HORSE AND PONY MANUAL

for 4-H Club Members

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Circular 803
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For explanations of this manual or for additional help, consult your farm adviser or a competent horse breeder.
Horse and pony projects are becoming increasingly popular with Illinois 4-H Club members. This manual has been prepared to help you in selecting, caring for, handling, riding, and showing your horse. When used in this manual, the word “horse” also applies to ponies.

Although purebred horses (registered in your name) are preferable for this project, you may use high-grade or cross-bred horses out of sound dams by purebred sires. To start any of the horse and pony units, you should be 12 years old or older. Choose the unit that best fits your home situation and preference.

FOUR UNITS TO CHOOSE FROM

Yearling Filly

Usually this unit and the Horsemanship unit are best for beginners. Since you shouldn’t ride or breed a filly until she is at least 2 years old, this will be a long-time project. Here are the requirements:

1. One or more yearling fillies are needed.
2. You should start your records in the fall when the filly is purchased or weaned, and enroll in this unit by January 1.
3. The filly must have been born the previous year.
4. You will keep feed and management records in the 4-H Livestock Record Book.
5. Suggested exhibit: yearling filly shown at halter.

Two-Year-Old Mare

You may use your yearling filly to enroll in this unit the second year; if you are an older member or have had experience with horses, you may begin with this unit. These are the requirements:

1. One or more 2-year-old mares are needed.
2. If you are continuing the unit from the yearling filly unit, continue your feed and management records in a new Livestock Record Book starting September 1. You should enroll by January 1.
3. Mare should be bred to a purebred stallion to foal in the spring or early summer of the following year.

This circular was prepared by George L. Daigh, Jr., 4-H Specialist; W. W. Albert, Assistant Professor of Animal Science, and H. G. Russell, Professor of Animal Science.
4. Suggested exhibit: 2-year-old mare shown at halter. (May be shown under saddle at the discretion of the county 4-H committee.)

**Mare and Foal**

You may use your 2-year-old mare to enroll in this unit if she was bred to foal in the spring of the current year. If you are an older member or have had experience with horses, you may start with this unit or add to a herd by purchasing a bred mare or mare and foal. The requirements are as follows:

1. Own one or more mares with foals, or have a partnership or management agreement involving the entire herd.

2. If you are continuing this unit from the 2-year-old mare unit, continue your feed and management records in a new Livestock Record Book starting September 1. You should enroll by June 1.

3. Mare should be rebred to a sound purebred stallion at the proper time after the foal is dropped.

4. Suggested exhibit: mare and colt shown at halter. (Mare may be shown under saddle at the discretion of the county 4-H committee.)

![Parts of a Horse Diagram](image-url)
Horsemanship

This unit should be started when the horse or pony is purchased, and in no case later than June 1. It is designed for the member interested in learning the art of correct riding as well as the fundamentals of feeding, managing, and training horses or ponies. Feed and management records should be kept in the regular 4-H Livestock Record Book and the supplement for the horsemanship unit.

Requirements. 1. Own one or more horses or ponies for pleasure riding or have a partnership or management agreement.

2. Complete one of the following divisions of the horsemanship unit:

   Beginning Horseman: Complete 5 or more of the tasks from the recommended list.

   Intermediate Horseman: Complete 10 of the tasks from the recommended list that have not previously been completed.

   Advanced Horseman: Complete 15 of the tasks from the recommended list that have not previously been completed.

3. Have the tasks approved by the leader, horseman, or committee appointed by your county 4-H committee or extension adviser.

4. Suggested exhibit: Horse or pony mounted or at halter. (You may be given credit for exhibiting your horse or pony upon passing the horsemanship tasks before the person or committee responsible or at the local 4-H show.)

Recommended tasks. (Most of the following tasks are described in this manual.)

1. Know the common horse terms and names of the breeds of light horses.
2. Know the common color characteristics.
3. Know and be able to identify the parts of a horse.
4. Know the common forms of faulty conformation of the feet and legs.
5. Describe the parts of the hoof and tell how each part functions.
6. Report on the characteristics, origin, and use of your favorite breed.
7. Describe and point out the ideal horse conformation.
8. Explain and demonstrate the 3 natural gaits of a horse.
9. Explain the slow gait and rack. (Demonstrate if you have a 5-gaited horse.)
10. Describe the movements of faulty action.
11. Know and describe the diseases and parasites of horses.
12. Describe or show how to determine the age of a horse by its teeth.
13. Know and identify the parts of your equipment.
14. Demonstrate how to care for your equipment.
15. Know at least 15 of the safety rules of good horsemanship.
16. Describe and show the kinds of feed necessary for a horse.
17. Describe how to feed the foal and yearling.
18. Demonstrate the proper methods of grooming.
19. Demonstrate how to test for unsoundness.
20. Lead your horse at halter at the walk and trot.
21. Properly approach, halter, bridle, and saddle your horse.
22. Mount; ride at the walk, trot, and canter, using good seat and hands; back your mount; dismount.
23. Demonstrate control of your horse at all speeds, using proper reining, seat, and hands.
24. Gather, start, turn, and stop your horse when asked.
25. Demonstrate a series of figure 8's, changing leads at the canter.
26. Start to canter from the trot, taking first the right lead and then the left.
27. Start to canter from the walk, taking first the right lead and then the left.
28. Start to canter from a standing position, taking first the right lead and then the left.
29. Trot with and without posting — when posting, use either diagonal upon request.
30. Trot a figure 8, posting on the outside diagonal at all times.
31. Canter in a circle, using proper lead; reverse.
32. Back your horse mounted and unmounted; ground-tie your horse.
33. Demonstrate proper performance in the show ring.
34. Demonstrate how to prepare for a show.
35. You may add other equally challenging tasks of your own choice as long as they are satisfactory to the committee or leader approving the tasks.
WHAT KIND OF HORSE?

Classification and Breeds

Horses are classified according to their use. There are pleasure mounts or saddle horses; harness horses; race horses, including running horses and trotters and pacers; stock horses; hunters and jumpers; polo ponies; draft or work horses; and many other subdivisions.

The height of the animal, as measured from the top of the withers to the ground, determines whether he is classified as a horse or a pony. A horse is 14 hands 2 inches and over; a pony is under 14 hands 2 inches. A hand is 4 inches.

The most popular light-horse breeds in the United States, according to approximate registration figures, are listed below. Of course many horses are not purebred and registered.

1. American Quarter Horse
2. Thoroughbred (race horse)
3. American Shetland Pony
4. Standardbred (trotters and pacers)
5. American Saddle Horse
6. Tennessee Walking Horse
7. Arabian
8. Appaloosa
9. Palomino
10. Morgan
11. Welsh Pony
12. Hackney Pony

You may obtain information on these breeds by writing to the various breed associations. Other breeds of horses include the draft breeds — Belgian, Percheron, Clydesdale, Shire, and Suffolk — and the Albino.

Common Colors

- **Bay** — reddish brown with black mane and tail.
- **Brown** — dark brown; mane and tail usually the same color.
- **Black** — body, mane, and tail black.
- **Chestnut** — reddish color; mane and tail lighter than body. Varies from dark liver color to washy yellow. Never has black mane or tail.
- **Sorrel** — a rich reddish chestnut.
- **Palomino** — light chestnut to creamy; occasionally a golden color. Mane and tail are usually lighter than body.
- **Buckskin** — tan body with black mane and tail.
- **Gray** — mixture of black and white hairs. May be dappled.
Roan — fairly even mixture of colored and white hairs. The red roan (sometimes called “strawberry roan”) has a mixture of red and white hairs. The blue roan has a mixture of black and white hairs.

