

NOVICE EQUESTRIAN STUDY GUIDE:

RIDING:

The two styles of riding you can choose to learn:

1. English – Hunt Seat Equestrian – The forward jumping seat style of English.
2. Western – Basic western riding skills that will be used for most western disciplines.

There are five basic grooming tools used on a horse. Always thoroughly brush a horse before saddling. This prevents saddle sores:

1. Curry Comb
2. Hard Brush
3. Soft Brush
4. Main and Tail Comb
5. Hoof Pick

Stirrups:

Stirrup length can be estimated on the ground. Hold your fingertips at the top of the stirrup strap that is attached to the saddle and stretch the stirrup out. Try to fit it directly into your armpit. If it fits it is generally a good length. Once on the horse and legs stretched downwards the stirrup should hit just below the ankle.

Always remember to keep heels lower than toes with the stirrup on the ball of your foot and toes angled more forward than to the side.

Rider should hold onto the horse with more calf muscle than any other muscle in the body. The legs are held right behind the girth.

Mounting:

Always tighten the girth before mounting the horse. When mounting, always hold the reins and mane in left hand, place your right hand on the back of the saddle and your left foot in the stirrup. Holding firm with hands and putting majority of your weight on your left hand and onto your left leg in the stirrup, lift yourself up throwing your right leg over the saddle and carefully place yourself into the saddle.

Five Natural Aids to Control your horse:

1. Eyes
2. Voice
3. Hands
4. Seat/Weight
5. Legs

Reins:

Hands should be holding the reins, low and in front of the pommel / saddle horn. Ideally you should be able to reach your thumbs across and touch and reach your pinkie fingers down and touch the neck.

Sitting Saddle Position:

Sit up straight in the saddle with shoulders relaxed and eyes up. The head plays a huge part in the ability to steer a horse, because it is connected to the spine, which in turn sends signals to the horse's spine.

We will be using direct reining which means that direct pressure from the reins to the bit in the horse's mouth is what controls the horse's direction. To turn left pressure is applied to the left rein only. To turn right pressure is applied to the right rein only. To stop pressure is applied equally to the both reins.

When sitting in a saddle this is called a three point position; two legs and the seat are the three points touching the horse.

There is also a two point position used for forward jumping. It is called two point because only two points of your body are touching the horse; your two legs. In order to two point, rise up out of the saddle and bend at the hips keeping your center of gravity over the saddle. You will only rise up about an inch. Reach out of the mane with reins and hold mane. Hold this position. This position is used when actually jumping. It also has other benefits i.e., building strength in your legs, stretching the back of your heels as well as creates a better sense of balance.

A posting rider should always make sure they are on the correct diagonal (rising when the outside shoulder of the horse is forward)

An Independent seat means that the hands, seat and legs have the ability to move independent of each other. For example; your hands stay still as your body moves up and down with the rhythm of the trot. This is a very important skill to achieve.

Moving the Horse:

A horse moves away from pressure. When asking a horse to move forward, both the legs apply pressure equally to the sides of the horse while the seat pushes forward slightly. While turning, the inside leg should be applying more pressure so that the horse turns keeping the outside leg steady so the horse doesn't swing the hind quarters out.

Gaits (Speeds of Moving):

Horses have four distinct gaits:

1. Walk – Slowest gait – one hoof off the ground
2. Trot – two hooves of the ground at a time and is very bumpy
3. Canter – three hooves off the ground at a time and resembles a rocking motion.
4. Gallop – Fastest gait – all four hooves off the ground

When changing directions a half turn is performed turning to the inside of the arena.

When passing someone, it is generally good to pass on the outside and announce to the other rider that you are "outside" of them.

Cavellettes are poles on the ground that are trotted over. This is an exercise to learn the rhythm needed for jumping.

Serpentine – It is a bending and steering exercise where the rider forms an "S" pattern on the ground.

Horse Lead Leg

Being on the correct lead leg is imperative to success. This means that the horse is reaching forward more with the inside leg versus the outside leg at a canter. This creates a smoother ride and is more natural for the horse. For example, a left lead the horse is stretching forward further with the left leg. Generally, the horse is also traveling in a left circle as well.

Always walk the horse before asking for any type of strenuous movement and always walk to cool down after completing a strenuous ride.

Canter – The outside leg taps the horse three to four inches behind the girth.

Horse Care:

When untacking, the girth is un-done on the left side only, and the throat latch of the bridle is the only part of the bridle that is unbuckled. Care should be to remove both reins and the headstall off the ears and allow the horse to let go of the bit.

A horse prefers routine, so he should be fed the same time of day, every day.

Horses were made to move constantly, so the more turn-out (free roam) time the better.

A balanced diet consists of a mixture grains, grass and hay. Supplements can be added as needed.

Every horse has a certain amount of worms in their system. In order to keep the worm burden under control, worming is vital. A paste wormer is given every two months. The type of paste wormer should be cycled, so that the worms do not develop resistance to any specific ingredients.

