



Horse Grooming and Tacking

Consistency is a necessity for the emotional well-being of our horses.

In an effort to create a consist environment for our horses, we need every volunteer preparing horses to follow “The Healing with Horses Ranch Way” of grooming and saddling.

Remember:

- 30 minutes prior to class, check in with the office, sign in the volunteer log book and check in with the team leader.
- Check the assignment board
- When necessary, please be prepared to help prep more than one horse.



The Healing with Horses Ranch Model

1. The students will be pulling tack, getting their horse from the paddock, grooming and tacking up with the Horse Handler as the Mentor and the Side Walker as the assistant
2. Allow bonding to happen so minimize talking
3. Allow mistakes to happen and help students come up with solutions
4. Sequencing skills, memory skills, fine and gross motor skills and communication skills are all being challenged during this phase of the lesson

Grooming a Horse

The assignment board will list the tack to be used on each horse in each lesson. All horses should be led and pre-groomed before student arrives to check for soundness. When the student arrives, go with them to get their horse from the paddock.

Grooming Area

Grooming buckets are kept on the fence so horses don't step in them.
Use tools in this order:

1. Groom your horse with a curry comb using large, firm circular motions. Do not use curry comb on face or legs.
2. Use the body brush on entire body of horse except for the face, using quick firm flicks of your wrist in the direction of the hair growth to get rid of excess dirt and dander.
3. Always clean horses' feet before a lesson. Use a hoof pick to get mud and dirt out of horses' hooves. **Remember "The Healing with Horses Ranch Way" to pick out hooves is:**

left front

left back

right back

right front

4. Use the mane and tail brush to brush the mane and tail. Remember to move off to either side to brush the tail. **DO NOT** stand directly behind your horse to brush its tail.



Tack

Healing with Horses Ranch uses the following types of tack:

Saddles:

Saddles are fitted to horses at Healing with Horses Ranch. The tack chart on the door of the tack room indicates whether a saddle fits a particular horse. DO NOT randomly change tack without an Instructor's approval.

All-purpose saddles are for general English riding.

Dressage saddles are English saddles with a deeper seat and longer, straighter flap.

Surcingles and bareback pads, some with handles and some without, are used to challenge riders that may be working on balance.

"Cashel" saddles are made of thick foam.

Western saddles

Stirrups and leathers:

Stirrups and stirrup leathers are coded by size.

Putting stirrup leathers on the saddle is a little easier to do before you put the saddle on the horse. After you attach the stirrups, "run them up" so they aren't dangling. (Ask someone to show you if you've forgotten how to do this.) The student will pull them down when he or she is ready to mount.

Peacock stirrups are safety stirrups. The rubber band should face the front of the saddle when it is hung on the saddle. Make sure that the safety catch is in the open position.

Pads and cashels:

Quilted pad – used under Dressage, AP saddles, and cashel saddles (unless otherwise instructed).

Girths:

Dressage -The short ones with 2 buckles

AP - the longer ones with 2 buckles

Western cinches for Western saddles, bareback pad, and cashel saddle.

Surcingles have their own girths that should stay attached.

Bridles, side-pulls and reins:

Each horse has its own labeled bridle and/or side-pull. (Side-pulls are bit-less with a stiff nose band.)

Reins will be listed as “rainbow” reins, solid color reins (white or brown), and “balance” reins which go around the neck rather than attaching to the bridle.

Tacking

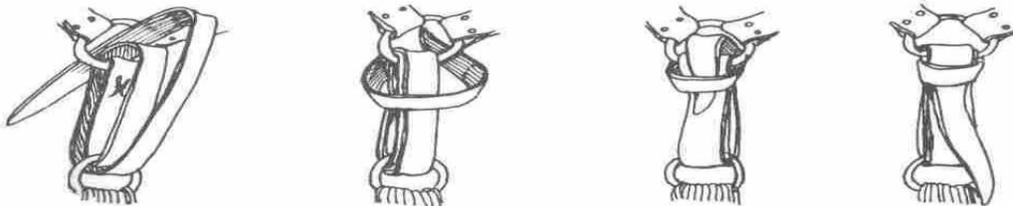
Put the blanket slightly up the horse’s neck and slide it back into place so the horse’s hair is smooth beneath it.

Make sure the saddle is in the right position, just behind the withers and centered on the horses’ back before girthing. Place the saddle high up on the horse’s neck and then slide it back into position until it stops. This should put the saddle into the correct position.

Attach the elastic end of the girth to the left side of the saddle first. Gently tighten the girth on the right side just enough to keep the saddle from shifting.

If using a Western saddle, hook the right stirrup on the saddle horn before you put the saddle on the horse so the heavy stirrup doesn’t hit him in the side.

Use a “Texas T” knot to secure the western girth.



Girthing:

When girthing, be gentle. Don’t tighten the girth all the way - just enough to keep the saddle from shifting. An Instructor will check it before the rider mounts and then again during the lesson.

- Some horses object to being girthed and may bite, so always warn anyone near the horse’s head if you are tightening the girth.
- Check the girth at the horse’s chest – NOT at their sides.



Bridling:

Keep the halter on and put the bridle or side pull on OVER the halter.

Remember

- Never leave your horse unattended.
- If your horse is being particularly unpleasant, let an instructor or team leader know immediately.
- If you get injured, report to a Healing with Horses Ranch staff member and fill out an “Incidence Report”. These forms can be found in the main office.
- If you are uncertain about anything, please ask.