

North Carolina

4-H

HORSE MANUAL

The 4-H Horse Project

This project is designed to help 4-H members:

1. Develop leadership, initiative, self-reliance, sportsmanship and other desirable traits of character.
2. Experience the pride of owning a horse or pony and being responsible for its management.
3. Develop an appreciation of horseback riding as a healthy and wholesome form of recreation.
4. Learn skill in horsemanship and an understanding of the business of breeding, raising and training horses.
5. Increase knowledge of safety precautions to prevent injury to themselves, others, and their mount.
6. Promote greater love for animals and a humane attitude toward them.
7. Prepare for citizenship responsibilities through working in groups and supporting community horse projects and activities.

1. Be responsible for managing and caring for the horse. This includes grooming, exercising, training, feeding and stall care. (If boarding your horse at public stables, feeding and stall care may be omitted.)
2. Complete the *4-H Horse Record Book*, 4H R-5-11, which will be provided by your leader. This should be returned to your leader when completed. Younger members should ask older 4-H members or leaders for help when they begin record work.
3. Keep detailed records throughout the year to be included in your project summary. These records should include a description of your feeding program, expenses you may have, and what you plan to teach your horse.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Prepared by

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HOW TO SELECT A HORSE FOR YOUR PROJECT

Characteristics of the Breeds

There are three main types of horses—work horses, light horses and ponies. Types are classified according to size and build and particular use. Since there are few work horses left in this state, light horses and ponies are emphasized in this manual.

American Albino.—This light horse breed is distinguishable by its albino color. American albinos are used both for riding and utility purposes.

American Saddle Horse.—This breed furnishes an easy ride with great style and animation. They may be either three or five gaited. Three-gaited horses, by custom, are shown with their manes roached, or clipped short. Five-gaited horses are shown with a flowing mane and full length tail. Most are 15 to 16 hands high and weigh 1,000 to 1,200 pounds. This breed is noted for a beautiful head carried on a long, graceful neck; short, rounded back; level croup; high-set tail; and proud action.

Appaloosa.—Colorful spotting is characteristic of the breed. Most Appaloosas are white over the loins and hips and have dark, round or egg-shaped spots ranging in size from specks up to 3 to 4 inches in diameter. The eye shows more white than in other breeds.

Arabian.—Distinctive characteristics of the Arabians are medium to small size, beautiful head, short coupling, docility, great endurance, and a gay way of going. Their usual height is 14 to 15.1 hands and they weigh 850 to 1,100 pounds. The breed is used primarily for saddle, show and stock purposes.

Hackney.—High natural action is first among the distinguishing features of this breed. The Hackney varies more in size than any other breed, ranging from 12 to 16 hands. The Hackney pony should not exceed 14.2 hands. The Hackney has become essentially a show animal.

Morgan.—The Morgan is an American breed that was developed in New England. It has always been noted for smooth trim lines, good style, easy keeping qualities, sturdiness, endurance, and docility. The average height is 15.2 hands and the average weight is 1,050 pounds.

Morocco Spotted Horse.—Horses of this breed are spotted. The secondary color, white, must not be less than 10 per cent, not including legs or white on face.

Palomino.—Palominos must be golden and have light colored manes and tails. White markings on the face or below the knees or hocks are acceptable. The preferred height is 14.2 to 16 hands and the preferred weight 1,000 to 1,200 pounds.

Pinto.—The word "pinto" refers to a marked or spotted horse, a description first applied to the

spotted descendants of the horses of the Spanish Conquistadores. The Pinto is a color breed, for color is its most distinctive characteristic. The breed registry association is attempting to preserve, improve, and extend the use of a color and type of horse whose development has gone hand in hand with the transformation of America.

Pony of the Americas.—The Pony of the Americas is a new breed, with both color and height requisites. The breed registry association describes their conformation standard as a miniature cross between a Quarter Horse and an Arabian.