Pinto or Paint — white and colored spots over entire body; spots usually large.

Dun — varies from a grayish brown to a golden dun; usually accompanied with black points and stripe.

In addition to being able to recognize these body colors, you should be familiar with the common color markings shown below.
Selecting Your 4-H Horse or Pony

In selecting your horse, it is important to get an overall view of his general appearance. You can develop skill in estimating a horse’s value by looking first at his —

Feet, legs, and action

Withers, back, loin, and croup (top line)

Muscling and body capacity

All horses are valued for their performance. For this reason, a horse’s feet, legs, and action or “way of going” are extremely important. The feet and legs should be sound and correctly placed, and the horse should move with a long, true, straight stride. His action should be coordinated and prompt, with enough snap and enough flexing of the knees and hocks to insure an enjoyable ride. See “Care of the Feet and Legs,” page 20.

A good weanling often appears “leggy.” But if he has a deep chest and ribs, he will probably develop balance as he matures. Beware of a colt that is too wide or too short-legged. He may be easy to care for, but may not develop the action necessary for a good riding horse. A wide, short-legged horse has a tendency to roll from side to side and pound the ground, causing a very rough ride.

Horses have good “tops” when they have clean withers, strong, short backs, and long, evenly turned croups. Muscling gives a horse his power to move, and he should have plenty of well-defined muscling in the quarter, stifle, gaskin, arm, forearm, and croup. A deep shoulder, heart girth, and barrel, along with well-sprung ribs and good width between the front legs, mean that the horse’s chest capacity is adequate for his heart and lungs and insure good wind and stamina. Feeding capacity is indicated by a reasonably deep rear flank. Other characteristics, such as breed character in the head, ear, and neck, are also important. See “Parts of a Horse,” page 4.

It is more difficult to select a yearling or 2-year-old than an older horse because the colt or filly is not yet fully developed. A careful study of the colt’s parents is very helpful, since many of the parents’ characteristics will be passed on to the offspring. A yearling should have a deep, well-balanced body on straight, well-set legs.

Other basic points that you should consider in selecting your horse are (1) the amount of experience you have had; (2) the facilities you have available; (3) the price you can afford to pay; (4) your preference in breed; and (5) your plans for using the horse.
It is best to have an experienced horseman help you select your first few animals.

The ideal horse should have the following qualities:

**Legs** — set squarely under the corners; clean bone; medium-length pasterns with good slope; straight, broad, short cannon; large, deep, clean hocks; broad, smooth knees.

**Feet** — smooth, level, deep.

**Action** — straight, free.

**Withers** — prominent enough to keep the saddle from sliding. Moderately prominent withers are an indication of free, easy motion.

**Back and loin** — short, strong, heavily muscled.

**Hips** — smooth, hip point well-muscled.

**Croup** — long, evenly turned.

**Quarters** — full and deep.

**Shoulder** — long and sloping.

**Chest and flank** — deep, wide, and full.

**Rib** — long, with plenty of arch.

**Barrel** — deep and roomy.

**Ears** — alert, placed to make a pleasing appearance.

**Eyes** — bright and full.

**Head** — clean and neat, forehead broad, wide between the eyes.

**Neck** — refined, but not too steep nor too short.

**Disposition** — gentle and controllable.

These are the ideal qualities to look for in a horse, but few horses have all of them. You should learn to recognize the common faults of horses in order to avoid animals with these faults. The horse with a long back and light, shallow flank is probably a poor “doer” and lacks endurance. Shallow, flat feet are also handicaps because they are usually shelly and brittle.

Some of the common faults of horses are —

**Weak constitution** (physical condition) — indicated by a narrow chest; long, shallow body; light, shallow flank; long back.

**Poor action** — indicated by straight shoulders; straight, short pasterns; crooked legs and feet; short, stubby gait; winging; paddling; and interfering.

**Weak feet and legs** — indicated by shallow, flat feet; light, weak cannons; crooked and weak hocks.

**Bad temperament** — balking, kicking, rearing, backing, shying.
Ideal conformation of the legs. The hind legs have the greatest strength when they have the direction shown in "A"—a vertical line from the buttocks crosses the center of the hock, cannon, pastern, and foot. In "B," a vertical line from the hip joint crosses the center of the foot and divides the gaskin in the middle; another line from the point of the buttock passes down the back of the cannon. "C" and "D" show the correct conformation of the forelegs. A vertical line from the point of the shoulder, "C," falls on the center of the knee, pastern, and foot. In "D," a vertical line from the center of the elbow falls on the knee, pastern, and back of the foot; another line from the middle of the forearm falls on the center of the foot. If a horse's legs do not fit this pattern, their conformation is faulty. Faulty conformation may or may not be serious. Consult an experienced horseman.

Unsoundness—any abnormality in the form or function of a part (poor eyesight, bad teeth, etc.) that interferes with a horse's usefulness. A blemish is a superficial scar, wirecut, etc. that detracts from a horse's appearance but not his usefulness. If you suspect that a horse you're interested in buying has an unsoundness, consult an experienced horseman to find out whether the fault is a serious one. A suggested method for discovering unsoundness is to observe the horse (1) in the stall; (2) at the halter; (3) in motion; and (4) after exercise.

To test for soundness of legs, trot the horse on a hard surface. Any break in rhythm means trouble (see "Gaits," page 32). Have someone walk or trot the horse directly at you and then away from you. Watch for unusual action such as paddling, winging, or undue motion of the head (see "Faulty Action," page 40). Examine
the legs carefully for abnormal enlargements. Some horses have strained or "bowed" tendons. Tendons are strong tissues connecting muscles with other parts of the body. Frequently the tendons that run from a horse's knee to the ankle and from the hock to the ankle are strained and become swollen. This condition is quite painful.

To test for soundness of wind, gallop the horse for several minutes. When you stop, look at the flanks. If they show a double heave when the air is forced out, the horse is suffering from heaves (see "Diseases and Parasites," page 23). Coughing or wheezing are also defects.

To test for blindness, wave your hand near the horse's eyes. A blind horse will not blink. White spots in the eyes may indicate total or partial blindness.

In selecting your horse for this project, remember these points:

1. Get the advice of an experienced horseman in making your selection.
2. Select a horse that will fit your experience, facilities, finances, and preference.
3. Look at the sire and dam.
4. Observe the horse in action as well as standing.
5. Review the ideal qualities of a horse.
6. Review the common faults and avoid horses that have them.

**CARING FOR YOUR HORSE**

**Shelter**

The only shelter that most horses need is a place to get out of the wind, sun, or rain. Fancy barns or box stalls are not necessary except at foaling time. Then it is a good idea to have a clean, well-ventilated, draft-free place for the mare.

The shelter should have 8 feet of headroom, open into a lot or pasture, and be free from protruding nails, loose boards, and other objects that could harm the horse.

**Feeds and Feeding**

"The feed and care you give a horse the first year makes the horse" is an old saying among horsemen. Your horse should be fed so that he will develop proper size, soundness, and good health.
Because the biggest expense of keeping your horse will be his feed, this item should be given close attention.

Give your horse a variety of good-quality feeds regularly, according to his particular requirements. If you give your horse a variety of feeds, he will usually stay on feed easier. Feeds are classified as roughages (hay) and concentrates (grain). In general, horses can digest about 50 percent of the roughages they eat and about 75 percent of the grains.

