



*Therapeutic
Riding Program*



Creston and District Society for Community Living

PUBLIC RIDINGPROGRAM



Creston and District Society for Community Living
849 Erickson Road, Creston, BC V0B 1G0
Phone 250-428-3938 Fax 250-428-2297 Cell 250-402-3938
email sschmidt.cdcs1@shawlink.ca



PUBLIC RIDING PROGRAM

P.O. Box 1820 223-10th Ave. N. Creston BC, V0B 1G0 ph. (250) 428-2296 fax 428-229 sschmidt.cdsc@shawlink.ca



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Welcome to horseback riding!

We hope you have a great time while learning about these wonderful animals that let us ride them. For many of you, this is your first time riding and I welcome you to the world of the horse..... I warn you, once you catch the "horse bug", you've got it for life!

While we want you to have a good time and learn, we also want you to be safe. One of the best ways to be safe around horses is to learn how they think and why they do the things they do. When you know that, then you can either stay out of or prevent dangerous situations where you might get hurt.

Our barn rules are designed to not only keep you safe, but to keep the horses safe too, so we ask that you pay close attention to them.

Enough of that serious stuff.....Let's ride!

Sarah Schmidt
Program Director/Instructor

Horses love carrots. Does that make them really big rabbits?

Or

Maybe rabbits are just really small horses?



SAFETY RULES

- ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING
- No one is allowed to enter the riding ring once the lesson has begun without the permission of the instructor
- All students must wear riding helmets when they are around the horses
- Students must be supervised at all times when they are around the horses
- NO running or shouting around the horses
- If you see anyone with a camera, please ask them to check with the Instructor BEFORE they start taking pictures or videotaping. Some of our students do not have photo releases and a flash may not only startle a horse, but a rider or volunteer as well.
- Horses are NOT to be fed anything without the permission of the Instructor. If permission is given, put the food item in a bucket or on the ground – NO HAND FEEDING. Horses soon learn to associate fingers with food and sometimes can't tell the difference!
- Please TURN OFF CELL PHONES & PAGERS

Also:

- If you open it – close it
- If you turn it on – turn it off
- If you unlock it – lock it
- If you break it – repair it
- If you can't fix it - tell someone who can
- If you borrow it – return it
- If you use it – take care of it
- If you make a mess – clean it up
- If you move it – put it back
- If it belongs to somebody else and you want to use it – get permission
- If you don't know how to operate it – leave it alone
- If it doesn't concern you – mind your own business



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ABOUT HORSES

- Horses are prey animals – they are dinner for predators
- Horses are claustrophobic – they don't like to be confined
- Horses are herd animals – they like to be with their buddies
- There is a distinct pecking order within the herd
- Horses are uncomfortable with “grey” areas – indecision on the part of the alpha horse gets them killed!
- Horses don't have terribly effective weapons so their response to danger is generally a “flight” response
- If the “flight” response is not an option, they may revert to the “freeze” option or the “fight” response and may kick, strike or bite
- Horses tend to be nearsighted and don't see details well
- Horses' eyes are set on the sides of their head so they see two different pictures
- Horses can't see directly behind them, directly in front of them, or under their neck
- Horses hear, smell and sense vibration very well
- Horses are protective of their jugular area and underbelly – predators attack those vulnerable area
- Predators lurked in trees to jump down on horses' backs
- Horses are creatures of habit and learn by repetition
- Horses move away from pressure and resist force – you can “push” a horse but you can't “pull” him
- Horses generally try to please if they understand what you want
- Horses can be trained to respond to cues and to ignore distractions
- Horses reflect their environment
- Horses pick up on how we feel
- Horses are individuals with different personalities and moods



HOW TO ACT AROUND HORSES

- Calm not excited or nervous
- Deliberate – not cautious but no sudden movements
- Quiet not loud
- Always talk to them calmly when approaching them so you don't startle them
- Approach them at the shoulder
- When going behind a horse either stay in close, talking to him and keeping your hand on him at all times, or stay right out of range
- Never go between the horse and the object he is tied to if he is tied up
- Never duck under his neck
- Always wear sturdy footwear around horses –they often weigh over 1000 lbs