Quarter Horse.—While quarter horses are characteristically stocky, those of extreme "bull-dog" type are undesirable. They seldom exceed 15 hands and weigh 1,000 to 1,200 pounds. The head is somewhat short and is distinctive because of the small, alert ears and heavily muscled cheeks and jaw. Their build makes them ideal stock horses. They have a calm disposition.

Shetland Pony.—Shetland Ponies are less than 11.2 hands; most are less than 10.2 hands. There are two distinct types. One resembles a small draft horse and the other a small road-type horse. They may be almost any of the horse colors, both broken and solid.

Standardbred.—While animals of this breed generally are smaller, longer bodied, less leggy, and less refined than Thoroughbreds, they show more substance and ruggedness and have better dispositions. They range from 900 to 1,300 pounds, and from 15 to 16 hands.

Tennessee Walking Horse.—In this breed particular emphasis is placed on the gait known as the running-walk. Tennessee Walking Horses average 15.2 hands and between 1,000 to 1,200 pounds. Many colors occur in the breed.

Thoroughbred.—Thoroughbreds possess a high degree of quality and refinement and are built for speed. Their bodies are long, deep chested, rather narrow, upstanding, and often a bit angular. They are active, energetic and nervous. They stand 15 to 17 hands. In racing trim, Thoroughbreds may weigh 900 to 1,025 pounds; stallions in breeding condition may weigh up to 1,400 pounds or more.

Welsh Pony.—Welsh Ponies are an intermediate size between Shetland Ponies and other light horse breeds. They usually range from 10 to 12 hands and weigh less than 600 pounds. Welsh Ponies have the build of miniature coach horses; they are more upstanding than most Shetlands.

Some of you will be interested in Jumping Horses. This is not a breed within itself, but usually a combination of several breeds.

What To Consider in Selecting the Breed.

What you plan to do with your horse is the most important factor to consider when buying a horse. Consider the characteristics of each breed and then decide which breeds will meet your needs best.

METHODS OF OBTAINING A HORSE

1. **As a gift.**
2. **Own a Mare.**—Raise a foal of your own.
3. **Buy or borrow a horse.**—Insist on a trial of any horse you buy. Find out as much of the horse's history as you can, such as: what he was used for, who his owner was, any record of sickness, any vices he might have. Observe the horse's disposition and friendliness. Will he stand when you mount? If you doubt him, don't take him.

See a consultant. This is a good way to buy your first horse.

Selecting the individual horse can be even more important than selecting the breed. When selecting horses, choose those that approach the ideal of the breed. Look for sound, alert, healthy horses with the correct type and conformation for the job you want.

Remember, small size does not make a pony safe for a child. For a pleasure horse, training is probably more important than type. You will find that older horses that have been trained carefully are safer than well-trained young horses.

UNSOUNDNESS IN HORSES

There are some types of unsoundness you should be able to detect when selecting your horse.

A. Eyes

Blindness.—A very serious defect because it makes a horse useless for almost all jobs.

Moon blindness.—An inflammation of the eyes which usually ends in blindness.

B. Wind

Heaves.—Caused by ruptured air vesicles in the lungs. Heaves is characterized by abnormal breathing and a short, hollow cough.

Roaring.—Loud, unnatural noise in breathing caused by paralysis of the larynx.

C. Hind Leg

Stifled.—A dislocation of the stifle joint which, if permanent, is a serious unsoundness.

Curb.—A swelling on the back side of the hock and 4 to 6 inches below the point of the hock; caused by a sprain of the tendon or the ligament in that area.

Thoroughpin.—A soft, puffy swelling located in the hollows of the hock.

Bog Spavin.—A soft, fluctuating swelling at the inner face of the hock.

Bone Spavin.—A serious unsoundness affecting the bones of the hock joint.

Capped hock.—A swelling at the point of the hock.

Stringhalt.—A muscular disorder characterized by the sudden, irregular, violent jerking up or flexing of the hock.

D. Foreleg

Fistula.—An ulcerous lesion at the withers which should be treated by a veterinarian.

