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Nebraska 4-H Light Horse Manual: Extension Circular 2-96-2

Morris Hemstrom

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nebraska 4-H

Light Horse

MANUAL

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Light horses provide recreational, educational, financial and utility values unsurpassed by many other animal projects. Healthy outdoor living, companionship and free development of mental powers are all encouraged by the 4-H member's association with horses. Riding and driving horses strengthens one's self-reliance, quickness of individual action and sense of judgment.

Interest in light horses has grown continually, especially since 1946. Our present United States population of around two million light horses represents over 13 times as many as in 1918. Nebraska is a leading horse state, ranking seventh nationally.

The light horse of Nebraska also has an added utility value in connection with the harvesting of our state's great product—beef. This utility, plus the recreation and pleasure derived from horses, makes the Nebraska 4-H horse project very popular.

This manual is intended to furnish 4-H members and leaders with reference material for 4-H horse projects. The manual discusses basic phases of production, management, horsemanship and training. For more detailed information on horses see references listed in back of circular.
parts of the horse

- Poll
- Forehead
- Face
- Cheek
- Throat latch
- Neck
- Crest
- Withers
- Back
- Loin
- Croup
- Shoulder
- Heart girth
- Barrel
- Thigh
- Flank
- Point of hip
- Chestnut
- Abdomen
- Stifle
- Gaskin
- Quarter
- Buttock
- Hock
- Forearm
- Knee
- Elbow
- Arm
- Chest
- Point of shoulder
- Forearm
- Finger
- Hoof
- Ergot
- Pastern
- Coronet
- Fetlock joint
- Cannon
- Fetlock
### Example Notes

Quarter Horse Mares (at John Brown's Ranch). First impression of placing, (first two minutes of looking) 1, 2, 3, 4. Final Placing, (generally same as first impression) 1, 2, 3, 4.

<table>
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<th>Admission</th>
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<th>Identification</th>
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<td>of better qualities of second mare in the pair.</td>
<td>of the better qualities of the first mare in each pair.</td>
<td>of or weakness of the first mare in each pair.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/2 Broader between eyes and more foxy ear.</td>
<td>Heavier muscled front, longer, leaner neck, sharper wither, shorter back, stronger and leveler croup, straighter legs and flatter bone, wider heel and moved straighter.</td>
<td>Sorrel, narrow headed, lop eared mare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3 Deeper rib.</td>
<td>Straighter front legs, longer neck, heavier, longer muscles, especially forearm and gaskin, heavier loin, stronger croup and longer stride.</td>
<td>Shallow rib.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4 Number four mare did not excell three in anything important. Leave this space blank.</td>
<td>Shorter coupled, heavier in front, more femininity and Quarter Horse character in head, longer croup, thicker inside gaskin, deeper foot and traveled longer with more decision than 4.</td>
<td>Grey mare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Lot of style, snap and bloom.</td>
<td>Was too shallow in body, flat in rib, long in body, flat and thin in muscling, short croup, light boned and small narrow footed.</td>
<td>Glass eyed, small, light boned mare.</td>
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### Reasons

When placing a class of livestock in a show or contest, one should justify this placing with “reasons.” These are simply a set of “reasons why” one animal placed over the other, and so on. In judging contests, reasons follow a pattern and are given orally to an official judge.

A sample set of reasons for a class of Quarter Horse mares are as follows:

"I placed this class of Quarter Horse mares 1, 2, 3, 4. In placing 1 over 2, I will admit that 2 was shorter and broader in her neater head with a shorter, more squirrel-like ear but I placed 1 over 2 because she was a heavier fronted mare with a leaner, longer neck that blended into a sharper wither. She was shorter and stronger in her back and was leveler and stronger over her croup. 1 was a deeper flanked mare that stood on straighter hind legs and was harder and flatter in her bone that set on wider heels, and deeper harder feet. The sorrel traveled straighter and was more collected in her stride than 2.

"I placed 2 over 3 even though 3 was deeper in her rib but 2 was straighter fronted, longer necked and was heavier and longer in her muscling. She was heavier muscled in her forearm, both inside and out, and stood on harder, cleaner legs than 3. She was a stronger, fuller loined mare and was stronger over her croup and traveled more collected with a longer stride than the grey. I would have liked the 2 mare ‘with more depth of rib’.
“I placed 3 over 4 because she was shorter coupled and showed more muscling in her heavier front. 3 showed more Quarter Horse character and femininity about her head and was stronger over her loin and leveler croup. She was thicker through her stifles and gaskin and stood on a deeper foot and traveled with a longer stride and more decision than 4.

“I placed 4 at the bottom of this class, a Quarter mare with a lot of snap but she was a light bodied, slab sided mare that was too long in her body and lacked the muscling over her short croup. She was too light in her stifle, too small, and lacked the substance and ‘bottom’ of the other Quarter Horse mares in the class. Thank you.”

Practice judging at every opportunity. Every animal and every class is different so study each animal and class thoroughly. Good horse judges are also good judges of other kinds of livestock. Judging horses is fun and helps the 4-H member choose his own horse wisely. Judging also develops one’s memory, public speaking ability and personality.

Selecting the Brood Mare

Desirable conformation and disposition is most important in any breeding animal. Each foal gets 50% of its inheritance from the mare and 50% from the stallion. Since weaknesses in conformation that develop into unsoundnesses may be inherited, both the sire and dam must be sound. Many states require by law that any stallion standing for public service be declared sound by a licensed veterinarian.

First, the brood mare should have sound feet and legs. Her underpinning should be flat, clean, hard in the joints and sloping in the shoulder and pasterns that set on deep, tough, round feet with an open heel. She should be very feminine about her head and neck and have large placid eyes.

The mare is generally bred in the early spring in order to drop early foals. Technically, all horses celebrate their birthday on January first, regardless of their date of birth. Thus, if a foal is born in December, it becomes one year old January first. Usually, the mare can be bred every 21 days, which is called a heat period. The duration of “heat” is generally six days. After the mare is bred and “settles,” she carries the developing foal about 335 to 340 days before it is born. This is called the gestation period. After she foals, she will again come into “heat” on about the ninth day. To breed her again at this time may be difficult since her reproductive tract may be torn or infected. Breeding the mare during a regular heat period, after the ninth day “heat,” results in highest conception rates. For best results, breed the mare on the fourth or fifth day of “heat”.

Selecting the Stallion

The stallion’s head, neck and front should show a lot of masculinity and strength in its makeup. The stallion, also, must be desirable in conformation and sound in his feet and legs. Do not breed a good mare to a poor stallion in hopes of getting a good colt. Remember, the stallion contributes 50% of the inheritance to the foal. Select your next foal’s sire with care. Ability, disposition and conformation are very important when selecting the stallion.

Precautions

Breeding mares and stallions that are close relatives is called inbreeding. Avoid inbreeding of horses unless you are a well-informed, experienced breeder. Inbreeding does not create undesirable foals but it may allow undesirable traits of close relatives to “crop out.” Generally, it is best to breed the mare to an unrelated stallion, which is called outbreeding, although inbreeding will concentrate desirable traits as well as undesirable ones. Also, outbred foals are generally more vigorous than highly inbred foals.

Disposition

A gentle disposition is a combination of heredity and correct early training. Horses with good dispositions respond quickly to kind, firm training and perform more faithfully than hot, excitable animals. High strung, nervous mounts may be dangerous and generally do not perform satisfactorily for most riders. Successful horse breeders consider disposition a very important characteristic to maintain in all breeding stock. 4-H horsermen should consider disposition as a very important trait when selecting a project animal.

Age of the Horse

The most productive age is usually from three to eight or nine years. How long a horse is usable depends so many factors that it is difficult to give a figure in years. Many horses past fifteen years of age are still being used. A young horse should not be used heavily until it is about three years old. Training, of course, should start much earlier.

Age can be determined by teeth fairly accurately until the animal is twelve years old. After twelve years, the cups are usually worn down and when the cups are gone it is a matter of how much the incisors slant forward.
Selecting the right breed is not as important as obtaining horses that are sound, willing and with good dispositions. If a club member selects a brood mare of one of the recognized light horse breeds, then the mare should be bred to a stallion of the same breed if possible.

Whether the 4-H club member selects a pony or a horse is generally determined by the size of the rider. Most children of 4-H age are generally too large for smaller ponies and, thus, will select horses for their projects.

Ponies are horses under 14.2 hands and horses are 14.2 hands or taller.

Information on a light horse breed of your choice can be obtained by writing one of the following light horse breed associations.