SIGNS A HORSE IS UPSET (ANGRY, NERVOUS, FRIGHTENED)

- Ears pinned back
- Head lowered or raised
- Squealing
- Swishing tail
- Stamping his feet



REMOTE CONTROL



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LEADING – with or without a rider

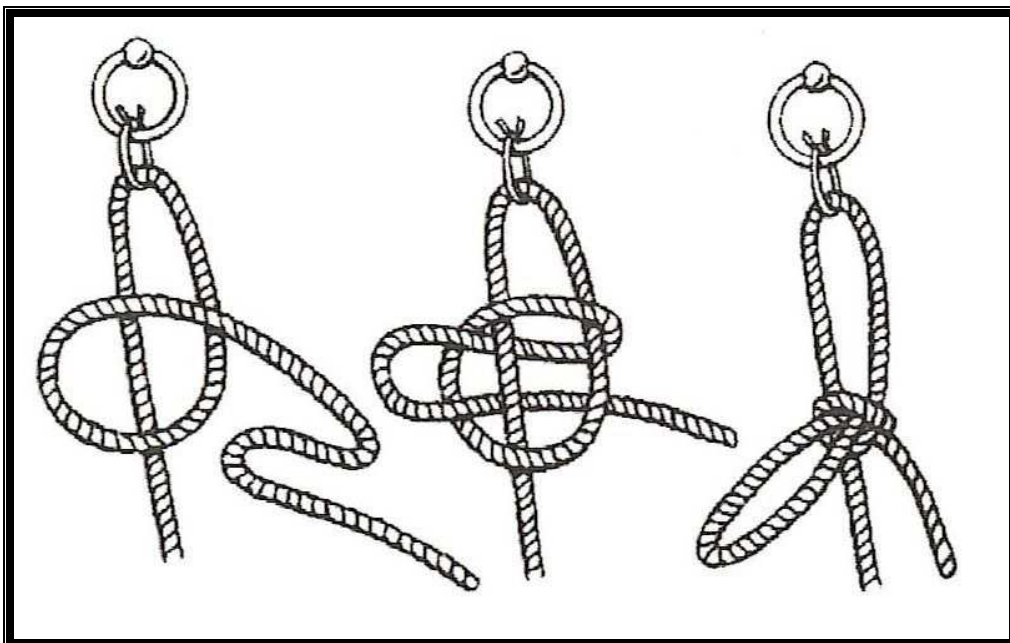
- The horse should be on your right
- Never lead from the halter alone. The horse may pull free and you will lose control and may injure your shoulder or fingers
- Never lead from the bridle or halter, always use a lead rope or the reins
- When leading, position yourself between the head and shoulder
- Hold the lead shank or reins between 6 – 12” away from the halter or bridle
- Don’t have a death grip – allow the horse’s head to move in the walk and trot
- Fold the end of the lead shank/reins back & forth in a figure 8
- Never coil the end of the lead shank/reins around any part of your body
- When turning a horse, turn it away from you
- If you must turn it toward you, make sure you put your hand on the ribcage to push the hindquarters away from you
- When going through a gate or door, approach straight not at an angle
- Check back as you go through to make sure the horse doesn’t catch a hip or stirrup on the gate or doorway
- When a horse is frightened by an object, let him stop, face the object, look at it and sniff it (don’t let the horse spin and flee). Give the horse time to overcome his fear. Reassure him and help to calm him in a slow, soft voice
- To calm an excited horse, rub his neck and speak in a soothing voice
- REMEMBER TO BREATHE



HOW TO TIE A HORSE

- Make sure you tie to something solid that won't give if the horse pulls back
- Make sure the footing and surrounding areas are safe ie footing isn't slippery; horse can't bump into things propped up against a wall etc.
- Always use a quick release knot or quick release snap
- Tie at wither height
- Leave approximately a foot to 18 inches of rope between horse and the post – not so tight that the horse panics and not loose enough for the horse to get a foot over the rope

QUICK RELEASE KNOT





GROOMING

The process by which the dirt on the horse is transferred to the groom.

