reins or injure his mouth. Always use a halter.

Be sure to tie to an object that is strong and secure to avoid danger of breaking or coming loose if the horse pulls back. You will want to tie your horse at about level of the horse's withers. Don't tie to a rail on a fence. If a horse has broken loose once, he is likely to pull back again.

Halter

Make sure you use a properly fitting halter. If a halter is too short, it will be uncomfortably tight and can potentially cause skin irritation or hair loss. If a halter is too loose and it may shift around on the horse's face and cover his eyes, or get caught on its surroundings. Rope halters pose special risks when they are too tight or too loose.

Never leave a halter on when releasing an unsupervised horse into a pasture, paddock, riding arena or even his stall. The halter can cause irritation and discomfort, but more importantly it is a safety issue.

Avoid using a flat, rope, leather or breakaway halter that is worn, frayed, ripped, cracked, or damaged in anyway. Check all buckles and connecting points. Make sure on a breakaway halter that it is functioning correctly.

Remember if you're using a breakaway or safety halter then the possibility is lessened. If you are using a standard web or flat halter, the buckle will PROBABLY break before your horse gets injured, but there is no guarantee. And if you're using a rope halter, the potential for escape is low but the chance for horse injury is higher.

It is important to remember that there are many reasons a horse might fight when tied down. Some of these include being ill mannered, stubborn, spooked, or have just been bitten by a painful horsefly in a sensitive area. It's difficult to predict the unknown. Be alert at all times.

Bridling

When bridling your horse, stand close to him just behind and to the side (preferably on the left side) of his head, handling his ears carefully folding them forward. Standing in this position will protect your head from a blow if he tries to throw his head to avoid placing the bridle.

Keep control of the horse when bridling by re-fastening the halter around the neck.

It is important to be careful not to hit the horse's teeth when bridling or unbridling. Help your horse to open his mouth by putting one or two fingers in the corner of his mouth.

Be sure the bridle is properly adjusted to fit the horse before you ride.

- **NEVER USE A BIT THAT HAS SHARP EDGES THAT CAN CUT THE HORSE'S MOUTH.**
- **CHECK THE BIT---THERE SHOULD BE ONE OR TWO WRINKLES AT THE CORNERS OF THE MOUTH.**
- **THE THROATLATCH SHOULD BE ADJUSTED SO THAT YOU CAN INSERT THREE FINGERS BETWEEN IT AND THE HORSE'S JAW.**
- **IF YOU USE THE CAVESSON IT SHOULD BE RELATIVELY TIGHT. YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO INSERT ONLY ONE FINGER BETWEEN THE CAVESSON AND THE NOSE.**
- **WHEN USING THE CURB STRAP IT SHOULD BE FLAT AND NOT TWISTED. YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO INSERT TWO FINGERS BETWEEN THE CHAIN AND THE HORSE'S CHIN GROOVE.**

Never let your horse eat when wearing a bridle. The horse may step on the reins or get his feet tangled in them. Also hay or grass may get caught in the bit and injure his mouth.

Saddling

When saddling your horse, the blanket goes on first. It needs to be clean and free from dirt, debris, rips and tears. Check the stitching to be sure it is secure.

Check to make sure the saddle fits the horse. If the saddle is too small, it can cause irritation and discomfort to the horse. Carefully check the saddle making sure all stitching is secure and the cinch strap is not cracked and weathered and the belly cinch is not frayed or cut. You also need to check the rear cinch to make sure it is in good shape.

Before placing the saddle on the horse, place the off side cinches and the right stirrup over the seat. Stand with your feet towards the front shoulder and swing the saddle into position smoothly—not suddenly. If you drop the saddle, it may spook the horse.

Go to the off side of the horse and gently let the stirrup and cinches down. Don't let them hit the horse on the belly or leg. Make sure the blanket is even on both sides and that it is lying smoothly. Check to make sure that no saddle strings are under the saddle.

Next, cinch up the horse. Remember to fasten the front cinch first when using a western double-rigged saddle. Pull the cinch up slowly when tightening. Don't cinch it too tightly at first. Tighten the rear cinch. It should be just a little loose, not so tight that it rubs or causes irritation. Fasten accessory straps (tie-downs, breast collars, martingales, etc.) after the saddle is cinched.