Young horses need a greater amount of protein and minerals than mature animals, and do well on oats and good-quality legume hay. Older horses can handle grains such as corn and barley better than young animals. Idle horses can be maintained on good-quality roughage or on pasture. Horses being ridden every day need some grain — the harder they work, the more grain they require.

**Roughages**

Good legume hays or mixtures of legume and grass hay are very rich in protein, minerals, and vitamins. When clean, bright, leafy, and free from musty odors, these hays are quite palatable. Since horses like them, they have a tendency to eat too much. For this reason, feed only the amounts recommended on page 17. Do not feed dusty or moldy hay to horses. It may cause heaves or other digestive troubles.

**Concentrates**

*Oats* are the most popular grain for horses, since they are rich in protein and minerals and safe to feed.

*Corn* may be used with older horses; but since it's low in protein, it should be fed with a protein-rich hay such as alfalfa. Corn is a high-energy feed. Do not feed moldy corn — it may cause digestive troubles.

*Bran* is rich in minerals and protein, and is a very valuable feed for horses. It is high in phosphorus and slightly laxative. Because of its bulkiness, it will make hungry horses take more time in chewing their feed.

Your horse should eat all of his grain within 30 minutes after it is fed.

**Other Feeds**

*Salt* and good clean *water* should be available at all times. It is better to feed loose salt than block salt.
ARABIAN (above). "Imagin," champion stallion owned by Mr. and Mrs. R. O. Emrick, Pittsfield, Illinois.

AMERICAN SADDLE HORSE (below). "Raising Cain," owned by Mr. Deslone Clark, Guatemala, Central America.
SHETLAND PONY (above). “Moonlight Larigo Sensation,” registered golden Shetland pony owned by Mr. Marion Smith, La Harpe, Illinois.

MORGAN (below). This breed is known for its intelligence, sure-footedness, mild temper, and strength.
Linseed meal is a protein supplement used extensively in feeding light horses, especially show horses. It gives animals a sleek, glossy hair coat. Don't feed more than 1 to 1 1/4 pounds for 1,000 pounds of body weight. Smaller horses should receive less. It is best to mix the supplement with the grain.

Soybean meal and cottonseed meal are protein concentrates and may also be used as a supplement for horses. They are usually cheaper than linseed meal, but will not produce as sleek a hair coat.

Good pastures provide adequate, cheap feed for horses. In addition, they conserve labor, feed, and bedding.

Any change in feeds should be a gradual one.

Feeding the Mare

The mare should run on good pastures whenever possible. Water, salt, and plenty of shade should be provided. In the fall and winter,
when pastures do not furnish much feed, the mare will need about
1 pound of good-quality hay daily for every 100 pounds of weight.

Toward the end of the pregnancy period, feed the mare ½ to
1 pound daily of grain (oats, bran, corn) per 100 pounds of body
weight. If the mare is idle and nursing a foal, she should receive, in
addition to good pasture, at least ½ pound of grain daily per 100
pounds of body weight to help keep up her milk production.

Feeding the Foal and Yearling

The foal will usually begin to eat a little grain from the mare's
feed box when he is only a few weeks old. Encourage him by giving
him a separate feed box with ½ pint to 1 pint of oats or grain mixture
per day. By following this practice, you will usually avoid a setback
when weaning the colt, and will have already accustomed him to
eating grain.

After the colt is weaned (5 to 7 months), feed him all the good
hay he will eat and 1 pound of grain for every 100 pounds of body
weight. He needs phosphorus and calcium to produce strong bones,
so be sure that the ration contains adequate amounts of these ele-
m ents. A properly fed colt will gain approximately 50 percent of his
mature weight the first year.

Yearlings may be allowed to graze on good pasture. The exercise
is good for their health, and you will save money on feed.

Daily Feed Allowances (per 100 pounds of body weight)

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<th>Amount of work</th>
<th>Roughage (pounds)</th>
<th>Grain (pounds)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Idle</td>
<td>1½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light work</td>
<td>1½</td>
<td>½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy work</td>
<td>1¼</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idle nursing mare</td>
<td>1½</td>
<td>½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing foal after weaning</td>
<td>1¼</td>
<td>1</td>
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Grain Rations

It is difficult to suggest specific rations to be fed because horses
differ in weight, size, amount of work that they do, etc. A few
general rules and suggestions can be made, but you must use your
own judgment. Start with amounts that the horse will clean up
within half an hour, and make gradual changes in the ration until
the proper one is found. Good oats, legume or mixed grass-legume
hay, water, and salt make a simple and adequate ration. Corn can be
used instead of oats in the grain ration, but it is better not to feed over
half of the ration as corn. When substantial amounts of corn are fed, bran should be added to the ration because it is high in protein and has a slight laxative effect.

Grain and hay make an adequate ration for most horses, foals, and yearlings, but bred mares and mares nursing foals require additional protein to support growth or milk production. One-half to 1 pound of bran daily will usually supply the additional protein needed. Linseed meal contains about twice as much protein per pound as bran, so only half as much should be used.

**Grooming**

Grooming not only cleans your horse but also improves his health. He will look better, eat better, and feel better — and as a result, he will perform better. A daily thorough brushing stimulates the circulation of blood in the skin and helps keep him in good condition. And while you are grooming your horse, you can check him over thoroughly for diseases or parasites.

The wise horseman will use only grooming equipment that will not irritate the horse’s tender skin. This equipment includes a soft brush, rubber curry comb, and clean cloth. The steel curry comb should be used only to clean off mud or thick, loose hair and to clean out the brush. Don’t use a steel curry comb on your horse’s legs. You can use a rubber curry comb on his legs — but be gentle.

Here’s a good procedure to follow when grooming:

1. Tie your horse securely before grooming.
2. Check and clean his feet. This will give you an opportunity to check for nails, loose shoes, or signs of infection.
3. Start currying your horse with the rubber curry comb on the left side just back of the head. Move in a circular or irregular motion from front to rear. Groom the right side in the same way.
4. Next, brush vigorously with a soft brush. Follow the same procedure as for currying. Clean the brush every few strokes.
5. Brush the face and head last.
6. A stiffer brush may be used to brush the tail and mane, although it should be used sparingly. Tangles should be freed with your fingers or a comb; separate a few hairs at a time. It helps to have the tail and mane slightly damp.
7. Finally, use a clean cloth to remove any dust or loose particles and to put a high gloss to the hair coat. Occasionally dampen the
hair with a sponge or handful of clean straw. Then brush or rub again with a cloth.

8. Soap and water should be used sparingly because it dissolves the protective oil of the hair and skin.

9. Clean the eyes, ears, nostrils, lips, sheath, and dock with a clean cloth.

10. If your horse perspires heavily while being worked, scrape the perspiration from his body and rub him for a few minutes to remove most of the dampness. Then walk him until he stops breathing heavily.

When rubbing your horse, stand at least an arm's length away and lean slightly forward. *Don’t rub too hard.* Remember — your horse feels pain too.

Grooming improves the health as well as the appearance of your horse. Always tie your horse or have someone hold him. Brush him gently. Do not apply too much pressure.
Care of the Feet and Legs

A horse's feet and legs are extremely important and should be given special attention. If your horse's feet and legs are dirty, they reflect badly on you. Keep the skin of the legs clean and free from dirt by daily brushing. Clean the hocks, pasterns, and fetlocks carefully.

The old adage "No foot, no horse" points up the importance of a horse's feet. Before you can care for your horse's feet properly, you must know the structure of the hoof. The outside of the hoof has three main parts — the horny wall, horny sole, and the frog.