Grooming is an important part of horse keeping. More than just keeping the horse clean, it promotes health, prevents disease, accustoms the horse to handling, and is an opportunity to assess the horse's condition and a chance for us to be close to these amazing creatures.

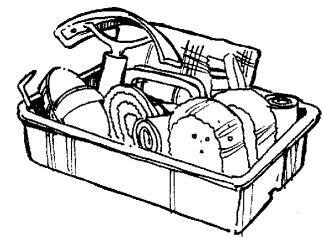
It is extremely important that the therapeutic horses get a good brushing. They work very hard and most of them are older and subject to aches and pains. A good massage goes a long way to keeping them happy!

We will do a complete brushing prior to the first lesson and an abbreviated version prior to subsequent lessons. The riders may be involved in the grooming process with supervision by the Instructor or Volunteers.

How to Groom

There are many books that can give you more information on this topic. Here are the bare bones essentials of grooming:

- 1) Make sure the horse is tied correctly with a quick release knot to something solid.
- 2) Make sure you use the grooming kit that is allocated to the horse you are grooming.
- 3) Clean the foot with a hoof pick (using it from heel to toe, paying particular attention to the cleft of frog). Check for any chips, smell, risen clenches, loose shoes, bumps on the leg etc.
- 4) Use rubber or plastic curry comb or dandy brush for loosening surface dirt (or hair in the spring). Do not use on head or legs.
- 5) Use dandy brush (long stiff bristles) to "flick" the dirt off.
- 6) Use body brush (short, soft bristles) to spread the oil and "finish" the horse (do not use when horse has winter coat). Use in a circular motion, finishing with the lay of the hair.
- 7) Brush face with body brush.
- 8) Brushing the tail pulls the hair out, so keep it to a minimum and use a body brush or your hands on both mane and tail.
- 9) When weather permits, use a sponge and water to clean the eyes and nostrils (untie the horse when doing this). Make sure you sweep the debris away from the eye, not into it. Also, make sure you use the sponge allocated to that horse)
- 10) Fly spray/wipe may be necessary, check with Instructor.
- 11) In dry weather, put hoof dressing on the sole and wall of the foot.
- 12) When time is short, the essentials are picking out the feet and brushing the saddle, girth and bridle areas – or anywhere tack is going to be touching the horse or has been touching the horse.





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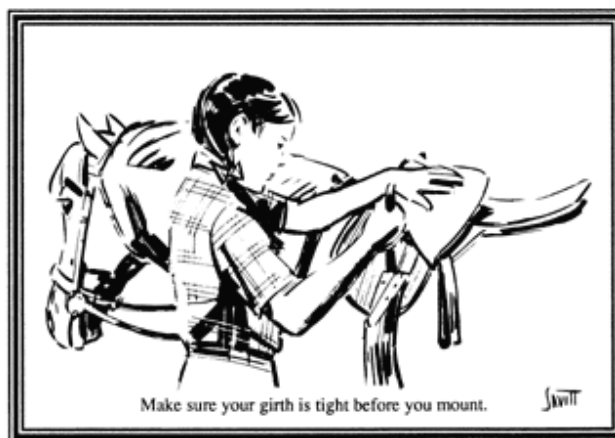
TACKING UP

- Make sure the horse is tied correctly with a quick release knot to something solid (ie the post, not the rail) and the surrounding area is clear of obstacles or debris.
- Check schedule re which saddle, bridle, reins, pads etc. to use, as well as any special equipment necessary.
- Make sure saddle, girth and bridle areas are clean and feet are picked out.

