

BSA Horsemanship Merit Badge

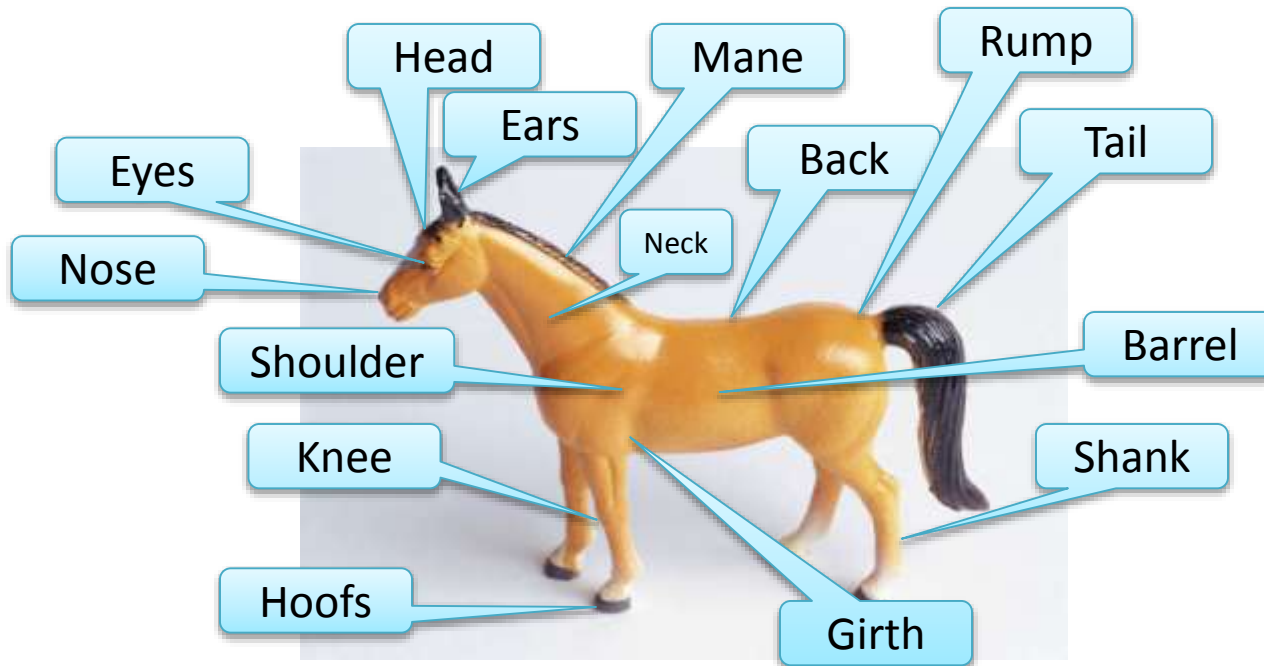
Safety Precautions

- Be calm and quiet
- Use a halter and lead rope to lead a horse
- Never stand directly behind a horse
- When cleaning the hooves don't squat bend over so you can move quickly if needed
- When going through a door make sure the door is wide open
- Never loop reins or lead rope around your hands
- Feed treats from a bucket or tub
- Wear sturdy shoes or boots (no sandals or thin shoes)
- The safest place to stand by your horse is there shoulder were they can see you.
- When grooming, saddleing, or cleaning your horses stall, tie your horse up.

Fire safety for barn and horses

- Use proper wiring rated for barns and arena's
- All light fixtures should have cages around them.
- All plugs in the barn should be GFCI's ()
- No smoking
- Put dry hay in the loft or separate hay barn.
- Don't let water heaters run dry.
- Heaters should be used with extreme caution
- Smoke detectors should be installed in the barn

Parts of the Horse



Different Breeds

American Quarter Horse

- The **American Quarter Horse** is an American breed of horse that excels at sprinting short distances
- Its name came from its ability to outdistance other horse breeds in races of a quarter mile or less; some individuals have been clocked at speeds up to 55 mph (88.5 km/h).
- The American Quarter Horse is the most popular breed in the United States today
- The American Quarter Horse is well known both as a race horse and for its performance in rodeos, horse shows and as a working ranch horse.

Arabian

- the Arabian is one of the most easily recognizable horse breeds in the world. It is also one of the oldest breeds
- The Arabian is a versatile breed. Arabians dominate the discipline of endurance riding
- They are one of the top ten most popular breeds in the world.

