

# **Right From the Start**

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## Horses

# Characteristics

- Social
- Quick
- Agile
- Biters
- Attentive
- Expressive
- Blind spots:
  - Directly behind
  - Under the neck
  - Under the belly
- Long-term project
  - Teach them respect.
  - A good working relationship is important.





# Characteristics cont.

- Good night vision
- Very wide field of vision
  - 65 degrees of binocular
  - 285 degrees of monocular
- Good sense of hearing
- Acute sense of smell
- Great sense of balance
- Well-developed sense of touch
- Advanced sense of taste

# Danger Points

- Body mass
- Feet
  - Kicking
  - Stepping on
- Teeth



# Long-term Project

- Teach them respect
- Develop a good working relationship



# Horse Selection

- Temperament
- Age
- Size
- Cost
- Gender
- Breed
- Conformation
- Riding discipline
- Skill level of the handler and horse





# Equipment

- Nylon or leather halter with stout buckle
- Rope halter
- Cotton lead rope
- Grooming tools



# Safety

- Approach animal slowly and calmly toward the shoulder
- Be aware of blind spots:
  - Under the neck
  - Directly behind
  - Under the belly
- Supervision
- Match horse and handler appropriately
- Abandon project if unsafe



# Acclimatization

- Environments
- People
- Sounds
- Lights



# Haltering

- Make the horse aware of you
- Use lead rope for control during haltering and un-haltering
- Allow horse to put its nose in the halter
- Tie the knot in the appropriate place on the rope halter.



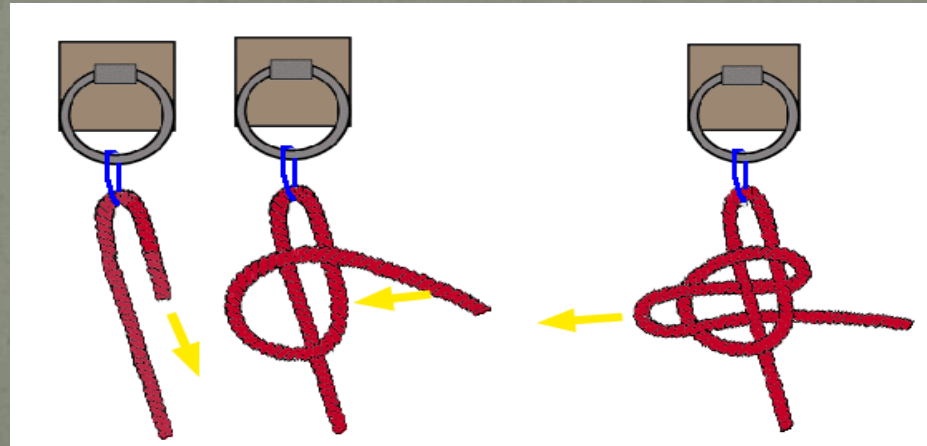


# Leading

- Handler should be even with the horse's neck
- Lead rope should be about 9-12 feet long
  - Hold lead rope close to the snap with right hand
  - Hold excess rope loosely in left hand
  - Do not let lead rope dangle; poses a tripping risk
- Typically want to pivot horse away from handler
  - Reduces tripping risk
  - Reduces stepping on risk
  - May have to pivot towards handler in turns of less than 90 degrees

# Tying

- Never use bridle reins to tie a horse
- Use halter and cotton lead rope
- Tie to a sturdy object
- Tie horses at their eye level, above the withers
- Allow only 18-24 inches of slack
- Use a slip knot





# Tying



# Grooming

- Make animal aware of your presence
- Relaxing for the horse
- All handlers should stand on the same side of the horse
- Pull tail to the side for brushing
  - Do not stand behind the horse



# Lifting the Feet

- Keep a hand on the horse at all times
- Stand to the side; not behind
- Point the hoof pick away from you
- Be slow and gentle
- Keep your feet out of the way



# Wash Rack

- Ensure good footing
  - Rubber mats
- Always have an escape route for the handler



# Maintaining Control

- Vary the horses speed
- Pivot the horse
- Stop horse
- Back horse up



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## Production Horses



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# Broodmares

- Social
- Aggressive when feeding
- Protective when in production

# Stallions

- Very aggressive
- Not worked with as often
- Pose a high risk for inexperienced handlers



# Weaned Foal

- Excitable
- Tend to run
- Easily startled

# Training Facility Horses

- Most not highly trained yet
- Spook easily
- Inexperienced handlers need supervision





# The Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education

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