The horny sole grows out from the live fleshy sole and forms the bottom of the foot. The horny wall and sole are tough, protective surfaces that safeguard the sensitive inner tissue with its complex series of blood vessels and nerves.

The frog is a semisoft, elastic, triangular-shaped structure that grows on the sole between the bars. The frog acts as a cushion, absorbing the shock when the foot strikes the ground.

Inspect your horse's feet every day. Clean all mud and manure from around the bars and frog of the foot. Carefully rasp the bottom of the hoof wall until the hoofs are level and your horse is standing.
Clean out the feet periodically. Clean around the frog, the cleft (a depression at the back of the frog that goes up into the hair), and the branches of the sole (depressions on each side of the frog). Inspect the feet for rocks, nails, injuries, loose shoes, and infections. Do not cut into the frog.

normally. The frogs will then make proper contact with the ground and perform their function as shock absorbers. A frog that doesn’t carry weight will shrink. Consult an experienced horseman about the correct way to trim the rough edges of the frogs. *Do not* cut into the frogs.

If you keep your horse shod, reset or replace the shoes every 4 to 6 weeks. It is not usually necessary to shoe a foal or yearling. A 2-year-old that is ridden on cinders or gravel may be shod with light shoes to protect its hoofs and increase its action. Shoes that are too heavy can ruin a colt or filly.

**Care of the Brood Mare**

Fillies may be bred when they are 2 years old or older, and are usually bred in the spring. The pregnancy period lasts approximately 330 to 340 days, although there is a great deal of variation among mares. March, April, and May are good months for the birth of colts.
These well-bred Shetland mares will produce desirable foals for their owner.

Consult an experienced horseman when your mare is ready to be bred.

Proper care of the brood mare is essential if she is to produce a strong, healthy foal. Give her regular exercise right up to the time of foaling, and have an experienced person on hand to give assistance when she foals.

If your mare foals in the spring, she can foal on pasture. But if she foals in cold weather, provide a roomy box stall that has been cleaned, disinfected, and freshly bedded. Immediately after birth, treat the foal’s navel with a mild antiseptic to guard against navel infection.

Symptoms of approaching foaling include enlargement of the udder during the eleventh month, relaxing of the croup muscles, and restlessness. Formation of beads of wax on the teats is a good indication that foaling will take place within one or two days.

In most cases, a mare will foal lying down, and a normal foaling will be over in a few minutes. She will usually pass the afterbirth 3 to 4 hours after foaling. If your mare does not “clean,” call a veterinarian.

Winter is the time to treat your mare for round worms, bots, blood worms, and other internal parasites. Don’t try to do the job without the supervision of an experienced horseman. It is safest to
have your mare treated by a veterinarian. The most common horse diseases and parasites are listed below and on the following page.

Diseases and Parasites

Colic. Pain in the stomach or bowel. Can be caused by bloat, impaction, hernia, parasites, etc. The horse may become wild — striking, kicking, and rolling — and if relief is not obtained quickly, he may die. Colic can usually be prevented by avoiding coarse and moldy feed, changing feeds gradually, and not feeding the horse too much when he is tired, hot, or hungry.

Fistula or poll evil. Fistula occurs over the withers and poll evil on top of the head. A swelling begins that is soft and painless at first. It keeps growing until it bursts, becomes infected, and pus forms. Occasionally the bone becomes infected.

Founder. Sometimes called laminitis, founder is an inflammation of the foot just under the hard wall. The horse suffers great pain in the affected feet, sometimes standing with his feet held out in front. Founder often occurs when the horse overeats grain or drinks while hot. It sometimes occurs after foaling. While waiting for the veterinarian, stand the horse in cold water.

Grease heel (sometimes called “scratches”). An infection of the hair follicles at the heel and in the hollow below the fetlock. It can be caused by filth, by improper grooming of the legs, or by an infection in the blood stream. Some horses may itch or bite the irritations.

Heaves. Broken wind characterized by abnormal breathing and a short, hollow cough. Caused by dusty feeds or overwork, this condition is permanent once it develops.

Lice. A horse with lice will itch severely and rub against objects. Lice avoid daylight but may be found on darker colored portions of the horse’s body. Spray with 0.25-percent lindane spray or treat with 5-percent DDT dust.

Mange. Caused by a mite that cannot be seen. Mange looks like lice damage; the hair usually falls out of the affected areas. Treat with 0.25-percent lindane spray.

Respiratory diseases. These include distemper, pneumonia, strangles, shipping fever, etc. Symptoms include discharge from the nose, redness of the eyes, lack of appetite, fever, weakness, etc. These
diseases are infectious — if your horse has any of them, keep him away from other horses.

**Stringhalt.** Disease affecting one or both of the hind legs. The horse picks up his foot with a jerk and raises it much higher than usual. Occurs frequently in some horses and only occasionally in others. Considered a disease of the nervous system with no known or satisfactory cure.

**Thrush.** An infection of the frog caused by improper care of the feet or by the horse's standing in mud or wet bedding. The frog becomes wet and foul smelling. This condition, which can easily be avoided, can cause serious lameness if established.

**Internal parasites.** These may be as much a problem to the horse breeder as to breeders of other types of livestock. The three types most common to horses are bots; red or blood worms; and round worms.

*Bots* are located in the stomach. The bot fly deposits its eggs on the hair of the horse, and larvae enter the mouth and attach themselves to the stomach wall. Symptoms include unthriftiness, weakness, loss of appetite, and paleness of the eyes.

*Red or blood worms* are extremely small. Part of their life cycle is spent in the intestine and part in the bloodstream. Often they partially stop the flow of blood through the arteries, causing colic.

*Round worms* are from 6 to 8 inches long and live in the intestines. They may sometimes be seen in the manure.

ALWAYS call a competent veterinarian when your horse develops symptoms of a disease or parasites.

**HANDLING YOUR HORSE**

**Safety Precautions**

You should always observe safety precautions in handling a horse, just as in driving an automobile or wiring a new home. The horse is a timid animal and reacts violently when frightened. But there is no need to be afraid of horses if you follow these common-sense safety precautions:

1. Always warn your horse when you walk up behind him. A horse is usually on the defensive. If he suddenly becomes aware of someone behind him, his instinct is either to kick or run. Speak to him gently as you approach.
2. Work around your horse from a position as near his shoulder as possible.
3. Always work close to your horse.
4. Always let your horse know what you are going to do. Never move hurriedly.
5. Avoid excessive noises or shouting.
6. Treat your horse gently and kindly. Most horses become vicious through abuse.

Training Foals and Yearlings

It is much easier to train a foal than a mature horse, but training a foal properly requires a great deal of care and patience. Don't attempt it until you can control your own temper.

A foal's early training has a great influence on his value and usefulness. Any failure on your part, no matter how slight, may have a lasting effect on your foal. If you fail to catch him, he will be more difficult to catch next time. If he breaks a tie rope once, he will try to break it again.

To train your foal properly, see that you have no outside disturbances. It is best to put him in a pen by himself so that his attention is on the lessons. There are three basic rules to follow:

1. Teach your foal one thing at a time.
2. Don't ask him to do anything new until you are in a position to see that he does it — and never stop until he has done what you want. Force may be necessary in some cases, but it should be gentle force.
3. When you have made your foal do something new, repeat the lesson until it is firmly fixed in his mind.

The easiest way to teach a foal to have confidence in you is to always move slowly and quietly when you are near him. Animals are curious. In most cases, a foal will come to you of his own accord, touching you with his nose. When this happens, scratch him on the neck and over the withers and hips. Then your foal will want to come to you for you to scratch him again.