SADDLING

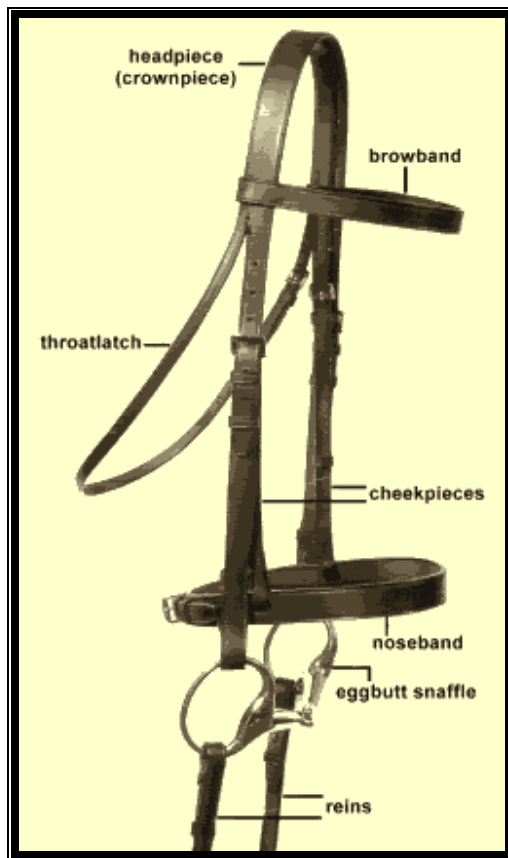
1. Make sure the saddle pad is clean of shavings, twigs etc that could irritate the horse.
2. English – make sure stirrups are run up and girth is draped over the saddle.
3. Western – make sure the off stirrup and cinch are up over the saddle.
4. From the left side of the horse, gently place saddle pad on the base of the neck and slide back into place, smoothing the hair as you go.
5. From the left side of the horse gently place the saddle and any extra pads on the saddle pad, being careful not to bang the stirrups on the horse and that the cinch/girth is not caught under the saddle.
6. Go round to the off side of the horse and bring the cinch/girth down.
7. Pull up saddle pad at withers.
8. Do up cinch/girth just tightly enough to keep the saddle from slipping, not as tight as you would do to ride.
9. Check the cinch/girth again prior to leading the horse away, but don't "crank" it up tightly.

The Instructors and/or Volunteers will put on and take off the bridles.