American Quarter Horse Ass'n., P.O. Box 271, Amarillo, Texas—Howard K. Linger, Sec'y.
The Jockey Club, Thoroughbred Registry, 300 Park Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.—Marshall Cassidy, Sec'y.
Palomino Horse Breeders of America, P.O. 82, Mineral Wells, Texas—Dr. H. Arthur Zappe, Sec'y.
Arabian Horse Club Registry of America, 111 West Monroe St., Chicago 3, Illinois—Frank Watt, Sec'y.
Morgan Horse Club, 90 Broad St., New York 4, N. Y.—F. B. Hills, Sec'y.
American Saddle Horse Breeders Ass'n. 929 South 4th St., Louisville 3, Kentucky—Charles J. Cronan, Jr., Sec'y.
Appaloosa Horse Club, Route No. 3, Moscow, Idaho—George B. Hatley, Sec'y.
Tennessee Walking Horse Breeder's Ass'n. of America, P.O. Box 87, Lewisburg, Tennessee—Mrs. Marianne Hawkins, Sec'y.

United States Trotting Association, P.O. Box 2058 M.O., Columbus 16, Ohio—Ken McCarr, Registrar.
American Hackney Horse Society, Room 1737, 42 Broadway, New York, N. Y.—Mrs. J. Macy Willets, Sec'y.
American Shetland Pony Club, Lafayette, Indiana—Chas. F. Osborn, Sec'y.
Welsh Pony Society of America, Wicomico Church, Virginia—Mrs. H. L. Shelton, Sec'y.
HORSE COLORS and CLASSIFICATION
OF COLORS

To describe the colors of horses is very difficult. However, to be a good horseman, correct knowledge of colors is important. Color names and specifications vary somewhat in different localities. As well as knowing colors of horses, other terms are useful in making a description of a horse. Some of them are as follows:

When discussing the color of a horse, the term "points" is used. "Points" of the horse are the ear tips, border of eyes and muzzle, mane, tail and legs below the knees and hocks.

"Glass" eyes are eyes with a white iris. "Moon" eyes or "wall" eyes have a distinctive over-all cloudy appearance. Do not confuse eye unsoundness with "moon" eyes. However, "moon" eyed horses tend to become unsound in their eyes. "Glass" eyes are more often found in spotted horses than in solid colored horses.

Below is listed, with their descriptions, the most common colors.

**Basic Colors**

1. Black—jet, sooty, without light areas (disregarding weathering). May have white face and leg markings.
   - A. Seal Brown—black with light areas on muzzle, eyes, flanks and inner legs.
   - B. White (Albino)—white hair and skin, pink eyes and feet.
   - C. Bay—shades from tan to brown, with black mane and tail and often lower legs. May have white face and leg markings.
      - A. Mahogany Bay (Brown)—brown shades of bay.
      - B. Blood Bay (Bright or Cherry)—red shades of bay.
      - C. Sandy Bay—light shades of bay.

4. Chestnut—shades of yellow gold to dark brown. Mane and tail approximately the same color as the body. May have white face and leg markings.
   - A. Liver Chestnut (Burnt)—darker shades, some appearing dark brown with an auburn hue.
   - B. Sorrel Chestnut (Red, Golden)—the red to golden shades.

5. Ysabella (Palomino)—a color group having flax or silver manes and tails. (Over 85% silver hairs.) May have white face and leg markings.
   - A. Red Palomino—red sorrel.
   - B. Golden Palomino—golden yellow.
   - C. Pseudo-albino (Cream)—light cream to white. May have "glass" eyes.

**Color Patterns**

Grey, roan, dun and paints may be in any combination.

1. Grey—is foaled a solid color but whitens with age. May have white face and leg markings.
   - A. Steel, iron-grey—generally a young horse with a high per cent of colored hairs.
   - B. Dapple grey—colors distributed in dapple effect.
   - C. White (flea bitten)—mostly white hair.

2. Roan—a rather uniform mixture of colored and white hairs. Roans are foaled as roans. May have white face and leg markings.
   - A. Blue roan—mixture of black and white hair but may have a few red hairs.
   - B. Red roan—roaned bay.
   - C. Strawberry roan—roaned chestnut.
   - D. Dun roan—roaned dun.

3. Dun—coat appears diluted. Always dorsal strip down back. May have stripes on legs and withers and shoulder. May have white face and leg markings.
   - A. Blue roan—mixture of black and white hair but may have a few red hairs.
   - B. Red roan—roaned bay.
   - C. Strawberry roan—roaned chestnut.
   - D. Dun roan—roaned dun.

4. Paint, pied, spotted—irregular colored and white areas.
   - A. Piebald—black and white spotting only.
   - B. Skewbald—any color with white, except black.
   - C. Appaloosa—solid, dark, white or roan colors with rather small dark or white spots. The smallish spots are round, oval, leaf-shaped or diamond-shaped.
In many cases it is difficult to distinguish between an unsoundness and a blemish. Many unsoundnesses are the result of blemishes, thus they may be called either or both depending upon how they effect the action and working ability of the horse, and the degree or seriousness to which they appear. Note: U = unsoundness, B = blemish.

**Head**
1. cataract (U) - cloudy or opaque appearance of the eye.
2. defective eyes (U) - impaired vision or blindness.
3. poll evil (U) - inflamed swelling of poll between ears.
4. roman nose - faulty conformation.
5. parrot mouth (U) - lower jaw is shorter than upper jaw.
6. undershot jaw (U) - upper jaw is shorter than lower jaw.

**Withers and Shoulders**
1. fistula of withers (U or B) - inflamed swelling of withers.
2. sweeny (U) - atrophy or decrease in size of a single muscle or group of muscles, usually found in shoulder or hip.

**Front Legs**
1. shoe boil or capped elbow (B) - soft, flabby swelling at the point of elbow.
2. knee - sprung or buck knee - over on the knees. Faulty conformation.
3. calf-kneed - back at the knees. Faulty conformation.
4. splint (B) - capsule enlargement usually found inside upper part of front cannon.
5. wind puff (U) - puffy swellings occurring either side of tendons above fetlock or knee.
6. bowed tendons (U) - enlarged, stretched flexor tendons behind the cannon bones.
7. ringbone (U) - bony growth on either or both sides of pastern.
8. sidebone (U) - bony growth above and toward the rear quarter of hoofhead.
9. quittor (U) - fistula of the hoofhead.
10. quarter or sand crack (B) - vertical split in the wall of the hoof.
11. navicular disease (U) - inflammation of small navicular bone usually inside front foot.
12. founder (U) - turning up of hoof and rough, deep rings in hoof wall caused by over feeding, severe concussion or disease and abnormal management.
13. contracted feet (B) - abnormal contraction of heel.
14. thrush (B) - disease of the frog.

**Body**
1. heaves (U) - difficult breathing, lung damage.
2. roaring (U) - difficult breathing due to obstruction usually in larynx.
3. rupture (U) - protrusion of internal organs through the wall (hernia) of the body. Umbilical or scrotal areas most common.
4. sway back - faulty conformation.
5. hipdown (U) - fracture of prominence of hip and falling away.

**Rear Limbs**
1. stifled (U) - displaced patella of stifle joint.
2. stringhalt (U) - nervous disorder characterized by excessive jerking of the hind leg.
3. thoroughpin (U) - puffy swelling which appears on upper part of hock and in front of the large tendon.
4. capped hock (B or U) - enlargement on point of hock. Depends on stage of development.
5. bog spavin (U) - meaty, soft swelling occurring on inner front part of hock.
6. bone spavin or jack spavin (U) - bony growth usually found on inside lower point of hock.
7. curb (U) - hard swelling on back surface of rear cannon about four inches below point of hock.
8. cocked ankle (U) - usually in hind feet, horse stands bent forward, due to contracted tendons.
9. blood spavin (B) - swelling of vein usually below seat of bog spavin.
FEEDING

Horse feeding requirements vary according to the work expected of them and the conditions necessary to perform this work efficiently. All feed should be high quality, clean, free from mold and properly balanced as to the portion of the roughage to grain. Feed good quality roughages and grains that are available at the lowest cost. Pasture, good quality hay, oats, mineral salt and water will satisfy the basic needs. Free access to loose or block trace mineral salt is a necessity.

Do Not

1. Continue an idle horse on a full grain ration.
2. Feed dusty or moldy feed or frozen silage to any horse, especially to brood mares. Such feeds may cause complications and possible abortion.
3. Feed or water a horse following a vigorous workout until the horse is cooled out.

Suggested Feeding Practices

Brood Mares

1. Before foaling, the brood mare should receive additional energy, protein, mineral and vitamins above the ordinary maintenance requirements. Increase the usual rations by 25% to 50% for gestating-lactating mares.
2. After the mare has foaled, restrict her ration for the first ten days to light hay and grain to help prevent excessive milk flow which might increase digestive disturbances of both the mare and foal.