You are now ready to catch your foal properly. Be sure to work quietly and slowly. If you have an older, gentle horse, crowd the foal into a corner with him and quietly slip a halter on the foal. Be certain that the lead strap is strong and that you have a firm
PICKING UP YOUR HORSE'S FEET

FRONT FOOT: To pick up the left foot, stand on the horse's left side, facing the rear. Place your left hand on his shoulder, and run your right hand gently but firmly down the back of his foreleg until your hand is just above the fetlock. Push against the horse's shoulder with your left hand, forcing his weight onto the opposite foreleg. Grasp the fetlock and lift gently.

When the horse picks up his foot, support it on your left knee.

HIND FOOT: To pick up the left hind foot, stand well forward of the horse's hindquarters, facing the rear. Gently stroke his back as far as the point of the hip. Place your left hand on his quarters, and stroke the leg gently but firmly with your right hand as far down as the middle of the cannon. Press against the horse's quarter, forcing his weight onto the opposite hind leg. Grasp the cannon just above the fetlock with your right hand and lift the foot directly toward you so that the leg is bent at the hock.

Now move to the rear, keeping the hind leg next to your thigh. Don't hold the horse's foot out to one side. The discomfort of this position will make him resist. Swing your left leg underneath the fetlock to support the leg firmly.
grip. After he quits struggling, tie him where he won’t be able to
hurt himself or others. Let him stand for an hour or so. Be sure to
pet and talk to him during this lesson. A handful of oats and kind-
ness can do wonders in gentling a foal.

**Leading**

It is often easier to teach your colt to lead if you tie an 8- or
10-foot rope to his left ankle. Then, by pulling on the halter rope
and the colt’s foot at the same time, you force him to take at least
one step forward. Each time he takes a step, rub his neck and pet
him. You should teach your colt to lead when he is only a few
months old — the lessons should last about ½ hour a day for several
days.

After you have taught your foal to lead, you should train him to
walk and trot with you in an alert and snappy action. Never allow
your colt to walk sluggishly.

**Yielding His Feet**

Next you should teach your foal to yield his feet, using the
method described on page 26. Repeat the lesson until he yields his
feet willingly. Pet and handle him gently at all times.

**Bitting and Bridling**

It’s now time to get your horse used to the bit on the bridle. A
colt’s mouth is very soft and tender, and a bit irritates it. Be very
careful not to give your colt a “hard” mouth by severe use of the bit.
A good mouth is one that is responsive to the lightest touch but never
tender or sore.

It is usually best to use a light steel bit with chains and soft,
light reins. The weight of the chains keeps a little steady pressure on
the colt’s mouth. This light pressure helps develop a light mouth.
Accustom your colt to the bit by letting him stand an hour or so
with it in his mouth. Be sure that he is used to the bit before you
actually use it to control him. (See “Common Bits,” page 30.)

When putting the bridle on, hold it in your left hand and slip
the reins over the horse’s neck with your right hand. The crownpiece
of the bridle (see illustrations, page 28) should be transferred to
the right hand. To press open your horse’s mouth, gently insert
your left thumb back of his teeth. Then immediately bring up the
bridle with your right hand, drawing the bit into his mouth. Next,
pull the horse’s ears through the crownpiece. Handle the ears gently.
Buckle the throatlatch.
Double-reined bridle, right.

Below left, single-reined bridle with snaffle bit; right, split-eared bridle with curb bit.
Saddling

Before using the saddle, work on getting your horse over his fear of movements or activities around him. Tie him up and rub him with a soft sack. Flip the sack over his body and about his legs.

As a 2-year-old, he is ready to be taught the feel of the saddle and of your weight. Be sure that he is tied securely or that someone is holding him. Then get on his back for a few seconds and slide off. After you have done this several times, get on his back and have someone lead him around. When he becomes used to your weight, it's time to put the saddle on.

First, slide the blanket on and off several times until your horse becomes accustomed to it. Then slip the saddle on and tighten the girth strap moderately tight. Be sure that all the hair under the blanket is straight—if it isn’t, a saddle sore may develop.

A 2-year-old may resent having pressure on his back and behind his front legs, so don’t tighten the saddle too tight. Lead your colt around at a walk until he becomes used to the weight of the saddle. Now gradually tighten the girth strap and continue leading him. After he has become accustomed to the saddle at a walk, urge him into a trot so that he will get used to the squeak of leather and the flap of the stirrups. Saddle and unsaddle him several times to make sure that he has learned the lesson well.

Shying

A horse is naturally timid and easily startled. But he is also a creature of habit and can be taught to get used to many things.

As soon as your colt has learned his first lessons well, you should introduce him to as many common objects as you can find. Walk him back and forth in front of the object, but not so close to it that he will bolt. As he gets used to the object, come closer and closer to it, finally making him stand and look at it until he loses interest. Your goal is to get your colt over his fear as well as teach him to go wherever you want him to go.

Equipment

Care of Equipment

A good horseman is as careful with his equipment as with his horse. Saddles, bridles, blankets, halters, etc. are expensive and deserve good care. Ideally, each piece of equipment should be cleaned every time it is used, but most of us can’t clean our equipment this often.
The next best thing is to clean it at regular intervals. Remove all dirt with water and saddle soap, making sure that the sponge is dry enough to prevent lathering. Saddle soap not only cleans your equipment but also puts back some of the oils and keeps the leather pliable. Oil your equipment occasionally with neatsfoot oil. It is also a good practice to hang your saddle and bridle on suitable racks to dry.

Polish metal parts and air out the saddle blanket frequently. Keep the blanket clean and dry — an occasional washing may be necessary. Give the reins, cinch straps, and stirrups special care — your safety depends upon them.

**Common Bits**

A bit is placed in a horse’s mouth to control him and to let him know what gait you desire. Bits are classified as snaffle or curb, with many special modifications.

The snaffle bit may be a plain straight bar or a jointed mouthpiece. The jointed snaffle exerts more pressure on the horse’s mouth than a plain snaffle. A single snaffle bit is commonly used for race horses, cow ponies, and many pleasure mounts.

The curb bit has either a plain bar or raised mouthpiece with a cheek lever or shank at each end of the mouthpiece. A chain or strap that goes beneath the horse’s lower jaw is usually fitted to each shank of a curb bit.

A double-bit bridle is almost universally used in the show ring for gaited horses. The top rein attached to the snaffle, acting on the corners of the mouth, helps to raise the horse’s head. The bottom rein attached to the curb brings the horse’s nose in when beginning certain gaits.

Two bits frequently used together in a double-reined bridle for show horses: above, jointed snaffle bit; below, curb bit (hooks are for attaching the curb chain).
Riding Your Horse

Protecting Yourself and Your Horse

You have already learned how to work around your horse safely (pages 24 and 25). Here are some other safety rules for protecting both you and your horse:

1. Start slowly when leaving the barn to allow your horse time to warm up.
2. Keep at least one length of a horse (about 10 feet) between horses when riding in a line.
3. Ride on the right side of the road. A horse is considered the same as a vehicle.
4. Tie horses two or more lengths from each other.
5. Loosen the girth slightly when the horse is resting.
6. Never run your horse past another horse that is being ridden at a walk. The other horse may jump or break into a run, throwing his rider.
7. Walk beside the horse when leading, not ahead of him or behind him.
8. Don't try to outpull your horse. He is stronger than you. He will usually respond to a quick snap on the lead strap.
9. Never wrap the lead strap, halter shank, or reins around your wrist or hand. You could be dragged.
10. Never mount your horse in a barn or near fences, trees, or overhanging projections.
11. Adjust the saddle carefully and cinch tight enough so that it will not turn when mounting.
12. If your horse is frightened by an obstacle, dismount and lead him by it.
13. Hold your horse to a walk when riding up or down hill.
14. Walk your horse the last mile or half mile to cool him off.
15. In cold weather, if your horse is heated, put a blanket on him and walk him until he has cooled.
16. Don't water your horse until he has cooled.
17. Don't feed grain or green grass to your horse when he is heated. Hay is all right at this time.
18. Safe riding also depends upon keeping your bridle reins, stirrup leathers, and cinch straps in the best possible condition.
Gaits

A gait is defined as a manner of walking, running, or moving. The three natural gaits of any horse except the Tennessee Walking Horse are the walk, trot, and canter. The natural gaits of the Tennessee Walker are the walk, the running walk, and the canter. Two other gaits — the slow gait and the rack — are artificial and must be learned.