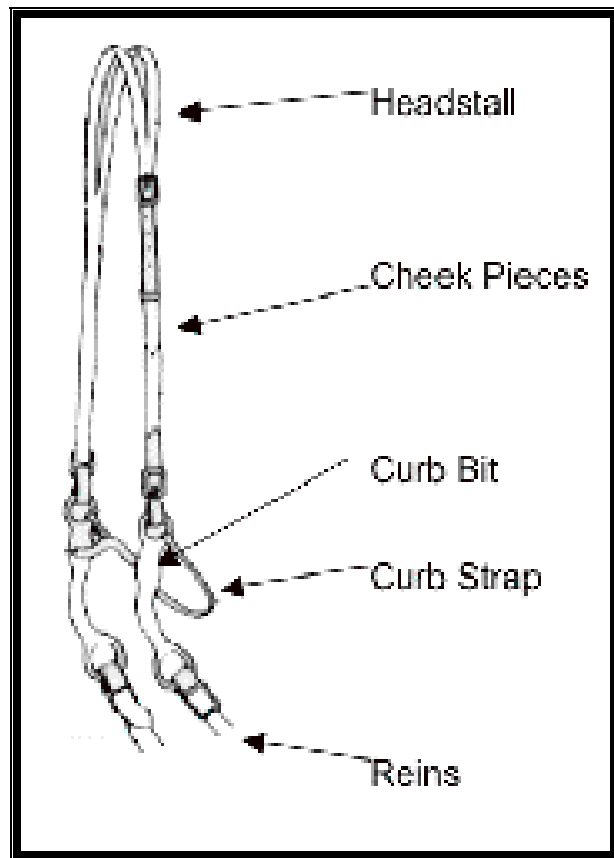


PARTS OF THE BRIDLE

ENGLISH

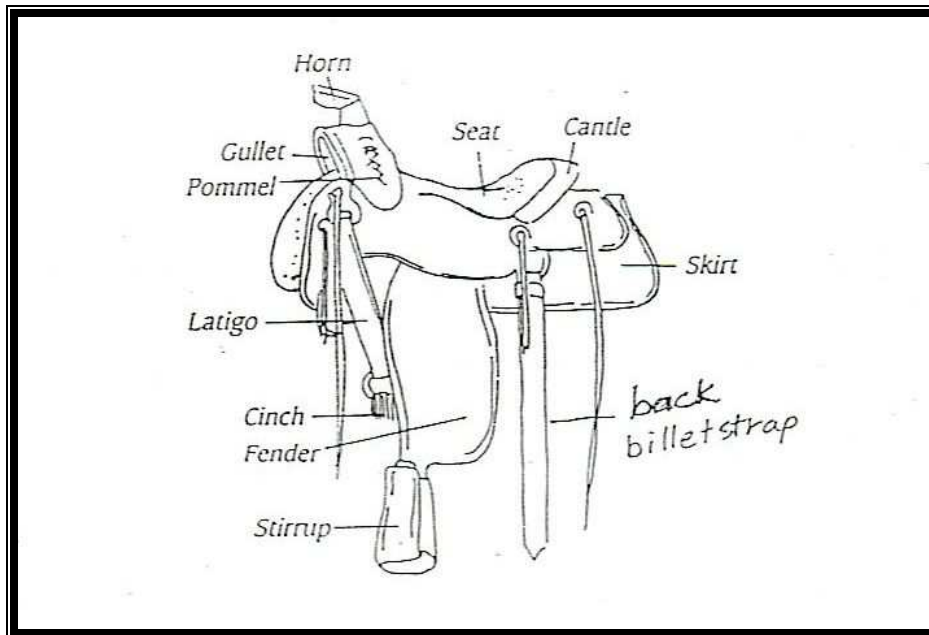


WESTERN

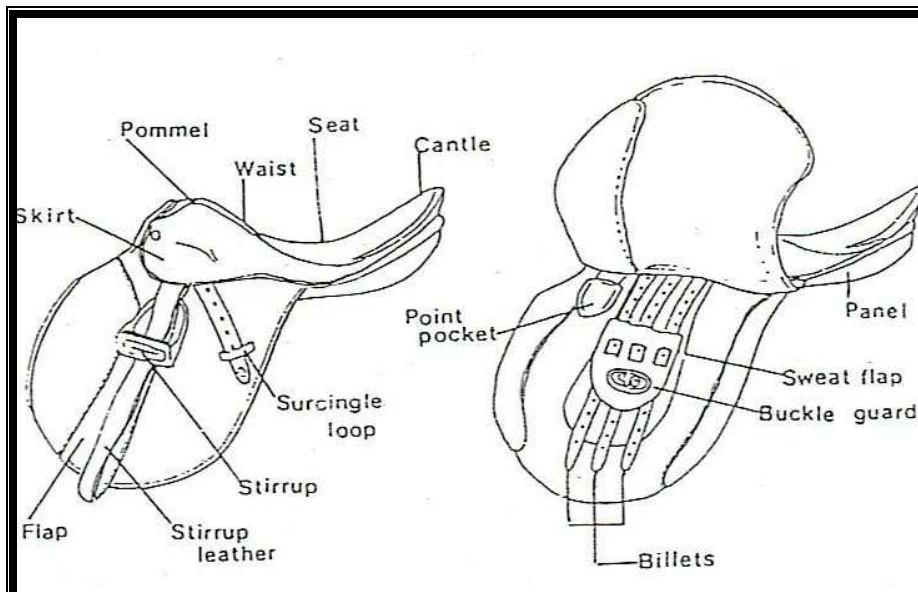