Before mounting, walk around the horse, double check the gear, and then tighten up the cinch snugly. Lead the horse a few steps, check and retighten the cinch if needed.

Unfasten accessory straps first when unsaddling then unfasten the rear cinch.

Headgear

Medical studies show that the most common riding-related injuries are to the head. Many of these injuries could have been prevented or made less severe by wearing protective headgear.

Riding helmets are different from many other safety helmets. There are different safety helmets designed and tested for bicycles, motorcycles, rock climbing, football and many other sports and activities. When looking for a riding helmet, be sure to find one that is ASTM/SEI certified.

You need to make sure the helmet fits your head. A properly fitting helmet should feel snug on your head but not hurt your head in such a way as to cause headaches. The edge of the helmet should stop half an inch above the eyebrows and the chin strap should touch your jawbone not your throat.

The helmet should be worn at all times when handling the horse, including when you are leading, lunging, saddling and when riding your horse.

Keep your helmet cool. It's great to keep your helmet handy but helmets are not made to be stored in heat. Avoid storing your helmet in the car trunk where temperatures can reach more than 160 degrees Fahrenheit.

To preserve your helmet's integrity, keep it out of the sun when it is not in use. Store the helmet in a tote or carrying bag where the fabric can wick moisture from the helmet.

Riding

When riding, wear boots with proper heels to prevent your feet from slipping through the stirrups. Always wear protective headgear, that it is properly fitted and fastened to your head.

It is important to keep your horse under control and maintain a secure seat at all times. Horses are easily frightened by unusual objects and noises.

If you don't know your horse, confine your riding to an arena or other enclosed area. Ride in unconfined areas only after you are familiar with the horse and you feel comfortable in your ability to handle the horse.

If your horse becomes frightened, you need to remain calm, speak to it quietly, steady it, and give it time to overcome its fear.

Whenever going up or down a hill hold your horse to a walk.

Always allow a horse to pick his way at a walk when riding on rough ground or in sand, mud, ice, or snow where there is danger of your horse slipping or falling.

Don't fool around. Horseplay is dangerous to you and to those riding with you, as well as to others who maybe nearby.

Never ride a horse with just a halter. Remember, halters don't provide enough control. Use a bridle or hackamore.

Try to avoid paved or other hard-surfaced roads. Walk your horse when crossing paved roads.

If you must ride along the road, ride on the shoulder and follow the rules of the road. These rules vary from state to state. To be sure what the rules are, get a Driver's Manual from the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Use good etiquette. Never rush past riders who are proceeding at a slower gait. This action may startle both horses and riders and is frequently the cause of accidents. To pass slower riders, approach them slowly and let those you want to pass know you have a desire to pass. Then proceed cautiously on the left side.

Ride abreast or stay a full horse's length from the horse in front to avoid the possibility of being kicked. You can tell if the distance is safe by looking through your horses ears. You should be able to see the hind heels of the horse in front of you.

You should never let your horse run to and from the stables. Walk the last distance home. When riding in an arena or enclosed area, avoid letting your horse run to or through the gate.

If you use spurs, make sure your legs are steady enough that you don't touch the horse with the spur by mistake. If you are not sure or are uncomfortable wearing them then don't.

If your horse gets frightened and tries to run, bring him under control by turning him in a circle and tightening the circle until he stops.

A red ribbon tied into the horse's tail indicates a kicker, so stay back.

In some cases dogs and horses are not always good companions. It is important to determine compatibility BEFORE attempting to have a dog around a horse or to ride together. Regardless, the dog must be under control at all times

Night Riding

Night riding can be a pleasure, but it is more hazardous than daytime riding. Walk the horse. Fast gaits are dangerous.

When riding at night on roads or highways, wear light-colored clothing or a safety reflective vest, and have a flashlight and reflectors.

Select riding locations with care; choose controlled bridle paths or familiar safe open areas. Let someone know where you are going and the approximate time you plan on returning.