Walk — a 4-beat gait with the feet striking the ground in the following order: right front, left rear, left front, right rear. The feet should be lifted from the ground and placed down flat-footed.

Trot — a 2-beat gait in which the left front and right rear feet and right front and left rear feet strike the ground together. The horse's body remains in perfect balance. The trot should be balanced and springy.

Canter — a 3-beat gait that should be slow. The canter is actually a restrained gallop in which the horse may lead with either of his front feet. The lead foot will be the first to leave and the last to strike the ground. When a horse leads with his left foot, the feet will strike the ground in the following order: right rear; left rear and right front; left front.

Slow gait — an artificial 4-beat gait of the 5-gaited horse. It is a smooth-riding gait, but very tiresome to the horse. Each foot is moving more or less separately in this order: left rear, left front, right rear, right front.

Rack — the only difference between the slow gait and the rack is speed; the rack is faster.

Running walk — the natural gait of the Tennessee Walking Horse. It is a very smooth gait with a gliding rhythm that is quite pleasant for the rider. The horse will average about 7 miles per hour in this gait, and his head will have a definite up-and-down movement. This is a 4-beat gait, with the feet striking the ground in the following order: left front, right rear, right front, left rear.

Principles of Horsemanship

Horsemanship means getting the horse to do just what the rider wishes at all times with the least amount of effort both to the rider and the horse. Horses are managed by the reins, legs, and weight. These are often called the "aids."
Local 4-H leaders and horse breeders can do much to stimulate good horsemanship. The leader in this picture is teaching a 4-H member proper riding posture.

The two fundamental principles of horsemanship are a good seat and good hands. Good hands are perhaps the most important, since they are your means of control and communication. But since you can't have good hands without first having a firm, comfortable, steady seat, the basic requirement for riding properly is a good seat.

Now, if you have learned to handle your horse well, you are ready to ride. The colt is a youngster and tires easily, so several short lessons are much better than one long one. Be patient and gentle at all times.

Accustom the colt to your weight in the saddle as you did before the saddle was put on. Mount him by turning the left stirrup for your foot while holding the reins and a lock of mane or the saddle horn in your left hand. Now, with your right hand on the saddle, raise your weight smoothly and swing your right foot over the saddle quickly and lightly.
If you have handled your horse properly, he shouldn’t buck. Be careful! A horse that throws his rider will be more difficult to train from then on. It may be a good idea to have someone lead the colt with you in the saddle. Don’t use the bit at this time — let the colt learn to walk relaxed. Dismounting is the reverse of mounting.

The Western stock saddle should be ridden with an almost straight leg and long stirrups. The stirrups of the English saddle should be long enough so that with your legs hanging naturally out of the stirrups, the tread of the stirrups will strike just below your ankle bones. Your legs should be against the horse without pressure, your knees down and closed against the saddle. The stirrup straps should be vertical. Your feet should be at least halfway in the stirrups, ankles bent, heels down as far as possible, toes out slightly. If you are seated properly, you shouldn’t see your toes when you look down.
A rider has a balanced seat when he sits in the lowest part of the saddle, leaving a space of 4 to 6 inches between his back and the cantle of the saddle. Your body should be slightly forward of the true vertical and balanced on a base consisting of seat, thighs, knees, and stirrups. Your back should be hollow, waist relaxed, head erect, and shoulders square.

Your center of gravity is directly over the horse’s center of gravity, and as a result, you represent the lightest possible load. Once you have learned a good seat, you need a minimum use of “aids” to get an immediate response from your horse at any gait. A balanced seat, assisted by the flexibility of your waist and back, gives you a secure position from which you can’t easily be dislodged, even by unexpected movements of your horse. Because of the practical work of Western stock horses and the speed that is frequently required of them, a strong, firm seat and good balance are especially important.
For best control of your horse with English equipment, hold the reins in both hands with your little fingers down and your thumbs up. When riding with a single-rein bridle, pass the reins under your little fingers, through your hands, and out over your forefingers, holding them with your thumbs. The ends of the reins should fall to the right side.

When riding with a double-reined bridle, hold your hands in the same position as with a single rein. Pass the curb or lower reins under your little fingers and the snaffle or top reins between your little fingers and third fingers. Both reins should pass through your hands, come out over your forefingers, and be held in place by your thumbs, with the ends falling to the right side. Your elbows should bend slightly just forward of your body, and your arms should be extended to make a straight line from the elbows through the wrists and reins to the horse’s mouth. Your hands should be spaced evenly across the horse’s withers and closed lightly on the reins. You control your horse by flexing your fingers, causing pressure of the bit on the horse’s mouth.
Your wrists should give and take with the horse’s head. Control your horse with the movements of your wrists and fingers; your arms should remain fairly still. With Western equipment, hold both reins in one hand and ride your horse with a loose rein. Stock horses should be trained to neck rein as described in the section on neck reinning.

Getting Your Horse’s Attention

It is necessary to “gather” your horse or get his attention before he can respond to your commands. You can get his attention either by slightly lifting the reins or closing your legs. If he is standing badly, he must get his legs under him and be ready to go. With practice, you will be able to “gather” your horse without actually starting him forward.

Starting and Stopping

You can start a colt by leaning forward in the saddle and urging him slightly with your legs. With practice, he will learn to start easily and smoothly with very little urging.

To stop your horse, lean backward in the saddle and pull gently on the reins. One good way to teach your horse to stop is to walk him towards the barn, and just before he reaches the barn, pull back on the reins. He will stop to keep from running into the barn, but will soon learn to stop on command. An essential part of this training is to make your horse stand quietly when stopped.

You start the trot in the same way that you start the walk, but you need to use more of a forward urge with your legs and a greater forward shift of your weight.

Backing

Backing should always be taught with the rider dismounted. Stand in front of your horse, holding the reins close to the bit. Slowly push him backward by placing your hand on his chest and pulling back on the reins at the same time. Once your colt is started backward, he should move from the pressure on his chest alone. The reins should act merely as a signal. He should be backed dismounted until he backs freely and is no longer nervous or afraid.

Now you should begin mounted backing. Sit as far back in the saddle as possible and use very little rein. Be satisfied with a few steps at first. Don’t treat your colt roughly; he may become sullen and cause trouble. Once he learns to back mounted, teach him to back and keep backing with pressure from your legs alone.
Neck Reining

Stock horses or pleasure horses ridden with Western equipment should be taught to neck rein. Use two hands at first, one to pull in the direction you want your horse to turn, and the other to bear the rein on the opposite side of the neck. A horse learns best at slow work, so teach him to neck rein at the walk or trot. Once your horse has learned to neck rein, you need only one hand to hold both reins and guide him.