Foal

1. The foal makes more than half its entire growth during his first year and if stunted during that time may never fully recover.
2. Grain is necessary for full development of the foal to one year of age—one pound of grain for 100 pounds of body weight.
3. Even before weaning, the foal should be started on a palatable, high quality grain ration.
4. It is hard to overfeed a growing foal, provided it gets an ample amount of exercise. Most foals are underfed rather than overfed and underexercised rather than overexercised.

Yearlings and Older

1. Good luxuriant pastures, plus supplemental grain, will produce well-grown, thrifty yearlings. Full yearling development is good insurance against stunted, unhealthy two-year olds.

Fitting Thin Horses

1. In fitting a horse for show, develop a firm finish and bloom. Part of this will come from feed, much of it from grooming and exercise.
2. Molasses will replace grain pound for pound and stimulate appetite for feed and water. Up to two pounds per day can be fed on grain or hay.
3. Bran is a good conditioner. Feed it at a ratio of three parts oats to one part bran by weight. Bran is rich in minerals and protein and can be fed as a regular part of the grain ration. When horses reach the desired condition, bran and/or molasses will provide the needed bulk and laxative effect necessary to keep them "on feed."

General

If a low quality, non-legume hay is fed and the horse has no access to pasture, linseed oil meal may be fed—no more than one pound per day.

Alfalfa or other legume hay is an excellent roughage, but usually it should not be the only source of roughage for horses.

When the horse is grazing good pasture, the grain allowance should be cut in half or discontinued. As pastures dry up, increase grain.

Oats and horses go together like carrots and rabbits. Oats is the only grain necessary; however, other grains will replace oats.

Clean water should be available at all times, regardless of the age of the horse or the amount of work he is performing.

The protein requirements of horses are usually satisfied with good quality hay or pasture. If the roughage or pasture is of low quality, then a protein supplement may be added to the ration, especially if the horses are working or growing. Six tenths to one pound of digestable protein will provide an adequate daily protein intake for a 1000 pound horse. Idle horses will require protein amounts close to the six tenths intake while working horses will require a protein intake of around one pound.

Put whole corn cobs in the grain box if the horse eats grain too fast.
Most disease problems should be turned over to a good veterinarian. He will be qualified to diagnose the trouble and prescribe treatment. Your horse is too valuable to "wait a disease out." At the first signs of sickness, start treatment.

Most diseases, accidental injuries, intestinal upsets and health disorders can be prevented by wise management. Some suggested practices are:

1. Keep loose barbed wire picked up from the lots and pastures. Do not use barb wire to fence in foals. When you separate the mares from their foals, put the foals in a tight stall so they cannot injure themselves in their efforts to get to their mothers.

2. Before you exert your horse with fast or hard work, give him a "warm up" period.

3. Heavy feeding just before hard riding is not a good practice.

4. Do not stall a horse for long periods without exercise. Reduce his grain ration during periods of inactivity.

5. Check hoofs often, removing collected manure, dirt and rocks. Keep feet trimmed at least once a month. Do not leave shoes on for over six weeks without resetting.

6. Treat galls, saddle sores and other blemishes when you first notice them. Clean with mild soap and water, then apply an astringent antiseptic solution. (Such a solution may be prepared by adding 30 grams of tannic acid and 1 gram of gentian violet to 1 pint of .1% alcoholic sublimate.)

7. Do a thorough job of grooming every day. Daily inspection will result in early detection of abnormal conditions.

8. The back teeth, or molars, often develop jagged edges which cut into the cheeks and bother the horse while eating. Sometimes permanent teeth will come in crooked if the first tooth does not fall out. Have an experienced person correct these by "floating" or pulling.
9. Loss of weight and general unthriftiness in young horses (2 to 5 years) may be caused by infected teeth. This generally occurs when the temporary teeth are not shed normally. Such cases should be treated by a veterinarian.

10. Keep the inside of stalls smooth and free from nails, slivers, protruding boards, etc.

11. Allow a “hot” horse only small and frequent drinks of water until the horse is “cooled out.”

12. Keep stalls clean and dry and free from holes.

Care of the Foal

The umbilical cord should be allowed to rupture naturally. After the foal is born, disinfect the navel within 24 hours. Soak the navel stump and surrounding abdomen for 1/2 minute with a strong tincture of iodine (10%) contained in a small, shallow, wide-mouthed jar. Do not touch the stump with the hands. Most normal, healthy foals should nurse within six hours after birth and should be started on feed at two weeks of age. Be attentive to the mare and new foal but do not disturb them unnecessarily.

Constipation

Administer a luke warm soap suds enema to all foals within 24 hours after birth. Use a pint to a quart of warm water with a small amount of mild, pure soap. Administer with a long, blunt-nosed catheter tube. Never use a syringe or force, as this may puncture the colon. Most of the fecal material gathers at least a foot away from the rectum, thus, it is important to introduce the catheter at least one foot into the colon. In case of impaction, and the enema treatment does not eliminate the black rubbery pellets, a veterinarian should be consulted.

Diarrhea

Many times young foals are troubled with diarrhea. Good preventatives are clean stalls, buckets, tubs and surroundings. Also, see that the mare is milked out after returning from any extended separation from the foal as this may prevent digestive disturbances in the foal. Undetected mastitis may cause diarrhea. Diarrhea also may develop during the mare’s heat period, or when she is overheated from exertion. Treatments for diarrhea may be administration of astringents, coating materials and antibiotics under professional supervision.

Orphan Foals

It is possible to save an orphan foal with careful attention and by using the following milk substitute mixture: 1 pint cow’s milk, low in butterfat, 1/4 pint lime water, 1 tablespoon sugar. Heat to luke warm and feed with bottle and nipple. Feed every two to three hours (1/2 pint at each feeding for the first few days). Do not overfeed. Foals should be taught to drink from a bucket as soon as possible and should learn to eat grain early.

Diseases of the Foal

Sleeper Foal

Foals appear sleepy and limp and may fall asleep while standing up. Sleeper foals should be treated within 15 hours after birth although less acute cases may appear within three days after birth. Early administration of an antibiotic by a veterinarian may correct the condition.

Navel Ill

The symptoms are a large navel, swollen joints, fever, loss of appetite and diarrhea. Contact a veterinarian immediately if these symptoms develop. Much of the trouble from navel ill and joint swelling may be prevented by using the iodine treatment on the umbilical cord.

Jaundiced Foals

In jaundiced foals, red blood cells are destroyed faster than they are produced, resulting in a yellow appearance of the exposed skin area. Excessive destruction of the red blood cells in the liver occurs in this disease. The symptoms are: dullness, foal nurses infrequently, is weak and lays down much of the time. Membranes of the mouth, lips and eyes become pale and yellowish rather than the normal pink color and labored breathing is apparent after moderate exercise even though the body temperature may be normal. Foals usually die within five days if not treated.

Cause—the mare was bred to a stallion of different blood type. Apparently, the developing fetus has a blood type similar to the sire rather than the mare. During the latter stages of pregnancy, the mare may develop a resistance to the fetal red blood cells and this resistance accumulates to a high degree in the colostrum. When the foal first nurses, it absorbs the harmful antibodies (resistance to its own blood cells) as well as many beneficial antibodies. This resistance, developed by the mare, will now destroy the foal’s red blood cells and the jaundiced condition develops.

Treatment—the veterinarian must diagnose the condition by a laboratory blood test. He may transfuse blood into the foal similar to the stallion’s type or, in emergencies where laboratories are not available, use of the blood of the foal’s sire is recommended. After 36 hours, the mare’s milk is usually safe, thus, muzzeling the foal for the first three days and substituting milk during this period may be a good practice.

Internal Parasites

Worm parasites appear in all horses without exception. Heavy parasite infestations cause marked retardation of growth and performance in horses. No
other infectious agents are responsible for as much disease and few others will cause as many mortalities. Ascarids (white worms) and strongyles (bloodworms, palisade worms, blood strongyles) are the most harmful to horses. Parasites are most harmful to horses two years of age and under and all treatments should be by a veterinarian or under the supervision of a veterinarian.

**Ascarids**

The ascarid female worms (6 to 10 inches long) are present in the intestines and lay eggs that pass out in the feces. These eggs may lie in stalls, pastures and surroundings for several years. The eggs may be picked up by foals or other horses at any time through contaminated feed, grass and water. After the eggs are swallowed, twelve weeks is required for the worms to mature and lay more eggs. During this period of twelve weeks of development in the horse, the eggs hatch and the larvae migrate from the small intestine into the lungs via the blood. They are then coughed up, reswallowed and locate permanently in the small intestines as adult worms to lay more eggs that complete the cycle again. One female worm may lay many thousands of ascarid eggs every day.