Hooves grow like fingernails and need to be trimmed every 6-8 weeks in order to ensure proper hoof health.

A healthy horse should have a clear eye, clean nose or with clear mucus, smooth coat, and ribs that can be felt but not seen.

Horse Classification:

The gender and age of a horse has its own classification:

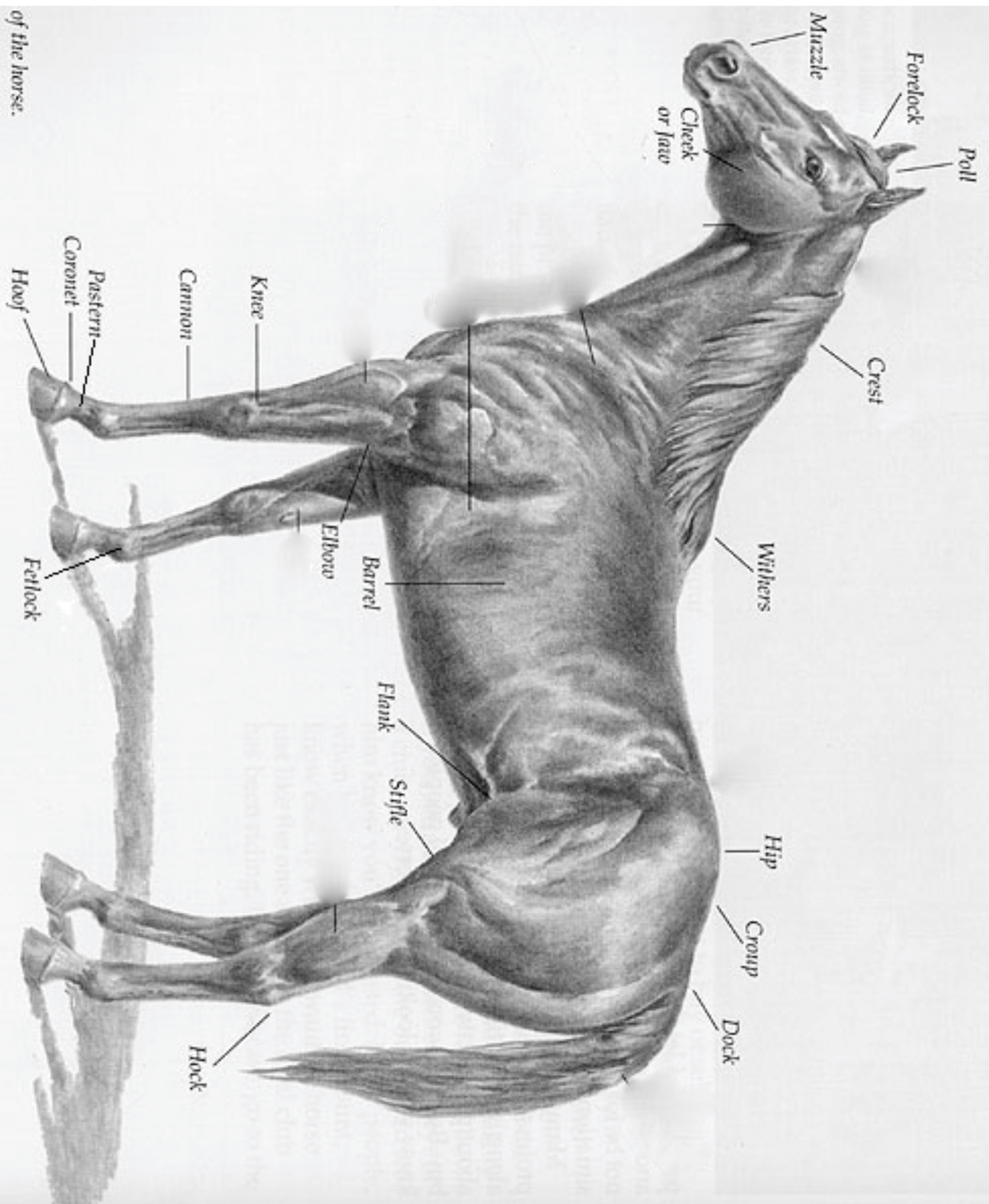
1. A baby horse is called a foal.
2. A female horse under the age of three is called a filly.
3. A male horse under the age of three is called a colt.
4. A female horse over the age of three is called a mare.
5. A male horse over the age of three and has been castrated is called a gelding.
6. A male horse that is intact is called a stallion.

A horse is measured in hands. A hand equals 4 inches. A horse measured from the ground to the top of the withers.

A pony is 14.2 hands or less.

A horse is classified as 14.2 hands or more.

of the horse.



Muzzle

Forelock

Poll

Crest

Withers

Barrel

Flank

Hip

Croup

Dock

Hock

Elbow

Knee

Cannon

Pastern

Coronet

Hoof

Fetlock

Fetlock