Riding the Walk, Trot, and Canter

When your horse is in motion, your body should be inclined forward to a degree determined by the horse's speed and gait.

At the walk, your body should be inclined forward slightly more than at the halt, and should have an erect, alert appearance. Keep your horse's head up by means of the bridle, and keep him swinging along at a brisk, flatfooted walk.

At the trot, you undergo a decided impact that has a tendency to throw you from the saddle. The correct way to ride a trot with English equipment is by posting. Posting can best be described as a rocking motion that is equally comfortable to the horse and rider. You should rise gently from the saddle and ease back into it with the two beats of the trot.

Use your balance from the stirrups half the time and contact with your knees and thighs the other half. To maintain a secure seat, your knees and thighs must be in contact with the saddle at all times. If your weight is evenly distributed, your legs should not swing as you post. Posting should not be a forced, labored rising from the saddle to stand in the stirrups. You are posting on the right diagonal when you rise from the saddle with the horse's right shoulder, and on the left diagonal when you rise with the left shoulder. Most stock or pleasure horses with Western equipment are not usually ridden at the trot for very long periods of time. A fast trot with a long stride must be posted as with English equipment. You can "ride out" a slow trot by sitting down flat in the saddle.

When riding at the canter with either English or Western equipment, sit as close to the saddle as possible, with your knees and thighs in close contact with the saddle. Your body should be relaxed but erect, and should not be inclined quite as far forward as at the trot.

Speed is not essential in the canter. When a horse is cantering properly, he looks active but restrained, hits the ground lightly in front while placing more of his weight in his hindquarters, and moves
very little faster than a walk. "Cantering all day in the shade of an old apple tree" is an old horseman saying that expresses the desire for a slow, restrained canter that is easy on both the horse and rider.

**Taking the leads.** At the canter a horse will naturally extend one of his forelegs farther forward than the other. This is called the right or left lead, depending upon which leg is farther ahead. By looking over your horse's shoulder at his forelegs, you can tell which lead he is taking. You should train him to take either lead at your command.

To start the canter at the left lead, shift your weight toward your horse's right hindquarter while slightly lifting his head with the reins. With your right leg well back, give him a light boot to push his hindquarters to the left, and at the same time urge him into the canter. Your left leg should be slightly forward toward the horse's left shoulder, twisting you slightly in the saddle. The idea is to start your horse a little toward the left instead of straight ahead and to lighten his left forequarter by shifting your weight to his right hindquarter. (The directions for taking the right lead are exactly opposite.) Always remember that you start the canter with your weight back, not forward as in the walk or trot.

Some horses like to take only one lead. If your horse gets into this habit, practice starting on the opposite lead until he can do it smoothly and easily.

It is never easy to teach a horse to start on the opposite lead. One method that may help is to trot your horse into a fence at a 45-degree angle and then break into a gallop just as he comes to the fence. Canter on the unaccustomed lead for several minutes to overcome his awkwardness. Once you break the habit, continue to work him, using both leads. First, start your horse into a canter from the trot, then from the walk, and finally, from a standstill.

When a horse is ridden in a ring, he should canter on the left lead when circling left and on the right lead when circling right.

**Ground Tying**

Frequently you will need to dismount and leave your horse where there is no object to which he can be tied. For this reason, you should teach him to stand as if tied to an object when you drop the reins to the ground. This is known as "ground tying" your horse.

There are several methods for teaching ground tying. One is to place a 50-pound weight in the middle of a large corral or paddock. Stop your colt near the spot, tie one rein to the weight, and drop the other to the ground. When your colt moves, he will discover that he is tied.
Excellent quarter horse conformation showing thick muscling and characteristic "dinner plate" cheek. The late Arlie Ferrell, a seven-year 4-H member in Shelby County, Illinois, on his champion mare Nicka Maria. Arlie was Grand Champion Junior Horseman of Illinois in 1955 and 1956. Nicka Maria was Reserve Champion mare at the 1956 Illinois State Fair.

Another method is to tie short pieces of wire to boards and bury the boards in various places around the farm, tying your colt to them whenever you want him ground-tied. He will soon learn to stand when the reins are down.

Faulty Action

Faulty action is any way of moving in which the horse's stride is not long, straight, and true. Some of the most common faults are —

Forging — striking the undersurface of a front shoe with the toe of the hind foot.

Interfering — striking the supporting leg with the foot of the opposite striding leg.
Paddling or winging out — throwing the front feet out to the side during the stride.

Pounding — making very heavy contact with the ground at the completion of the stride.

Pointing — extending the foreleg without flexing the knee.

FITTING AND SHOWING YOUR HORSE

Preparing for the Show

Your horse should be absolutely clean when you show it. Brush his hair coat until it is shiny and free from dirt or loose dandruff. Trim and clean the walls and soles of the feet. Apply neatsfoot oil to the hoofs to make them neat and clean looking.

If your horse is extremely dirty, or light in color, it may be necessary to wash him. If it is necessary to wash your horse, do it several days before the show; then keep his hair clean by brushing and by putting him in a clean stall. Ordinary laundry bleach is sometimes used to take stains from white hair.

You can use a comb on the mane and tail. Pick out the foreign material and keep the hair separated. When shown under English equipment, the forelock and the first lock of mane should be braided with ribbon. Stock horses usually have their manes clipped or “roached” except for the forelock and a small tuft about 4 inches long at the withers. Hair in the quarter horse’s tail is usually pulled so that the tail falls just below the hocks. Pull only a few hairs at a time, jerking sharply. With wax on your fingers, you can be sure of a secure grip.

Trim the long hairs around the muzzle and chin and the fuzz on the inside and outside of the ears. Often a 1-inch strip behind the ears is clipped for the bridle. Hair on the fetlock may be clipped or pulled to give a neater appearance. Do this work at least 3 weeks before showing.

At fairs or shows you will need a large bucket for water, a feed pan or box for grain, a second bucket for washing, a tack box or trunk for the saddle, etc., and grooming equipment. It is your responsibility to keep your horse’s stall clean and well bedded. Pails, extra bedding, feed, etc. should be in neat order and out of the way. Always clean your portion of the aisle.

Several weeks before transporting your colt to the show, practice leading him into and out of a truck or trailer until he no longer becomes excited.
Show Classes

In addition to showing your horse at halter, you may show him under saddle with either English or Western equipment. A horse shown under saddle is judged on his conformation and his ability to perform the gaits—walk, trot, and canter. Five-gaited horses, which are usually ridden with English equipment, are also judged on the slow gait and rack.

English equipment consists of a single- or double-reined bridle and an English saddle. Stock-horse equipment consists of Western saddle, bridle, breast collar, and a rope tied to the saddle. The rider should be dressed neatly in appropriate Western dress.

In Western classes, the horse is judged on his ability to work a figure 8 at a slow canter, changing leads so that the inside foot is always leading. (See “Taking the leads,” page 39.) He is then run a short distance, stopped, and backed. There are many variations in classes for stock horses, but all are based on good training.

For further information about show classes, consult one of the many books on the subject.

When showing your horse, wear neat, appropriate clothing. Be courteous. Show your horse at all times.
What to Do When Showing

Be sure that your colt is well groomed before you take him into the show ring. (See "Grooming," page 18.) Do not use showy or flashy equipment in halter classes.

Be ready when called. Enter the ring leading your colt with your right hand and walking at his left side, even with his head. Hold the lead strap 18 to 24 inches from the halter. Carry all excess strap coiled up neatly in your right hand.

Always be courteous to the judge and to the public. It is permissible to get in a favorable position in the ring, but remember good manners and sportsmanship. Learn to win graciously and lose the same way.