**Strongyles**

After hatching in the gut, the blood worm larvae (strongyles) migrate through the body similar to the ascarids. Heavy infestations of these larvae in the blood may lodge in the intestinal arteries. This is one of the most prevalent causes of Colic in horses under two years of age.

**Control of Ascarids and Strongyles:**

1. Clean housing and stalls and proper manure disposal.
2. Several treatments as sucklings, one treatment as a weanling and yearling will control ascarids and strongyles.
3. Use one of the following treatments.
   A. Periodic carbon disulfide treatment after horses are off feed for 12 hours. Very toxic and must be administered by a veterinarian.
   B. Periodic treatment with 30 grams of phenothiazine as a therapeutic dosage.
   C. Periodic administration of piperazine for ascarids is very effective and is not as hazardous as carbon disulfide.
   D. A popular and effective treatment for worm parasites is the low level feeding of phenothiazine. This is best accomplished by feeding two grams of phenothiazine in the morning feed everyday for the first 21 days of each month, especially during the fall, winter and early spring months. A mixture of one pound of phenothiazine and three pounds sugar, fed at 1/2 to one level teaspoon per day will supply the required two grams daily treatment. Do not overfeed phenothiazine.

**Bots**

Adult bot flies obviously annoy horses. Heavy infestations of bots may impair passage of feed through the digestive system. The newly hatched larvae may burrow into the tongue and mouth tissues and cause irritation. Though bots annoy horses, they are not as serious a problem as are the strongyles and ascarids. Carbon disulfide administered by a veterinarian may control bots.

**Pinworms**

Pinworms are whitish worms three to six inches long, with a very long, slender tail. They hatch and develop in the large intestine. As they pass out through the anus, they may attach here and cause much itching. Thus, the horse infested with pinworms may rub its posterior parts on any object available. Though not a serious parasite, the pinworm is most successfully combated by good sanitation practices and the low level phenothiazine treatment used for the control of ascarids and strongyles.

**Mange and Lice**

Proper sanitation, good nutrition and other good husbandry practices are very effective in controlling these external parasites.

Mange is caused by three different types of insects called mites. Mites spend their life on the horse and hatch and mature every fourteen days, thus, two treatments are generally necessary for control. They are most troublesome in the winter hair and tend to disappear in the summer. The mites burrow and tunnel in the skin, causing intense irritation and itching.
Some types of mange are transmissible to man and most mange is contagious to other animals. Dipping or thoroughly spraying the horse two times about two weeks apart with such chemicals as rotenone, lindane or benzene hexachloride generally gets rid of mites. Good husbandry and sanitation measures are the best preventatives.

Two kinds of lice, one blood sucking and the other a biting louse, are also most prevalent in the winter. The blood louse generally feeds in the head and softer skin areas while the biting louse generally accumulates around the withers and the base of the tail. Effective treatment includes dipping, spraying or dusting the horse with DDT, lindane, chlordane or benzene hexachloride two times, two weeks apart.

Caution—follow the manufacturers dosage and treatment recommendations closely.

Tetanus producing bacteria are soil borne and are widespread. Affects the nervous system, causing muscle spasms, difficult swallowing and moving. It is a good practice to inject tetanus antitoxin in animals that have suffered wounds that might harbor the active organism. Annual tetanus antitoxin injections as a precautionary measure are not universally accepted.

Colic—a general term referring to pain in the abdominal cavity. Caused by high infestation of internal parasites, bowel impaction, twisted bowel, rupture, or improper feeding. Colic can be largely prevented by common sense feeding such as gradual feed changes, not overfeeding hungry, tired horses, or allowing them to overdrink when hot.

Call a veterinarian for treatment. Slow walking may relieve the pain.

Founder—a condition that may result from overdrinking, or overfeeding, especially when the horse is hot. Symptoms are extreme pain, fever (103°C-106°F) and reluctance to move. If not treated early by a veterinarian, the toe wall may turn up and rough rings appear around the hoof wall. Until professional treatment is administered, immerse the feet and legs in an ice pack or cold water bath.

Heaves—difficulty in forcing air out of lungs, resulting in a rasping breath, coughing and jerking of the flanks. It may be caused by extreme over-exertion or moldy feeds, and results in lung damage. No satisfactory treatment is known for advanced stages of heaves.

Moon Blindness (periodic ophthalmia)—this disease is the most common cause of periodic or total blindness in horses. Horses of all ages may be affected. The disease may attack one or both eyes. At the onset, moon blindness may cause excessive tears, swelling and tenderness of the eyelids and a cloudy or milky appearance of the cornea or outer eyeball may be apparent. Infected horses try to avoid light. This disease may be hereditary although rations low in vitamin B2 seem to produce moon blindness more than normal. Recent investigations have shown that Leptospirosis also may cause this disease as well as virus infections. No cure is known although well cured green, leafy hay may prevent moon blindness or veterinary treatment may help if it is diagnosed as Leptospirosis.

Azoturia (Monday morning sickness) — generally caused by idleness following regular work while still on full feed. May be recognized by abdominal distress, very dark, coffee colored urine and stiffness and lameness. Relieve the distress by applying hot packs on the affected muscles until the veterinarian arrives. Do not feed idle horses full grain rations but keep the ration bulky.
To disregard simple safety rules in handling horses can result in serious mishaps. A knowledge of safe riding is imperative. Here are some rules for safety which members should practice.

Always warn a horse when you walk up behind him. Coming up behind a horse unexpectedly is a good way to get a “foot in the face.”

While working around horses, stay close in to the horse so you cannot be struck by the feet or receive the full impact of a kick.

Never approach a horse directly from the rear. Even in single stalls it is possible to approach from an angle.

Always speak to a horse before approaching or touching him. Most horses are likely to jump and may kick when startled.

If the horse hangs back on the end of the rope, lead him a few steps forward before touching him with your hand.

Keep your head in the clear when bridling the horse. He may throw his head or strike to avoid the bridle. Avoid bridling a nervous animal in close quarters.

Walk beside the horse when leading, not ahead or behind him. Always turn the horse to the right and walk around him.

If the horse rears up, release the hand nearest to the halter so you can stay on the ground. Use a long lead strap coiled or folded “accordion” style while leading. Always lead from the left or “near” side using your right hand to hold lead. Extend your right elbow slightly toward the horse so that if the horse makes contact with you, his shoulder will strike your elbow, thus, moving you away.

The horse is stronger than you, so don’t try to out-pull him. He will usually respond to a quick snap on the lead strap or rope.

Never wrap the lead strap, halter shank or reins around your hand, wrist or body.

Bridle reins, stirrup leathers, and cinch straps should be kept in the best possible condition, as your safety is dependent on these straps. Replace any strap when it begins to show signs of wear. All tack should fit the horse.

Stand with your feet well back in the clear and reach forward when saddling the mount.

Never mount the horse in a barn, near fences, trees, or overhanging projections. Sidestepping mounts have injured riders who failed to take these precautions.

Adjust saddle carefully and cinch tight enough so it will not turn when mounting. Soon after starting the ride, dismount and again tighten the saddle girth. Horses often swell up when first saddled and failure to tighten girths later can result in serious accidents.

If your horse is frightened by an obstacle, dismount and lead him by it.

Keep your horse under control and maintain a secure seat at all times. Horses are easily frightened by unusual objects and noises. Anticipate these and steady your horse.

When a horse is frightened and attempts to run, turn him in a circle and tighten the circle until he stops.

Hold your mount to a walk when going up or down hill.

Reduce speed and hold the horse’s head up when riding rough ground or in sand, mud, ice, or snow, where there is danger of the mount falling or slipping.
Avoid paved roads. Slow your mount to a walk when crossing such roads. If he is a spirited or young horse, dismount and lead him across.

Know your horse, his temperament and reactions. Control your temper at all times but let him know that you are his firm and kind master.

Never rush past riders who are proceeding at a slower gait—it startles both horses and riders and frequently causes accidents. Instead, approach slowly and pass cautiously on the left side.

Do not ride too close to the horse that is in front because of the danger of kicking. Stay abreast or a full length behind other mounts.

Walk the horse when approaching and passing through underpasses and over bridges.

