

Horse Safety:

Always practice safety when it comes to a horse and you.

Our tools are Voice and Touch: Use a soothing voice and touch so the horse can keep track of your location.

A horse's defensive weapons are Teeth, Hooves, Head, Body: Parts of the horse than can cause injury.

The Aggressive Horse: There are few horses that are truly "out to get you" though they do exist and should be handled by a professional trainer for the purpose of retraining.

The Sleepy Relaxed Horse: The sleepy dozing or relaxed horse can be more easily startled than an alert horse. Still, practice good safety procedure even if your horse is calm, relaxed and never hurt a fly. Don't let his "doziness" rub off.

Scary Things: Noises, objects or movements. Anything can be a "scary" thing to a horse. Even something he's seen before. Scary noises or objects may include: plastic bags, umbrellas, raincoats, tarps, etc.

WALKING BEHIND A HORSE:

DO: Either walk directly behind keeping contact with the horse or walk six feet behind out of striking range.

DON'T: Walk up from behind, work or walk in the "danger zone."

WORKING AROUND A HORSE:

DO: Always either stand or squat in a ready position so you can move quickly if necessary.

DO: Speak in a soothing and calm tone.

DO: Hold the front hoof while cleaning so your head is not in striking range of the rear hoof.

DO: Walk around behind the horse to get to the other side for grooming.

DO: Make sure you have plenty of working room between the horse and any obstacle.

DON'T: Sit, kneel or lie down. From these positions you cannot move fast enough to get out of danger.

DON'T: "Horse around", make sudden movements or startling sounds.

DON'T: Walk under the horse (a well aimed kick at a fly could hit you instead) or walk in front under the lead rope he is tied with (a startling sound could make him bolt and could crush you against the post or wall. The only exception is when a horse is in cross ties and there is no obstacle in front.

DON'T: Squeeze into a narrow space to groom the horse before getting the horse to move over.

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LEADING YOUR HORSE

- DO: Lead or stand at least one step to the front and left of the shoulder.
- DO: Turn your horse away from you while you are leading unless you are doing a bending/suppling lesson.
- DO: Insist on manners when leading your horse. He should be paying attention to you not the grass or his buddies.
- DON'T: Don't stand in front of the shoulder. You could easily get run down if your horse bolts.
- DON'T: Turn your horse in toward you where he could run you down.
- DON'T: Let your horse gawk off, or walk in front of you while leading.

RIDING YOUR HORSE

- DO: Ride at your level of experience and where you are comfortable.
- DO: Train your horse to load into a trailer properly.
- DON'T: Let anyone push you beyond your comfort zone or into a dangerous situation.
- DON'T: Get into a trailer with your horse while loading.

AN UNFAMILIAR HORSE

- DO: Ask permission of an owner to pet or fuss over their horse. It is best to approach a new horse from an angle with a calm demeanor. When a few steps away, if the horse appears calm and accepting, stretch out your hand and let the horse smell you. Mutual smelling and blowing is the traditional horse greeting.
- DON'T: Approach an unfamiliar horse aggressively or thoughtlessly. An unfamiliar horse could have dangerous vices you don't know about.

HORSE SAFETY

- DO: Take your horse's halter off when turning him out or use a safety halter or safety halter attachment.
- DO: Tie your horse using a safety knot and safety halter using a cotton lead rope.
- DO: Use safety ties while tying in a horse trailer.
- DO: Tie net hay bags properly so they don't hang in the 'danger zone' when empty.

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- DO: Use shipping boots while tailoring to protect legs and coronary bands.
- DO: Keep a pocket knife handy at all times to cut lines in an emergency.
- DO: Carry wire cutters on trail rides.
- DO: Check your barn, barnyard, and pastures for anything dangerous.
- DON'T: Turn your horse out in a nylon halter.
- DON'T: Tie your horse in a nylon halter or nylon lead rope. If you must tie without a safety halter use a safety halter attachment.
- DON'T: Tie in a trailer with a regular lead rope.

RIDER SAFETY

- DO: ALWAYS wear a helmet.
- DO: Wear proper footwear having a heel.
- DO: In an emergency, if you fall and get a foot hung up in the stirrup - twist your hips and shoulders to flip onto your stomach to help your foot slip from the stirrup. Consider using some type of safety stirrup if you will be riding alone.
- DO: Keep all of your tack in good repair and inspect it before each ride.