Sweeny.—An atrophy of the shoulder muscles.

Capped Elbow.—A bruise or swelling at the point of the elbow.

Splint.—A bony enlargement located most commonly on the inside of the front cannon.

Bowed Tendon.—A swelling of the back side of the cannon.

Cocked Ankles.—Partial dislocation of the ankle brought about by a shortening of the tendons.

Ringbone.—A bony enlargement usually around the pastern.

Sidebone.—A bony enlargement at the hoof head and back toward the heel.

Toe Cracks.—Splitting of the hoof wall from the coronet downward.

Navicular disease.—A chronic inflammation involving the navicular bone and other structures within the hoof.

Founder.—An inflammation of the sensitive laminae of the foot, which is caused by over-eating.

Corns.—A bruise on the sole that may cause lameness.

FUNDAMENTALS OF FEEDING HORSES

Quality oats and timothy hay have always been considered standard feeds for light horses. However, feeds with similar nutritive values can be substituted to obtain a balanced ration at the lowest cost. Other feeds which can be used are corn, barley, wheat, and sorghum, as well as many varieties of hay.

Make sure that the feed you start with is readily available all the time. It is not a good practice to switch feeds.

Hay can be grass or grass-legume mixture. The proportion of concentrate to hay will be determined by the energy needs of your horse. As energy needs increase with greater use, increase the concentrate. The faster you work your horse, the more energy he needs. However, do not over-feed him. A good feeding rule-of-thumb is 1 pound of grain and 1.1 pounds of hay per day for each 100 pounds of weight. Observe your horse closely

and regulate the feed to his appetite. The following ration is suggested:

6 lbs. oats	2 lbs. bran
2 lbs. corn	10-12 lbs. hay

A controlled amount of bulk is necessary to the horse's diet. (Too much results in shortwindedness, labored breathing and easy tiring.) Never use feeds which are moldy, old, very coarse or stale.

Legume pastures or legume-grass pastures can be used to supply a large portion of the diet and are very economical when compared to other feeds. In addition, pastures provide space for the horse to exercise.

A good commercial mineral supplement may be fed, if desired. Or, you can make your own mineral supplement by mixing two parts of steamed bone meal with one part salt.

Horses should have ample quantities of clean, fresh, cool water. They will drink from 10 to 12 gallons of water each day.

CARING FOR YOUR HORSE

A. **Housing.**—A large section of any building could be used, but an individual stall is the best place to keep a horse. Stalls should be about 12 feet by 12 feet with earthen or wooden flooring. The stable should be in a well-drained location. Walls should be made from smooth boards and should have no nails, wires, or hooks in them. The ceiling should be at least 8 feet high.

Locate the feed box and hay rack at a height convenient for the horse. Keep dry bedding (shavings, sawdust, straw, or peanut hulls) in the stall.

Rail fences 4 to 5 feet high should be used when horses are confined in a small area. Barbed wire fencing is dangerous for horses.

Always groom your horse outside the stable when the weather permits. Thus, you will need a paddock or other small fenced area to use. This area can also be used to exercise your horse.

A tack room or some convenient cool, dry place will be needed to store your tack (saddles, bridles, and harness). A tack box can be located in the tack room to store your brushes, combs, soap, first-aid supplies, etc.

B. **Exercise.**—Proper exercise is essential to keep a horse in good condition and to develop strong, sound feet and legs.

Riding a horse each day is the best way to exercise him. When the horse is not used, he should be allowed to run on a pasture or have access to a paddock.

C. **Grooming.**—Ask your Horse Project Leader to work with you in grooming your horse.

A clean stall is essential to reduce the amount of time spent in cleaning your horse. Vigorous grooming massages the body mus-

cles and improves a horse's fitness. It stimulates the pores to produce natural oils which will bring a shine to his coat and cleans his hair.