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GAITS OF
THE HORSE

The way or manner of a horse in motion is called a gait. Horses have three natural gaits—the walk, trot and gallop or canter, all of which are commonly used by Nebraska Stock horses. The running walk of the Tennessee Walking horse and the pace of the Standardbred may be natural or acquired. The “gaited horse” or American Saddle horse may acquire the slow gait and rack in addition to the three natural gaits and is thus known as a five gaited American Saddle horse.

Walk

The walk is a natural four beat gait since each foot strikes the ground independently of the other three feet. If the steps are short and rather quick, then the walk is said to be collected. The walk is easy on the horse and enjoyable to the rider.

At the walk, the horse should move straight and true. The feet of the straight moving horse point and move in the exact direction the horse is headed. This type of horse moves efficiently since the shortest distance between two points is a straight line.

Next, the stride should be reasonably long. Short, stubby-strided horses are rough to ride and are more prone to soreness and other faults. Horses whose hind footprints mesh or overreach the front hoofprints have ample length of stride and are easy to ride as they absorb more road shock than shorter stepping mounts. Longer strided horses move with less effort and cover more distance. Regularity and rapidity are marks of desirable strides. Thus, the important components of the stride are directness, length, rapidity and regularity. Both Western and English horses do the flatfooted or collected walk while the Western Parade horse may be required to do the parade walk, a fancy high stepping walk.

Trot

The trot is a natural two beat diagonal gait. Thus, the forefoot on one side strikes the ground at the same time as the opposite hindfoot. To start the trot, the rider should shift his weight forward while pressing with his knees and perhaps urging with his heels, and
at the same time release the pressure on the reins. In order to keep his weight forward, the rider may have to lean on the horse's neck or saddle horn. The rider should not pull himself forward by the reins.

Although the trot carries the horse and rider over great distances at a good speed, this gait may be hard to ride. Some riders dislike the trot even though it is easy on the horse. A slow trot or jog may be enjoyable to ride and may be ridden flat in the saddle. However, many riders, both Western and English, post the fast trot. In posting, the rider allows himself to be lifted slightly out of the saddle at every other step. This permits the shock of each step to be partially absorbed by the rider's slightly flexed legs. The trot is a fast, straight, low moving, natural gait except the slow, high prancing trot of the Parade horse called the parade gait.

Canter or Gallop

The canter is a slower moving gallop. The canter may be known as a lope in Western horses. The gallop is faster and when extended is known as running. The canter or lope is not a straight forward gait like the walk or trot but is a diagonal moving gait. The canter is known as a three beat gait while running is a four beat gait. This leaping gait (canter) starts with one hindfoot striking the ground, then a front and the other hindfoot hit the ground together followed by the remaining front foot hitting the ground as all the weight rolls over that foot. Long fast strides obviously produce the most speed.

Leads at the Canter

It is important that the rider knows "leads." Since the canter moves at a slight diagonal, the independent moving front foot is "leading." This can be seen by looking over the shoulder and observing which foreleg reaches furthest ahead in the stride. If the left leg leads out, then the horse is in the left lead and vice versa. A good horse can canter equally as well on either lead. Some horses prefer one lead and are very rough gaited on the other lead.

Developing both leads requires skill of riding and training. To start the horse on the left lead, the rider twists his body slightly to the right and at the same time his right leg and foot moves backward to put pressure toward the right rear flank. Simultaneously, the rider presses down and forward on the left stirrup causing his weight to move to the left and thus requiring the horse to lead out with the left front foot to support the shift in the rider's weight. The right lead is started in the same manner but substituting the right foot press in the stirrup, etc., instead of the left.

The correct hind lead is also very important for smooth riding. Horses that canter the wrong lead behind are called "crow hoppers" and are very rough gaited. For instance, if a horse is leading with the left foreleg in front, then he should also lead with his left rear leg. Many horses are difficult to get into a particular lead and if the regular training methods fail, several methods may be used to assist in this problem. Young horses that have been properly trained on the ground with the longe line generally do not need this additional training.
Starting the horse under saddle on an unaccustomed lead is never easy. One method is to trot the horse toward a fence at about a 45° angle and then press or urge him into a canter just as he comes to the fence. Another method is to walk or trot the mount rather close to the fence, then turn him into the fence quickly and canter off in the opposite direction. Another aid is to trot the horse in a small circle and increase the speed until he breaks into the canter. This latter trick can be accomplished with the longe line or under saddle. When the horse gets into the unaccustomed lead, hold him there until his muscles and mind get used to it. However, young horses will tire.

Training sessions should not last much over 30 minutes at a time and not over two times a day, especially for young horses. Also, do not restrict all the training to a corral, but mix trail rides and road-work in as they start "coming along." Nor should the horse be allowed to become tired of one routine after he has mastered it.

Most all horses, at the canter, are required to lead correctly both ways of the ring, in any show. Horses that lead either way easily are enjoyable to ride and make sharper turns with greater ease. The stock horse is often "asked" to change leads in mid-air to work cattle and even the flat racer finds good use of lead changing on the turns of the circular track. To assist the stock horse on his mid-air lead changes in figure eights, the rider generally shifts his weight in the saddle toward the direction of the desired lead as the horse leaves the ground in front. Training in figure eights requires solid footing.

Training the 4-H horse in gaits and leads is very enjoyable and rewarding. Reining with finger tip control, riding straight in the saddle on the balls of the feet with good knee contact, plus timely shifts of the rider's weight reaps tremendous benefit in good horsemanship and training. Severe restraints, clubs, sharp spurs and short tempers often go together in spoiling a horse for anyone to ride.

Pace

The pace is a two beat lateral gait that only Standardbred race horses use regularly. The pace is very rough and dangerous to ride over rough terrain. The racing pacer is usually faster than the trotter.

Slow Gait

The slow gait or stepping pace is the fourth gait of the American Saddle horse. It is a slow, beautiful gait with lateral motion and a floating action in front. The horse will not "hold" this gait without much aid from the rider and it is rather rough to ride.

Rack

The rack is a beautiful, fast, four beat gait of the American Saddle horse and is executed from the slow gait. This fifth gait is easy to ride and very flashy but cannot be "held" by the horse for longer than two to four minutes. Professional trainers are required to ride and train the horse at the slow gait and rack.

Jumping

Show ring jumping is for the expert but most pleasure horses should jump from one to 2½ feet. The green horse should be put over low jumps at first. Bring the horse straight into the jump at a gallop with the hands spread to keep him from turning off. Do not jerk the horse's mouth when he lands as he must have a loose rein here. The rider may balance himself in the landing by hooking both thumbs over the top of the neck or bracing himself with one hand. Do not overjump a horse at his upper limit. In jumping your horse, use an object that will fall readily in the event the horse does not clear the object. This will prevent falls of the horse and rider.
4-H horses may be in all stages of training from "green" to well-trained. If the horse and member are both "green," they must learn together. Training your own horse may well be one of the most rewarding tasks you have undertaken. Remember, impatience and a short temper will soon spoil any horse.

A horse is much like a person in that he is always capable of learning more. Bad habits or vices are difficult to unlearn, so do not let your horse develop them. Just as in grammar school, a horse must also learn the fundamentals first. To lead, back, stop, start, turn and behave are all important parts of his early education. This training can, and should, be given before the horse is old enough to be ridden.

The horse is said to learn by habit and/or force. He remembers that fear and perhaps punishment is connected with certain actions and rewards with other actions. For instance, if the first time your horse is loaded into a horse trailer he bumps his head, he may resist going in again. Thus, if foals and young horses are fed grain in a horse trailer for several weeks, they will not mind being loaded later.

The training of a horse should always be done one step at a time. Each step is taught until it becomes habit.

Horsemanship and horse training are actually much the same. What a horse does is the result of the skill of the rider and of the previous training of the horse. A green rider can expect little from a well-trained horse and vice versa.

Always see that a horse does what you want. Do not give in until your goal is reached. Then repeat the lesson until it becomes habit. Remember, the horse is stronger than you, so don’t try to match muscles with him.

Be patient, persistent and use common horse sense. The horse is by nature a timid animal. His natural reaction to fear is to run or kick—his only means of protection. The young horse must lose his fear of people although some trainers keep their horses in constant fear in order to get results. However, a horse who trusts his trainer performs more effectively. Training should be firm, toward a goal, and correction and punishment should always take place at the instant of disobedience, without anger from the trainer.
Early Lessons

A foal should be taught to lead, back and have his feet picked up before weaning. These lessons are easiest to teach at this time rather than when the horse is half or full grown.