Different Breeds

Draft Horse

- called a **work horse** or **heavy horse**, is a large horse bred for hard heavy tasks such as ploughing and farm labor.
- There are a number of breeds, with varying characteristics but all share common traits of strength, patience, and a docile temperament
- Most draft horses are used for driving

Thoroughbred

- The **Thoroughbred** is a breed best known for its use in horse racing
- Thoroughbreds are considered "hot-blooded" horses, known for their agility, speed and spirit.
- Thoroughbreds are used mainly for racing, but are also bred for other riding disciplines such as show jumping, polo, and fox hunting.

Health Problems

Symptoms of Colic

- Elevated body temperature
- Elevated heart rate
- Elevated respiratory rate
- Change in gum color
- Change in the degree of gut sounds
- Pawing
- Increased attention to the abdomen (including flank watching, nipping, biting, or kicking)
- Lying down and getting up
- Rolling
- Sweating
- Decreased fecal output
- Groaning
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Frequent attempts to urinating

Other Horse health problems

- **Heaves**-resembles asthma in humans and is most often seen in horses who are in their stable a lot and exposed to dust and molds from old hay and straw.
- **Laminitis** is an inflammation of certain internal structures of the hoof. This painful and serious condition causes lameness; the horse may lie down to try to relieve the pain in his hooves. The affected foot may feel hot to the touch.
- **Abscess** is an infectious pocket within a bodily (i.e. this occurs when a foreign object, such as a nail or sharp stone, penetrates the body like in the hoof.)
- **Parasites** -like any other animals who spend a lot of time outdoors, are often exposed to parasites. A wide range of parasitic organisms can afflict a horse, including ticks, lice, pinworms, tapeworms, roundworms, and lungworms.

Conformation

- **Equine conformation** evaluates the degree of correctness of a horse's bone structure, musculature, and its body proportions in relation to each other.

Lameness vs Unsoundness

Lameness

- **Lameness** in horses is a term used to refer to any number of conditions where the animal fails to travel in a regular and sound manner on all four feet.
- **Examples** are:
 1. inflammatory diseases of the hoof
 2. Injury to bone, muscle, tendons or ligaments, ranging from pulled muscles to broken bones.
 3. Injury induced by compensation for strain or pain in other parts of the body, particularly the back
 4. Neurological disorders
 5. Swelling and inflammation linked to infection
 6. Hoof problems, including injury, disease and poor farrier work

Unsoundness

- An **unsound** horse is unhealthy and has physical defects that might effect it's capacity for work. The most common cause is **lameness**.

Importance of Hoof care

- Many horses spend most of their time in a pen or stall, and when they are exercised it is often for a short period on soft footing. Their hooves don't wear away, so they get too long, deform and break off in chunks. When the hooves grow unevenly or wear unevenly, they become imbalanced; this can lead to many forms of lameness.
- **Hoof Growth** hooves grow about 1/4" per month.
- **Wear** -if a barefoot horses wear his hooves too short, he can suffer from painful bruises and serious abscesses. Shoes protect his hooves from wear and help keep them in balance. Unless you ride a lot on hard abrasive ground, shoes will last at least six weeks and can sometimes be reset (used again).
- **Traction** A barefoot horse often has sufficient traction for pleasure riding on most surfaces. Specialized shoes can alter traction for events from jumping to reining. Too much or too little traction can cause injuries to joints, tendons and ligaments. Your farrier can help find a horseshoe that's best for your activity.
- **Management** Manure, mud, rocks, and snow pack into the bottom of the hoof. This buildup can put undesirable pressure on the sole and lead to bacterial infections such as thrush. That's why it's important to pick out your horse's feet every day.