Trail Riding

Ride a well-mannered horse. Always use good riding habits. Excessive speed on a trail is unsafe. Ride at a safe gait. Do NOT attempt to ride a horse that has never been exposed to obstacles such as logs, bridges, water courses, or changes in ground terrain on a trail.

Have a safety plan that is known to all, if you ride at night, plan your ride close to a full moon, and travel on a familiar trail. Know what local wild animals you might run into and plan accordingly.

Avoid overhanging limbs. Watch the rider ahead so a limb pushed aside doesn't snap back and slap you or your horse in the face.

Starting with the leader of a group, every second rider should warn those behind of dangers such as broken glass, low branches, poor footing, holes, etc.

If a rider falls off or the horse gets loose and runs away, do not chase him, halt and wait as the horse may return to the group. If he does not return, send one rider to catch him. The rider should do so calmly and quietly.

Tell someone where your riding group is headed and when to expect you back. When riding at night, make sure you wear reflective riding gear and have a flashlight.

When riding in a group, change the order in the lineup every 15 to 20 minutes to allow another horse and rider to take the lead. Horses that usually follow can tune out their riders cues and simply follow the horse in front. To change positions, look for an open space where you'll have plenty of room to step out of the lead and allow the others to pass.

Get a trail map to check the trail terrain before venturing on a new trail. It is recommended that you carry a GPS unit with you. Be sure you are familiar with how to use it.

On a day ride it is best to have a pair of sunglasses. Make sure your glasses fit under your helmet with room to spare. When shopping for glasses take your helmet with you. Get lenses made from polycarbonate material designed not to shatter.

Keep in mind that UV rays can be strong enough to cause sunburn even if it is cloudy or when you are in dense forest. Choose a sunscreen that will provide the appropriate level of protection. Also, remember to bring insect repellent along for both you and your horse.

Always bring water for yourself and your horse as you may not encounter safe drinking water. It is also a good idea to bring some food with you in case of delay or accident.

Trailer

Trailer should be done with two people if at all possible.

Be sure the ground area behind and around the truck or trailer has safe footing before loading or unloading your horse.

Be sure the trailer is level and steady and doesn't move as the horse tries to enter. Place chocks behind the wheels to keep the trailer steady.

Remove the bridle, saddle, and other equipment from your horse before loading. Use your halter and a good sturdy lead shank (at least 5 feet) made of cotton rope. Don't use nylon shanks-they can be dangerous if your horse pulls back.

Always wrap your horse's legs. Be sure the bandages extend over the coronary bands onto the hoof and that they cover the heel area.

If you have trouble loading or unloading, get experienced help.

Secure the butt chain or bar as soon as the horse is in the trailer and always before tying the horse. Use care when reaching for the chain.

If you tie the horse while hauling, allow a sufficient length of rope so the horse can move his head for balance and comfort but keep it tight enough that he can't get in trouble or get to the horse next to him.

Always tie with a quick-release knot, or use panic snaps on the ties.

When hauling only one horse in a two-horse trailer, load the horse on the driver's side. Try to distribute the weight of the load evenly. When hauling two horses in a two-horse trailer, be sure to load the heavier horse on the driver's side. Use rubber mats for secure footing. Three inches of bedding will cushion bumps and cuts on your horse's legs.

Always speak to a horse that is in a truck or trailer before attempting to handle it. Check your trailer often for: rotting or weak floor boards rusted or weakened door hinges, and cracked hitch welds.

When having the trailer serviced, ask the mechanic to check the spring shackles and wheel bearings.

The horse trailer should be high enough to give the horse sufficient head and neck room. Horse trailers are built for different size horses from very large (such as a draft horse) to very small (the mini horse).

After loading and before driving, always:

- *Double check all the connections-lights, brakes, hitch, and safety chains.
- *Be sure all doors are secured.

Never throw lighted cigarettes or matches from a car or truck window. The situation may be uncommon, but a discarded cigarette butt accidentally thrown into a horse trailer's open window could start a fire in the combustible materials found on the floor.

Check the horse and trailer hitch at every stop before continuing.

Some horses may get motion sickness. Adjust the feeding schedule to avoid traveling immediately after feeding. Feed smaller amounts more often if necessary.