Halter the foal an hour or so at a time and tie him in the stall by his mother. Be sure he is securely tied and that the halter fits well so that it will not choke him. After a week of this, he will be ready to start leading. If a trainer is alone, drape a non-slip loop over the hind quarters and thread the end through the halter shank. The foal will generally lead soon with alternate and simultaneous pulling of the halter and quarter leads. Be satisfied with just turning him around at first in a small tight corral. He will soon start following with little tugging on the halter. Do not work the horse in anyone direction too long, as it is important that he be equally adept at both the right and left leads.

When the foal will lead and is gentled down, teach him to back. This can be done by standing in front with the halter rope in one hand and a small switch in the other. Push back on the foal with the halter rope and at the same time say “back.” A light tap across the breast with your switch will help to get the message across. When the foal backs a few steps, relax the halter rope and soothe the foal’s feelings with a kind word and pat on the shoulder. Repeat this lesson several times a day until he has learned.

In showing a foal at halter, a well-muscled quarter and gaskin will please the eye of a judge and may be developed more fully by exercise and backing.

A foal that has had this early training will be much easier to train under saddle.

Ground Training

Several preliminary steps are necessary before one can mount a green two-year old and ride off. The days of the old west are nearly gone when a green horse that had never been touched by human hand, was roped, saddled and bucked out all in one operation.

Bitting

One of the first steps should be training to the bit, or “bitting.” No other factor contributes so much to the pleasure, comfort and safety of the rider as a horse with a responsive mouth that promptly obeys the slightest signal from the reins. Some trainers use a hackmore for early training and follow later with a bit. Whichever procedure is used, the young horse must sometime get used to the bit. Proper, early training with the bit is very important. A horse with a hard mouth is always hard-mouthed and is usually one of those “quarter section stoppers.” Of course, much of the development of an easy mouth depends on how lightly a rider uses his hands.

The young horse will soon become familiar with the bit if allowed to wear the bridle and bit for an hour or so each day before actual riding begins. A broken snaffle bit should be used. The proper adjustment of the bridle is very important. The length of the headstall must be adjusted so as to bring the bit in mild contact with the bars of the mouth. If the headstall is too short, the bars and corners of the mouth soon become sore. If the headstall is too long, the bit drops down in the mouth and is very annoying to the horse. The bit should fit up well into the mouth so as to cause a slight “grin” in the corners of the mouth. It should not cause deep wrinkles in the corners of the mouth. When the bit is no longer a foreign object to the horse, later lessons in reinng will come easier.

Driving

Many modern trainers insist that the two-year old be driven on the ground or off another horse, or even to a light training cart, before being saddled. Merely fasten two long, soft ropes or leather lines to each side of the snaffle bit and thread each end through large, slick rings on each side of a sursingle. Now drive the horse in the corral and around the premises until he will stand, walk, turn, back and mind.

Next replace the sursingle with a stock saddle and drive the horse again with the long lines passing through the stirrups. If the lines are long enough they will serve to start the horse on the longe line. Longe line driving probably gives the trainer more control than the single line of the general longe line attached to the chin.

The Longe

The longe is a light rope or line fifteen to twenty-five feet long. It is attached to a loose ring on the chin strap of a snaffle bit and the horse works around the trainer in a circle. This method of ground training has proven worthwhile over the years and is being used by many good Quarter Horse trainers before the horse is introduced to the saddle. It trains the horse to develop a collected canter in a small circle and to use either the left or right lead. A long, light whip will be needed to start a green horse on the longe line. It will take but a short time for the horse to learn that he is supposed to circle the trainer. The first reaction will be one of backing away from the trainer, then the whip should be used on the rump. Have patience in starting a horse on the longe line, he will soon accept it.

Do not work the horse in any one direction too long, it is important that he be equally adept at both the right and left leads.

While working the young horse on the longe line, a few trainers have tied sheep or small cow bells at the throat latch. These bells help develop rhythm and balance of movement, good flexion of feet and legs, and proper carriage of the head and neck which is so important in later training.
Training to Neckrein

All stock horses should neckrein. Some trainers cross the reins under the neck in early lessons. Thus, if the rider wishes to go to the right, he pulls firmly on the right rein, which is now on the left side of the neck. This pulls on the right side of the bit and at the same time pushes the neck to the right. The trainer may also use the reins naturally, thus, if the rider wishes to go to the right he pulls on the right rein and at the same time pushes the neck to the right with the left rein.

Regardless of the method of neckrein training used, the rider should shift his weight toward the direction he wishes to turn at the same time the rein signal is given. The rider's leg, opposite the direction of the turn, should be pressing that side of the horse to help the horse execute the turn. Most horses learn to neckrein by a light touch of the rein rather easily, especially those trained with hackamores.

Ground tying

After the young horse has become bridle-wise and bitted, the trainer may tie one of the reins to a fifty pound weight in the center of a large corral to teach the horse to ground tie. However, any small anchor will serve the purpose. Also, one rein may be fastened to the front cannon or long pastern so that the horse jerks himself when he moves. Use a stout rein or piece of rope for this method.

Spurs

Inexperienced riders should be cautious when using spurs. Spurs are to be used as an aid to cueing. A shift in the rider's weight, leg pressure, neckreining and voice commands are other methods of cueing. Horses may be trained with or without spurs, and if spurs are used in early training their continued use is generally necessary. Excessive use of spurs may cause "tail wringers." Spurs, if worn, should be dull and the rowell free moving.

GROOMING and CARE of EQUIPMENT

Equipment and Grooming

No amount of grooming will make a horse look his best if he is out of condition. If horses are eating well-balanced rations and are in good condition, their skin will be healthy and the hair will have a natural gleam.

If the horse is wet or sweaty, a metal or wooden body scraper is recommended to take off excess water. The horse will then dry off much faster. Do not use a steel curry comb on the horse's head, cannon or mane or tail. Vigorous circular currying with a rubber curry comb is an excellent way to remove excessive dirt and saddle marks. Clean, stiff brushes (rice root, etc.) will remove most of the dirt, dandruff and scurf when properly used. Brushing with short, strong strokes with outward action away from the horse's body removes more dirt than long, gliding strokes. A strong, stiffened arm with vigorous wrist action is necessary to get the hair coat cleaned.

The grooming cloth is important. Old wool blanket material works well if it is cut into pieces about twelve inches square. Use the cloth following the brush to wipe loose dirt and perspiration from the horse. Wipe the cloth with the grain of the hair. All
grooming equipment should be kept clean and be hung up out of the way in the stall where it will not be lost under the horse.

Clipping should be done at least two weeks before showing. The long hair inside the ears, under the chin and jaw, and on the fetlocks and lower legs should be trimmed.

Run the clippers with the grain of the hair. The mane and tail may be thinned by pulling the excess hair out. Some horsemen find that barber’s thinning shears work very well. On stock horses, the tail should be thinned—not cut off—to just below the hock. Stock horse manes should be thinned to not over six inches in length or completely roached to the neck. Leave a forelock from the headstall forward. Leaving a small lock of mane over the withers will help balance the neck and will cushion some of the wear from the saddle.

It is not a common practice to use shoe dye on the feet in a stock horse class. The stock horse should be fitted and shown in the most natural manner possible.

Checking the feet should be a part of the grooming routine. Hoofs should be cleaned and checked for gravel, nails and other foreign material. Keep the feet moist. If the feet dry out, paint them with neatsfoot oil once a week until they are healthy again. Never use motor oil.

Washing

Horses are seldom washed. Light colored horses may be washed two weeks before showing and light colored mane, tail, feet and ankles may be washed more frequently. Frequent washing removes natural oils from the skin and hair. Bloom can not be developed artificially. Horses may be sponged in warmer weather after a vigorous workout. Do not use cold water when sponging. All horses should be cooled out gradually, then watered before stabling.

Care of Leather Equipment

Much of the equipment used for horses is made of leather. Frequent cleaning and care will prolong the life of leather and keep it soft and pliable.

Saddle soap may be applied with a damp sponge or cloth. After dirt is worked off use a dry cloth to wipe the leather dry. It is especially important to keep reins, cinch straps and stirrup leather soft and pliable. The entire saddle should be cleaned occasionally and may be treated with neatsfoot oil to prolong its life. Note—neatsfoot oil will darken leather.