Your grooming equipment may include:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Metal currycomb | 5. Dandy brush |
| 2. Rubber currycomb | 6. Sponge |
| 3. Hoof pick | 7. Finishing brush |
| 4. Rice root brush | 8. Grooming cloth |

Keep your tools clean and have a special place to store them.

Steps in Grooming:

1. Take horse out of the stall and tie him securely.
2. Clean his feet. (Let your leader show you how.)
3. If you keep your horse shod, shoes should be replaced or reset every 4 to 6 weeks.
4. Brush hair with currycomb and dandy brush. Start with the currycomb on the left side of the neck immediately behind the head. Never use the currycomb on the head or on the legs from the knees and hocks down. Use the dandy brush on the head and face.
5. Now brush the mane and tail. Wash the tail with warm soap and water, when needed.
6. With the grooming cloth, wipe the ears, face, eyes, lips, sheath and dock. You may also use the sponge on the ears, nostrils, and lips.

When you work with your horse, do not abuse him. Do not apply too much pressure when grooming.

D. **Health.**—Know your local veterinarian. He can help you keep your horse healthy. Since your horse is a valuable animal, at the first sign of sickness, call your project leader. The following suggestions will help you protect your horse from sickness or injury:

1. When you ride your horse, always give him a warm-up period before exerting him.
2. Do not over-feed your horse just before a hard ride.
3. Keep the horse's area clean of glass, cans, and wire.
4. Give your horse daily exercise.
5. Reduce feed when he is not being used regularly.
6. Inspect your horse daily and look for abnormal conditions.
7. Keep the stall clean and dry.
8. Keep your horse clean by grooming him every day.
9. When your horse is hot, do not allow him to drink too much water.
10. When your horse is losing weight, won't eat, or has some other abnormal condition, get help from your project leader, parent or your veterinarian.

GOOD HORSEMANSHIP

The type of tack or equipment you need will be determined by the style of riding you plan to do. The pictures below show a rider and the tack used for both Western and English riding.

Mounting and Dismounting.—Stand on the left side of the horse to mount. While facing the rear, turn the stirrup one-half turn and place your foot in. Hold the reins in your left hand and grasp the horse's neck just ahead of the saddle. Use your right hand to grasp the saddle and lift yourself upward. Now swing your right leg over the horse and sit in the saddle.

Dismounting is the reverse of mounting. Swing your right leg over the horse's back while grasping the saddle with your right hand. Free your left foot and stand facing the front of the horse with the reins in your right hand.

Riding.—When you ride, be careful and use sound judgement to protect both you and your horse. Do not gallop when you are in a group. Remember that any yell or loud noise you make may cause trouble for someone else in the group. Always treat other people in the group the way you would like to be treated.

The different gaits of horses:

Walk—A slow, flat-footed, four-beat gait.

Trot—A two-beat gait in which the opposite fore-and hind legs act together.

Pace—A rapid two-beat gait in which the lateral fore-and hind legs function together.

Amble—A lateral gait, slower than the pace and more broken in cadence.

Rack—A fast, very flashy, four-beat gait.

Gallop—A fast, three-beat gait in which two diagonal legs are paired. First, a hind foot touches the ground, second the other hind foot and its diagonal forefoot touch at the same time, followed by the remaining forefoot.

Canter—A three-beat gait done while under restraint. The sequence of hoofbeats is the same as the gallop. In cantering to the right, the right foreleg should lead; and when cantering to the left, the left foreleg should lead.