How to groom a horse

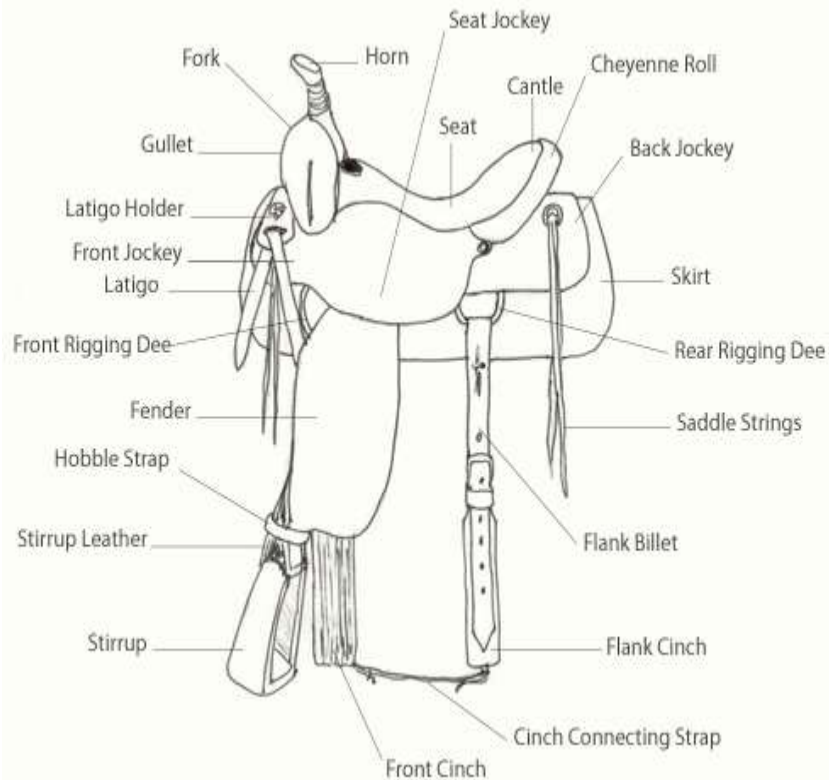
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=pHtyy0tAPpA

Feeding

- **Provide plenty of roughage**-Many pleasure and trail horses don't need grain: good-quality hay and/or pasture is sufficient. If hay isn't enough, grain can be added, but the bulk of a horse's calories should always come from roughage.
- **Feed grain in small amounts and often**-If you feed a horse grain, give it in multiple smaller meals rather than one large one. Most horses are given grain twice a day for the convenience of their human caretakers.
- **Feed according to the horse's needs**- each horse is an individual and has different needs. Two major factors for deciding how much your horse needs to eat are her size and the amount of work she does.
- **Change feed and feed schedules gradually**-Whenever you make a change to your horse's ration, whether it's increasing or decreasing the amount or changing to a new kind of feed, make the change incrementally. Sudden differences in the amount or type of feed can lead to colic or founder (founder is a chemical and/or metabolic imbalance in the horse's body). The average thousand-pound horse who relies on hay for all his forage typically eats fifteen to twenty pounds of hay per day.
- Ideally, you should wait an hour or so after your horse has finished a meal before riding him or let the horse cool down completely—his breathing rate should be back to normal, and his skin should not feel hot or sweaty before feeding again.
- **Stick to a routine**-Horses thrive on routine, and their amazingly accurate internal clocks make them much better timekeepers than their human caretakers.

Parts of the Saddle and Bridle

Saddle



Bridle



Care for the Saddle and Bridle

Leather is skin. Just as your skin suffers abrasions and dryness from irritants like sweat and dirt, your leather does too. The key to tack longevity is the practice of daily cleaning after every ride.

The traditional method of leather care is to wipe dust and sweat from your tack immediately after use with a sponge or cloth that is barely moistened with cool water. Then rub a with a cleaning solution followed by a conditioning agent that restores moisture

How to saddle and bridle a horse

- www.youtube.com/watch?v=NR537_bIHu0

How to mount and dismount a horse

- www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NLWL2WJx-A

How to approach, lead a horse from a stall, coral, field, and how to tie the horse securely

- www.youtube.com/watch?v=GtI0CoI9CNM
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7wQTn1F0Ac
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpP34SHS0bU

On the day of working with the horse, you will have to demonstrate the following

- Demonstrate how to approach and lead a horse safely from a stall, corral, or field and how to tie the horse securely
- Demonstrate how to groom a horse, including picking hooves and caring for a horse after a ride.
- Show how to properly saddle and bridle a horse.
- Demonstrate how to safely mount and dismount a horse.
- On level ground, continuously do the following movements after safely mounting the horse. Do them correctly, at ease, and in harmony with the horse:
 - a. walk the horse in a straight line for 60 feet.
 - b. Walk the horse in a half circle of not more than 16 feet in radius.
 - c. Trot or jog the horse in a straight line for 60 feet.
 - d. Trot or jog the horse in a half circle of not more than 30 feet in radius.
 - e. Halt straight.
 - f. Back up straight four paces.
 - g. Halt and dismount.