Wool or hair saddle blankets are preferred. They will absorb perspiration and will be less likely to scald the horse. Rubber or synthetic material will not absorb moisture and may cause scalding and resulting sores. Blankets should always be aired after use and washed in soap and cool water as they become dirty.
WESTERN STOCK SADDLE
1. Horn
2. Fork
3. Seat
4. Cantle
5. Skirt
6. Back Housing or Back Jockey
7. Lace Strings
8. Dee Rings
9. Leather Flank Girth
10. Fender
11. Stirrup
12. Stirrup Leather
13. Front Tie Strap or Cinch Strap
14. Front Jockey and Seat Jockey, One Piece
15. Wool Lining
16. Rope Strap
17. Pommel

ENGLISH SADDLE
1. Pommel
2. Skirt
3. Seat
4. Cantle
5. Panel
6. Flap
7. Stirrup Bar
8. Tread of Stirrup Iron
9. Stirrup Leather

SINGLE-REINED BRIDLE
1. Crown-piece, or Headstall
2. Browband
3. Cheek Pieces
4. Throat Latch
5. Noseband
6. Snaffle Bit
7. Reins

SPLIT-EARED BRIDLE
1. Crown-piece, or Headstall
2. Cheek Pieces
3. Curb Bit
4. Curb Strap
5. Reins
Careful handling of your horse can prevent many vices from developing.

Kicking—A common vice often caused by teasing, abusing or tickling a horse. A kick is usually preceded by the horse laying back his ears and this is the time to rap him with a whip, touch him with the spur or slap him on the neck while in the saddle.

Biting—A colt often develops the vice of biting because he is not punished for this disagreeable habit while he is still young.

Rearing—When a horse rears, it is usually caused by too heavy a hand on the reins or a bit that is too severe. This vice should be broken before it is well-established.

Shying—Shyers are dangerous. Horses that are timid or have poor vision often develop this habit. Firm, gentle training is usually the best prevention for a shyer. Always be alert while riding a horse that shys.

Cribbing and wind sucking—Mangers or fences are grasped or chewed. May be caused by uneven incisor teeth, nervousness and, some believe, a mineral deficiency. Control measures are to paint freshly chewed areas with creosote, tack barbed wire on top of bunks, fences, etc., and fasten a broad strap snugly around the throat to cause compression on the larynx when the head is flexed.

Weaving—Rhythmic shifting of weight from one front leg to the other. Generally caused by idleness and/or nervousness.

**COMMON VICES**

**Tail rubbing**—Generally caused by rectal parasites, dirty sheaths or neglect of buttocks region.

**Tail Wringers**—Excessive switching and wringing of tail while being worked. Generally caused by excessive spurring and overtraining.

**Halter pulling**—Early treatment is most effective and some of the following procedures have proven satisfactory.

(a) Secure ropes or chains across slip stalls behind horses.

(b) Put a loose, non-slip loop of rope or small chain behind withers and elbows and thread the end between the forelegs and through the halter ring and tie securely. When pulling back, the noose tightens and the horse will then stand up to maintain a looser, more comfortable tie. This method is especially effective in teaching foals and young horses to stand while tied. Many good trainers tie all their foals like this the first few weeks, but with soft ropes.

(c) Pass free end of tie rope through tie ring and tie to a hobble on one fore pastern.

(d) When training several foals or yearlings, the "clothesline tie" is very useful. Usually a strong steel cable is stretched between heavy steel or wooden corner posts set in concrete or posts that are braced exceptionally well. One or two cables are stretched tight about seven feet off the ground with strong tie rings every ten to fifteen feet on the cable.

Each horse is then tied to its ring at the same time with a strong halter and rope. The tugging and pulling, each in a different direction, causes the young horse to "stand up" to its own tie ring very shortly. Also, pulling back against the tie, so high off the ground, raises the horse's front feet off the ground and thus his traction is ruined. The tie rope should not drop below the horse's shoulder point when standing directly under its tie ring. The area under the clothesline should be clear of trash or objects that would bruise the horse should he fall momentarily. A week or so on the "clothesline tie" will teach most young horses to stand when tied.
CARE and TRIMMING of FEET

No foot, no horse! About 80% of all lameness in horses originates in the foot. Proper care of sound feet will insure a long, useful life for the horse. Feet need periodic inspection. Before each ride or workout, check the feet for bruises, gravel, nails and other foreign material. Keep feet trimmed at least once a month, especially on growing horses. In most horses the wall of the hoof should be trimmed level with the sole. When using your trimmers, keep them perpendicular to the sole of the foot.

Proper trimming allows uniform distribution of weight over the entire foot. To be healthy, the frog must maintain contact with the ground. A healthy frog should not be trimmed. Do not use a pocket knife to clean the feet. A hoofpick or dull screw driver is much safer.

Corrective foot trimming is of value in shaping bones only so long as the bones are growing and taking shape. If the foal or yearling toes in, as described on page 28, trim the inner wall level with the sole and do not trim the outer wall. If the feet toe out, then trim the outside wall of the hoof. Early trimming at monthly intervals is necessary to help correct faulty feet and legs. The normal angle of the front foot when trimmed level should be forty to forty-five degrees and the hind foot forty-five to fifty degrees.

The ideal foot should be ample of size, well rounded, open at the heel, tough-walled, fine textured with ample depth of heel.

Essentials in Horse Shoeing

Unless extra traction is required or rough terrain is encountered, many horses will not require shoes. However, the primary aim in shoeing horses is to shape the shoe to fit the foot and not to cut and rasp the foot to fit the shoe. Horseshoeing should be done by an experienced farrier. Anyone can "tack on" a shoe, but to properly fit a shoe takes experience and training.

The normal hoof should have the wall trimmed flush with the sole. The boundary between the hoof wall and the sole of the foot is the "white line," and serves as a guide for driving nails into the wall. Nails driven inside the white line will cause lameness and blood poisoning may result.
Though light horses generally use a light weight shoe, the shoes must be strong. Light plates, rim shoes or swedged shoes are generally satisfactory for most light horses. The polo shoe also fits most of the requirements. Either three or four nails may be used on light shoes. Drawn clips, with their height equal to the thickness of the shoe, will hold the shoe in place and lessen the strain on nails. For best results, put one center clip in the front shoes and two side clips on each hind shoe. Borium on the center wearing surface of each shoe may double the shoe life.

Flat shoes are satisfactory for most stock horses, although shallow heeled calks may be necessary where footing is rough or slippery. However, horses wearing tall heel calks over a long period of time may develop dry, unhealthy frogs and contracted heels. The wings of the shoe should reach the bulbs of the heel in front. The wings behind can be longer, especially on the outside which will throw the hocks in for more collected action.

Remember to sink the nail outside the white line, not too shallow nor too deep. The flat side of the horseshoe nail must always face the outside of the hoof. Further, if facilities and farriers are available, "hot shoes" will fit more snugly than cold shoes. Shoes should be reset every four to eight weeks. Many light horses under ordinary use may only require shoes in front.

SHOWING the 4-H HORSE

Everyone likes to do well in the eyes of his fellow-man. The many horse shows throughout the state offer ample opportunities to exhibit your horse. Never dodge good competition. Competition stimulates extra effort and perfection. "Self-help" and extra effort help develop leadership and self-control.

Do not let the quest for ribbons overshadow the real purpose of your horse project. Learning more about horses, keeping good records and the companionship of fellow club members is more important than show placings.

For more information on classes and regulations for showing 4-H horses, contact your county agent. Since a lack of uniformity exists in show rules, always know what is required of the horse before the class is judged. The following general suggestions will apply when showing at halter and under saddle in the Stock Horse and Pleasure classes.

Fitting

If horses are clean, in good health and condition and have been correctly groomed and clipped as described in the section on grooming, they are well fitted. Fitting for show does not start a few days before the show, but is a year-round job. No amount of delayed fitting will cover up a poor job of feeding, or an unhealthy, unsound horse.

Showing at Halter

1. Both showman and horse should be neat and clean whether under saddle or at halter.
2. Horses may be shown with halter or open bridle.
3. Lead from the left side using the right hand on the lead strap about two feet away from the horse's head. Show the horse with the left hand, facing the horse.
4. Lead into the ring in a clockwise circle around the judge. When asked to line up, keep the horse's front feet uphill and leave at least five feet between horses.
5. When standing for inspection, place feet squarely under the horse, keep the head up and alert the horse as the judge approaches. The throat latch should be level with the topline for a well balanced appearance.
6. When asked to move the horse for the judge, lead in a straight line directly away at a brisk, smart walk and trot. The horse should trot without assistance from someone behind.
7. Always turn the horse to the right. Push rather than pull around turns.
8. Halter classes are judged on conformation and a small percentage on manners.
9. Practice showing at home with show halter or open faced bridle. Train the horse to stand and to move out at the requested gaits.
Showing Under Saddle

Stock Horse

1. Be sure all equipment is correctly adjusted and secure. A curb strap should be snug enough to allow two fingers to be inserted under it. A bosal should allow enough room for four fingers. A correctly adjusted cinch will allow only the first half of the fingers under it without considerable forcing.

2. Adjust stirrups on stock saddles to leave a three inch clearance between the saddle tree and the crotch of the mounted rider standing in the stirrups.