PARTS OF THE SADDLE

WESTERN

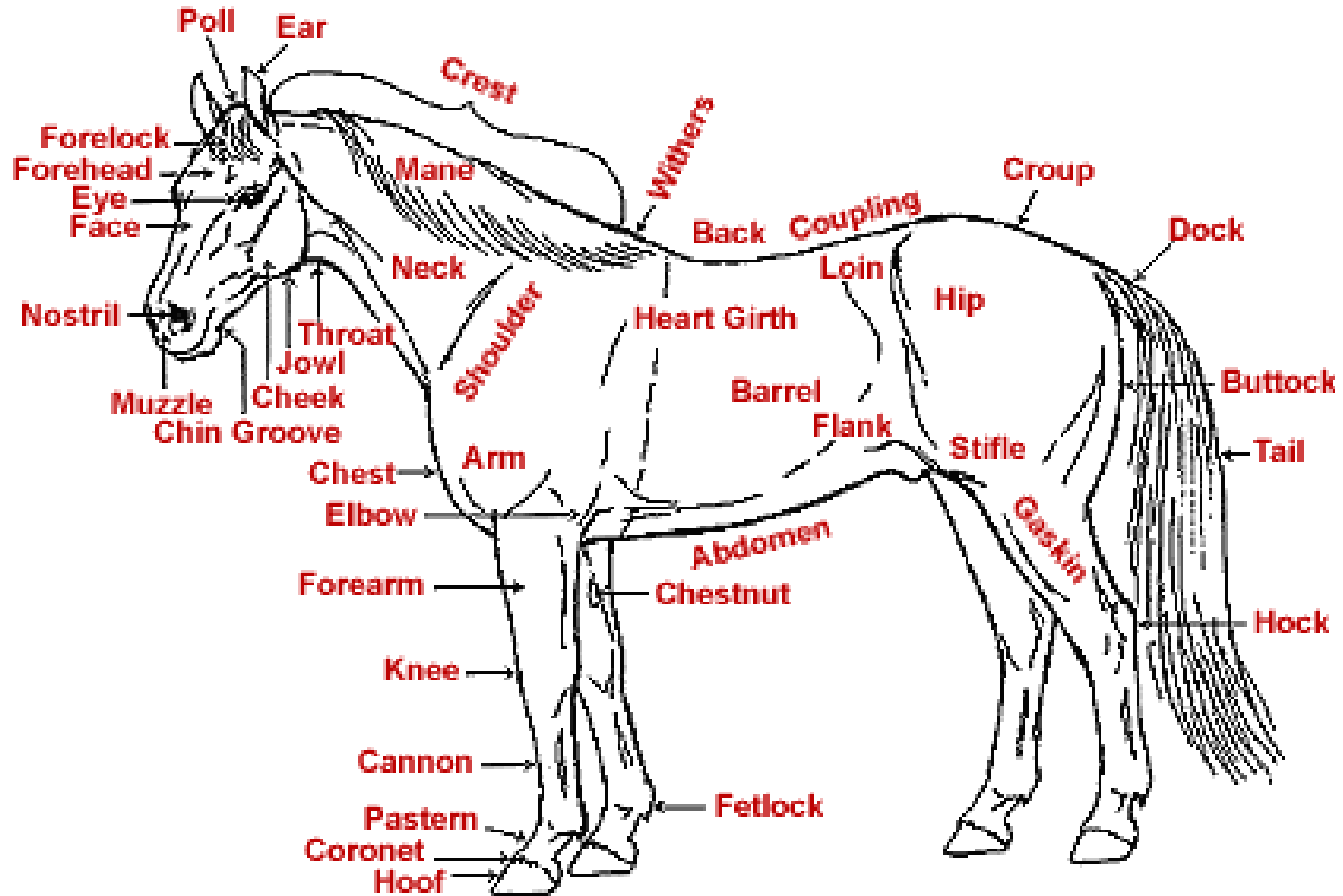


ENGLISH





PARTS OF THE HORSE





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