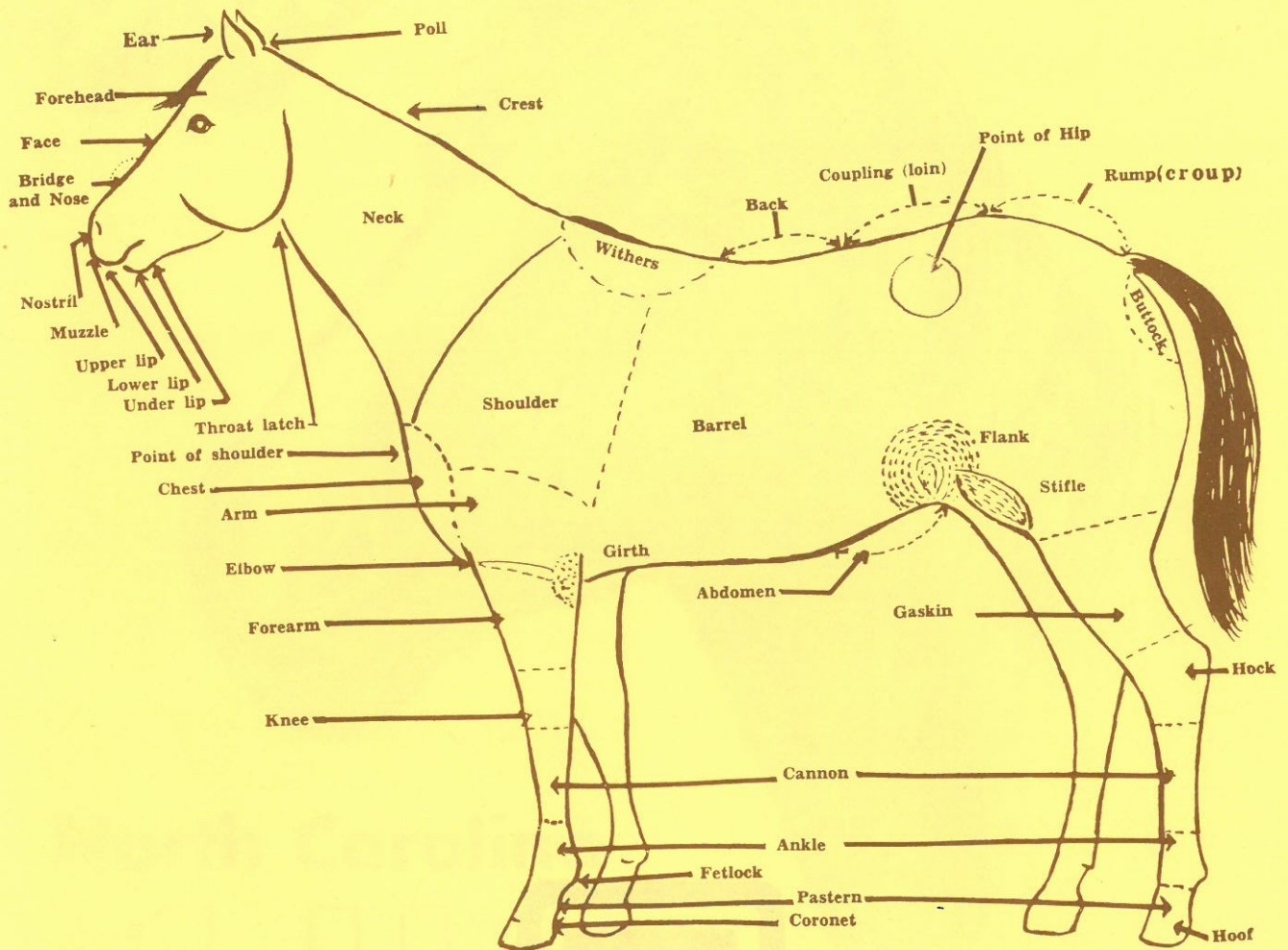
Running Walk—A slow, single-foot or four-beat gait differing from the stepping pace in that the break in impact occurs between the diagonal fore-and hind feet.

Fox Trot—A short, broken, somewhat uncollected trot.

Showing at Halter —Show your horse to his best advantage when he is displayed for inspection. Stand him squarely on all legs. If a horse's front end is lower than his hind end, he looks out of balance. Therefore, always have his forefeet on higher ground than his hindfeet. Lead the horse with the lead in your right hand, giving him enough lead to keep his head, neck, and body in a straight line as he moves. Keep full control of him. When making a turn, turn him to the right.



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