3. Use only one hand on the reins. Hands should be around the reins, not fingers between the reins.

4. Proper use of reins is very important. Any horse that will work well on loose reins is well trained. Junior horsemens should work toward this goal in showing, yet never lose control of the horse at the expense of loose reining. If, when the horse is pulled up, the rider must shift his weight out of the saddle, the reins are likely too loose. Continual sawing and jerking on the reins will only lead to a tough mouthed, poor reining horse. Use of the feet and legs and shifting of the riders weight should be combined with a light rein to convey commands to the horse. Any rider who uses these natural aids effectively will place well in a contest.

5. Riders should keep hands away from saddle and horse, except to prevent a fall.

6. Unnecessary voice commands, “booting” and slapping the horse with reins is discriminated against.

7. The following actions are considered as faults, and horses displaying these faults will be scored down by judges: excessive tail switching, stumbling, exaggerated opening of the mouth, hard, heavy mouth, nervous throwing of the head, lugging on the bridle, halting or hesitation while being shown.

8. Correct leads are very important. Always start the horse correctly in both front and hind leads. Some horses work well in one lead but not the other. Practice both changes of leads—they should be made smoothly and without stumbling. When asked to reverse and canter in a pleasure class, the judge is watching closely for correct leads.

9. When circling around the ring, faster horses should always pass on the inside. A slow jog trot and slow easy canter is preferable to speed in these gaits.

10. Timed events such as pole bending and barrel racing are fun but they may be the ruination of a good reining horse. A young horse is especially likely to develop such faults as a hard mouth, lugging on the bit and head tossing when used extensively in these speed events.

In this day and age of motor travel, horses are moved about the country by trailers or trucks. Some suggestions for safe and efficient hauling are:

1. Give distemper shots to horses going long distances and if they are to remain at a show for several days.

2. Provide blinkers or headboards for horses when hauling in open trucks or trailers.

3. Use tailboards or chains behind horses in horse trailers.

4. Be sure hitches are strong when pulling a trailer.

5. Before showing, allow some time after hauling for the horse to relax.

6. Consider insuring your horse. Costs are around $5.00 per year for each $100.00 of valuation. Death from any cause is covered. A veterinarian’s certification is necessary before insurance is accepted by the company. Horses are not insurable over twelve years or under thirty days of age.
These books will furnish valuable information to members who wish to do further reading.


horse terms

The mark of a knowing horseman is the terms and “horse-talk” which he uses frequently and correctly. Learn these terms and use them correctly. A few are listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>MIXED GROUP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suckling</td>
<td>Colt</td>
<td>Filly</td>
<td>Foals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weanling</td>
<td>Colt</td>
<td>Filly</td>
<td>Foals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearling</td>
<td>Yearling Colt</td>
<td>Yearling Filly</td>
<td>Yearling Foals or Foals of Last Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 year old</td>
<td>2 year Old Colt</td>
<td>2 Year Old Filly</td>
<td>Foals of such and such a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature Breeding Animals</td>
<td>Horse or Stallion</td>
<td>Mare</td>
<td>Horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature Non-Breeding Animals</td>
<td>Gelding</td>
<td>Spayed Mare</td>
<td>Horses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A mare is carrying a foal, or in foal, or with foal.
Mare with foal at side or nursing a foal (to be more specific, use colt or filly).
A mare will foal, or is with foal, to (name of stallion).
A stud is an establishment that has male breeding horses. Do not use it to identify an individual, male, breeding animal.
Near side is the left side of a horse.
Off side is the right side of a horse.
Ridgling is a male horse that has retained one or both testicles in his body cavity.
The sons and daughters of a stallion are his Get.
The sons and daughters of a mare are her produce.
A foal is by its sire.
A foal is out of its dam.
When a stallion stands for service, he is offered to the public for breeding purposes.
Stallion owners usually present one of the following terms to the mare owner when he offers his stallion for stud:
Stud Fee—That charge for breeding services rendered by a stallion.
Stud Fee Each Service—The mare is not guaranteed to be with foal and a stud fee is charged for each service.
Guarantee Foal to stand and suck—Guarantees a live foal.
Return privilege in season—You may bring your mare back until she is with foal for that breeding season only. A second fee will be charged after that current season if the mare is returned.
Aids—Natural aids are legs, riders, weight and reins. Artificial aids are spurs, voice, crop.
Astringents—Drugs that cause contraction of infected areas such as tannic acid, alum and zinc oxide or sulphate.
Appointments—that equipment and clothing used in showing.
Blemish—An injury or defect not interfering with the horses serviceability such as scars, shallow wire cuts, etc.
Bosal—that part of hackamore which fits over the nose.
Collected—a correct, coordinated action.
Corona—saddle blanket cut to fit shape of saddle, has a large colorful roll around the edge.
Curb-bit—solid bar with no joints, exerts strong pressure on mouth if port is deep and shanks are long.
Dropped sole—downward rotation of toe of coffin bone inside hoof due to chronic founder or laminitis.
Fiadore—special knot on hackamore, exerts pressure at the rear of jaws. May be severe if too much pressure is used.
Flexion—free unrestricted movement of feet and legs.
Hand—a measure of length equal to four inches. Four inches is the approximate distance across the average man’s hand. The height of horses is spoken of in hands. This is measured from a level ground surface perpendicular to the top of the withers. If a horse is 14.3, he is fourteen hands and three inches tall or 59 inches.
Lameness—may make a horse worthless or lower his value. May be detected while standing, walking or trotting. If standing the horse may refuse to stand "hard" on the affected limb and may "point" that limb. Lameness detected in the walk will be accentuated at the trot. When a sound limb strikes the ground, the head is jerked up. Stiff or short strides are common with lameness. Backing is difficult and extreme flexion of hind legs before trotting may detect faulty action.

Longe—leather strap or rope 25-30 feet long, used in early training.

Light Horse—Any horse used primarily with saddle or for driving purposes. All breeds except draft breeds.

Martingale—leather strap between front legs, attached to saddle girth and neck strap, and to the bridle nose band, prevents elevation of horse's head, restricts horse's action.

Posting—the rising and descending of a rider with the rhythm of the trot, more pronounced in gaited classes, barely noticeable with the western seat.

Snaffle-bit, mouthpiece—may be broken or solid, exerts mild pressure on mouth.

Tapadera—stirrup cover, used on the McClellan or Army Saddle and on some Spanish type parade saddles.

Unsoundness—A defect in conformation that interferes with the horses serviceability. An unsoundness may be congenital, pathological, hereditary or acquired.

Congenital—an abnormal condition that an animal possesses at birth such as hernia, etc.

Pathological—a diseased condition.

Vice—An acquired habit that interferes with the horses usefulness, such as cribbing, etc.

**LIGHT HORSE SELECTION GUIDE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Side</th>
<th>As Viewed From The:</th>
<th>Ideal Type</th>
<th>Common Faults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Style, beauty and breed type.</td>
<td>2. Smart ears, placid eyes and a flashy, stylish way of going. Smoothly blending parts and true color, body form and traits of a breed or type.</td>
<td>2. Lop ears, pig eyes, sluggish and rough body parts and hair. OH type.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Feet, pasterns and legs</td>
<td>7. Dense, tough feet, sloping, lean, pasterns (about 45°) and lean, hard, flat cannons. Joints and tendons. Straight, square, true legs and joints.</td>
<td>7. Flat, porous, shelly, small feet. Pinched heels and short, cocked ankles. Bucked or bent knees. Calf or “back at knees.” Posty legged or sickle set, or saber hocked. Round boned, rough, round, meaty or thick jointed. Coarse, rough or spongy legged.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Front**

|      | 1. Head and neck | 1. Head in proportion to body, clean, well chisled and strong. Head and neck feminine or masculine. Sharp ears that work on top of head. | 1. Heavy, meaty, dull head. Roman nose, dish face, parrot or monkey mouthed. Weak jaw and throaty. Head and neck not representing sex. Heavy, floppy ears or set too close. Pig or wild eyed. |
|      | 2. Chest and front legs | 2. Chest and ribs well sprung and deep, long, powerful muscles in chest. Leg square and true as viewed from side and front. | 2. Narrow, flat ribs and chest. Flat, weak, sweenied muscles and “tied in” too high. Knock-kneed, splay footed or pigeon toed. Bucked, bent or knee sprung. Bowed tendons and coon footed. |

**Rear**


**Soundness**


**Action**

|      | 3. Canter | 3. Collected and balanced on either lead. | 3. Too fast, short or crooked. Off leads. |
4-H Member trimming hoofs