Suggested 4-H Showmanship Guide (For Showing at Halter)

You will be put in a class according to your age and scored as follows:

The Club Member and Equipment ........................................ 25

- **Personal appearance:** Be neat, clean, well groomed, courteous, and attentive. No spurs.

- **Equipment:** Your halter can be leather or rope; it should be clean and adjusted to fit your horse. The lead strap or rope should fasten to the halter with no chain under the horse’s chin, and the lead should not be over 6 or 7 feet long. Hackamores should not be used when showing at halter.

The Horse (Grooming) ........................................ 25

- Clean, well groomed; feet may be trimmed or properly shod but must be clean; fetlocks trimmed; mane optional. Conformation not considered. No juniors to show stallions.

Method of Showing ........................................ 50

1. Be able to walk, trot, turn, stop, and back your horse as directed by the judge.

2. Stand your horse squarely on all four feet. Stand him on the exact spot requested by the judge and face as directed.

3. Stand on your horse’s left side or in front of him. Never stand on his right side.

4. Lead with your right hand from the left side of your horse. When showing your horse at a walk, walk by his side, never in front of him. His head should be about even with your shoulder. Give your horse enough rope to keep his head, neck, and body in a straight line. Move
him straight toward or away from the judge, unless the judge indicates that he wishes to see him from the side.

5. Run by the side of your horse when you are showing him at the trot. He should move willingly toward or away from the judge with his head, neck, and body in a straight line. He should trot freely, fast, and with spirit.

6. When you turn, always turn to the right around your horse. See that he is steady and in line with the judge before starting back.

7. Keep your horse posed at all times. Know where the judge is and what he wants, and always show your horse. A good showman always gives the judge the best view of his horse. You can’t change your horse’s type and conformation, but you can improve his style and appearance both when standing and in action. You can also make it easy for the judge to see your horse to best advantage.

8. Keep your proper position in line, and allow a reasonable space between your horse and the other horses. Never let your horse interfere with another horse.

9. If you are asked to change position in the line, back your horse out of the line and approach the new position from behind. Be careful when walking up behind other horses. Don’t get too close.

10. Move easily, quietly, and with confidence when showing your horse. Be courteous, respond promptly to directions, and show good horsemanship at all times.

**DEMONSTRATION IDEAS**

1. Training a colt.
2. Care of equipment.
3. Fitting and showing a horse.
4. Care of colt’s hoofs (picking up and cleaning).
5. Correct method of mounting, riding, and handling a horse.
7. Approaching, bridling.
8. Use of “aids” in controlling the horse — voice, hands, legs, position of body.
10. Clipping and grooming.
HOW TO TELL A HORSE’S AGE

Have a veterinarian or experienced horseman check the age of any horse you are considering buying. A horse’s age is indicated by his incisor teeth. A horse has 3 pairs of incisors on both the upper and lower jaws. The first pair appear about 8 days after birth, the temporary lateral incisors at 8 weeks, and the third or corner pair at about 8 months.

At 2½ years, the middle pair of incisors are replaced by a permanent pair. These are larger, longer, more rectangular, and less white than the baby incisors, and are grooved with obvious lines. The lateral incisors are replaced by a permanent pair at 3½ years, and the corner permanent incisors appear at about 4½ years.

When the horse is 5 to 8 years old, the top surfaces of the front incisors become worn, a black cup appears in the center of each tooth, and the edges around the outside of the tooth are a little higher than the black center. As the horse grows older, the cup becomes rounder and smaller. Finally, as wear on the surface of the teeth wears down the outer edge, the cup disappears.

The cups in the center incisors have almost disappeared at 6 years, the cups in the lateral incisors at 7 years, and the cups in the corner incisors at 8 years. At this time, horses are often called “smooth mouths.” When a horse is 9 or 10 years old, the incisor teeth become longer and a groove appears on the corner incisors.
GAMES FOR RIDERS

**Musical Chairs.** Chairs, one less than the number of riders, are placed in a ring facing outward. Contestants ride in a circle outside this ring of chairs. Music or a whistle is used for signals. When the music stops or the whistle blows, each contestant dismounts and attempts to sit in a chair while retaining hold of the horse's reins. The contestant not seated is eliminated and one chair is removed. The game continues until only one chair remains. The winner is the last contestant seated.

**Relay Races.** There are many variations of relay races. Contestants are divided into teams. Any number can play on a team. Each team is divided in half, with one half at each end of a course 50 yards long. The first rider is handed an object. He gallops across the course and hands the object to the next team member, who returns to the original point and gives it to the third, and so on. Teams are timed to select the winner.

**Potato Race.** Each contestant spears a potato, rides 50 yards, puts it into a bucket, and returns. The game ends when 5 potatoes are in the bucket. Many variations are possible: for example, an egg in a spoon or a glass of water may be substituted for the potato.

**Suitcase Race.** Each rider receives a light suitcase containing a shirt. He gallops 50 yards, dismounts, opens the suitcase, puts on and buttons the shirt, mounts, and returns to the starting point.

**Cake-Eating Race.** A piece of cake is suspended on a string at the far end of the course. Each contestant gallops 50 yards, eats his piece of cake off the string, and returns. A contestant is disqualified if he touches the cake with his hands.

**Spearing Ring.** Rings 2 inches in diameter are suspended with strings 100 yards from starting line. Riders gallop from starting line, and without changing gait, try to spear rings with bamboo poles. Best out of 5 tries wins.

**Stake Race.** Lines of stakes are driven in the ground for each contestant. These stakes should be 3 feet long, smooth-surfaced (to prevent splinters), and about broomhandle size. They should be driven just deep enough so that they won't fall over. Contestants ride to farthest stake, pull it up without dismounting, carry it back to starting point, drop it in a box, and repeat until all stakes are in the box.
Mounted Square Dance. Participants are divided into couples. Music can be provided by a record player and amplifier. A caller directs the riders through many folk-dance movements that can be performed on horseback.

**COMMON HORSE TERMS**

**Action** — movement of the feet and legs — should be straight and true.

**Bloom** — hair that is clean and of a healthy texture.

**Bolting** — running away, sudden jump.

**Colt** — usually a young male horse, but may refer to young horses of either sex.

**Conformation** — body shape or form.

**Filly** — a young female horse.

**Foal** — a young horse or pony of either sex up to 1 year of age.

**Gait** — a manner of walking, running, or moving (see section on gaits).

**Gelding** — an unsexed male.

**Groom** — to groom a horse is to clean and brush him.

**Heavy-middled** — an animal that has too much belly.

**Horse or Stallion** — a mature male.

**Horsemanship** — art of riding a horse and understanding his needs.

**Mare** — a mature female.

**Soundness** — freedom from any abnormality in structure or function that interferes with the horse’s usefulness. A horse is considered sound when it has no defects in wind, legs, or eyesight.

**Stylish** — having a pleasing, graceful, and alert general appearance.

**Tack** — equipment used in riding, such as saddle, bridle, blanket, etc.

**Thrifty condition** — healthy, active, vigorous.

**Yearling** — a colt or filly that is at least 1 year but not yet 2 years old.
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"4-H Light Horse Project," 4-H-Ag 32, University of California, 1957.

"You and Your 4-H Horse," Circular 2410, Colorado Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1956.

"4-H Light Horses," Iowa Horse and Mule Breeders’ Association, 1950.

"Horsemanship and Horse Training," C-6170, Oregon State University, 1957.

"Horsemanship," 4-H Circular 109, University of Missouri, 1952.


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