Watch your feet and fingers when dropping the tailgate.

Never undo the butt chain or bar before you untie your horse at its head. The horse may try backing out as soon as the tailgate is down.

Carefully back the horse out of the trailer straight and slightly toward the center ramps so that he doesn't catch a leg in the door springs.

If there are two horses in the trailer, have someone stand by the head of the second horse while the first one is backed off the trailer so that he doesn't think that he is free to back off also.

Walk the horse to restore circulation before putting him in a stall, especially after a long haul.

When the trailer is disconnected and parked, be sure to place chocks behind the wheels. Never load or unload a horse in a trailer that is not hitched to a truck.

Fire Safety

All emergency phone numbers are posted in a public place.

Appropriate fire fighting equipment for the stalls or barn is available. It is important to know where and how large quantities of water can be obtained.

Know the location of the electrical master switches or outlets.

Fire drills will be conducted several times a year to practice getting horses out of stalls and the barn. Everyone must know what to do in the event of a fire. Empty feed sacks should be stored in a handy, labeled plastic drum or 5 gallon bucket with lids near a water source. In case of a fire, these can be dampened and placed over the head of the horse so it can be led away to safety. Have a supply of empty feed sacks available for blindfolds. Wet the sacks in the water barrels in each stall before using.

Know where you will tie the horses if you have to evacuate the stalls or barn.

Fire Prevention

NO SMOKING NEAR THE STALLS OR BARN.

Clean up all debris and properly dispose of it. Never leave loose hay or straw in aisles.

Store all feed, hay, straw, or shavings in a separate building away from the stalls or barn.

Check hay for warm spots. If hay temperature is warmer than when it was put in, watch it closely. If necessary take the hay out and divide into small stacks.

Oily rags should be thrown away after use. Flammable materials (paint, gasoline, etc.) may not be stored in the barn.

Check all electrical wiring for frayed ends, etc. Bring any exposed wiring to the attention of a trainer or director so it can get fixed. Always use heavy-duty extension cords. If a fuse blows, alert a trainer or director.

It is important to have ongoing and effective rodent control programs. If you see a mouse, rat or other rodent that may damage wiring, notify a trainer or director immediately.

Keep aisles clear of equipment, etc.

Fire Response Procedures

Call the fire department (the phone number is posted in a public place). In a calm, clear voice, give your name, farm name, and location. Do not hang up until you are sure the information has been understood.

Open one door of the stable only. As long as possible, keep the flow of fresh air and oxygen to a minimum so the fire will not explode. If the fire is spreading rapidly and there is heavy smoke, stay out of the stalls or barn.

Evacuate Protocol

- **Halters and lead ropes should be on or by each stall door. Lead each horse out of the stall or barn to a pre-determined area. If you turn him loose, he will probably run right back to his stall.**
- **If the horse won't lead, blind him using a wet towel, handkerchief, or gunny sack. Wet the sack in the water barrel in the stall before putting it on the horse's head.**
- **Put the horses in an arena, round pen, or paddock a safe distance from the stall or barn and out of the way of the fire-fighting equipment. Make sure horses are contained so that in their panic they don't return to their blazing stall.**
- **Open all access gates to the stall or barn area for fire equipment. Save equipment only after all horses and people are out.**
- **Use available fire-fighting equipment (fire extinguishers, hoses, wet gunny sacks, shovels & dirt) to contain the fire until help arrives.**
- **Keep roads clear for fire equipment.**
- **Once help arrives, immediately check your horses for injuries, burns, or inhaled smoke. If you notice any burned areas on the eyes, cover them with a clean, moist cloth.**
- **Check for burns around the nostrils, and apply Vaseline or mineral ointment if you find any. Keep any burned areas on the body or legs moist with a cold, wet cloth.**

In Conclusion

Remember that the horse is a prey animal. His reaction is to run away when he is spooked or danger is near. Man has not been able to breed that characteristic out of him. After all that has been written, the wisest thing to remember is to use common sense and ALWAYS practice safety measures.

HAVE FUN RIDING AND TRAINING YOUR HORSE!