
HORSE MODULE: **HORSE**

Grooming

WHAT WILL WE LEARN?

In this module you will learn how to groom a horse and to employ some basic safety rules when working a horse from the ground.

WHO CAN HELP?

Horses are popular and you can find those familiar with the creatures quite easily. Find someone who has experience with horses, local stables, 4-H clubs.

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

A horse to practice on! Make sure the animal is calm and used to kids.

LET'S GET EDUCATED!

Grooming Horses

Grooming is important in maintaining the health and happiness of your horse. Domesticated horses must rely on humans to provide the opportunity for skin care. Grooming, no matter who does it (horses or humans) increases the circulation to the skin which then releases the oils that provide luster to the horse's coat and can help identify any abnormalities or wounds.

Safety First

Following are a few common horse sense practices that will reduce the chances of an accident:

- Do not jump around, move suddenly, or behave nervously around horses. All of these actions result in a nervous horse that is unsafe to work around.
- Hard-toed shoes or boots should be worn when working around horses. One of the most common horse-related injuries is having ones feet stepped on.
- Always let the horse know what you intend to do. Avoid quick, sudden movements.
- Keep all equipment away from the immediate work area. That way neither the horse nor you can trip on it.

LET'S HAVE SOME FUN!

The Grooming Process

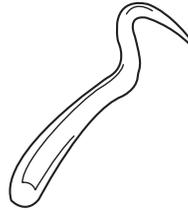
1. Start grooming on the near or left side of the neck and work towards the rear of the horse.
 - Areas that have few muscles and bones near the surface, such as the face, legs and hips, should be groomed carefully and gently.
 - Stand near the horse as you groom it. Make fluid, not quick jerky movements that are likely to startle the horse.
 - When changing sides, either walk far enough away to avoid getting kicked or stay close to the horse's rear quarter with a hand on the rump, to break the momentum of the kick.
 - Never step over the lead rope or crossties (which should not be low enough to step over anyway).
 - Never crawl under the horse's belly. Even the most docile horse can spook and step on you.
2. The grooming process begins with currying.
 - The purpose of currying is to loosen caked-on dirt and to bring dust and dandruff to the surface for easy removal.
 - Start currying at the neck and firmly brush the hair in circular movements while working towards the rear.
 - Pay particular attention to areas you cannot see such as the belly and underline, between the legs and behind the ears, because they are often forgotten.
 - Vigorous circular movements when currying increases circulation to the skin.
 - Be careful not to curry too vigorously on bony areas, and do not use a curry comb on the face. A rubber curry mitt or soft rubber curry should be used on the bony areas and the face.
3. Brushing with a stiff body brush should follow currying.
 - Brushing returns the hair to its normal position and removes the dirt brought to the surface by currying.
 - Brush with short, firm strokes not long fluid strokes.
 - While brushing with one hand, hold the curry in the other to clean out the brush every few strokes.
 - Do not use the stiff brush on the face.
 - Remember to brush the belly and underline. Be aware that some horses are ticklish there and may become fidgety.
 - During fly season, particularly, a horse often thrusts its hind leg forward to chase flies from the abdomen; therefore, it is wise to keep your head and body out of striking range when working in that area.

4. Follow the stiff brushing by brushing with a soft brush.
 - This second brushing removes the dust left by the coarser, stiff brush and brings oils to the surface, giving a lustrous shine to the horses coat.
 - The face can also be brushed with the finer, soft brush. Before grooming the head, untie the horse and hold it by the halter.
 - With a soft brush start at the forehead and move down the face, brushing with the grain of the hair. Avoid the eyes. Be gentle around the nose and mouth. Some horses are sensitive or ticklish in these areas and may try to move their heads to avoid the brush.
 - When grooming the legs, bend at the hips or remain in a squat position. Do not sit on the ground or rest one or both knees on the ground. These are committed positions, which means once in them, it takes longer than a split second to get out of them. In committed positions, if the horse should become frightened, the time it would take you to move away from scrambling feet and the chance of becoming seriously injured is increased. It always helps to have your free hand resting on the horses body while working on the legs. This way you can feel the muscles tense up and be warned that the horse is about to panic.
5. Grooming the mane and tail differs according to the breed and use of the horse.
 - For most hunters and stock horses, the mane and tail are brushed with either a Sarvis curry or a mane and tail comb.
 - A horse with fine, thin hair that falls out easily should have its mane and tail groomed frequently with nothing more severe than a soft brush, and the knots separated with ones fingers to limit hair loss.
 - Burrs and knots should not be combed out. Rather pull hairs away from the burr or knot until it is free. This method prevents excessive hair loss.
 - When brushing the tail, always stand to the side of the horse.
 - During fly season it is good to apply a liquid fly repellent. Be cautious when using repellents as they may be harmful to touch or breath in. Follow the manufacturers directions.

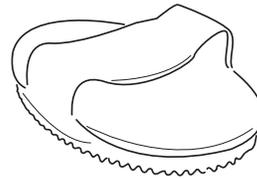
GROOMING TOOLS

Below are pictures of tools that may be used to groom horses. Draw a line to the right tool. Color the tools.

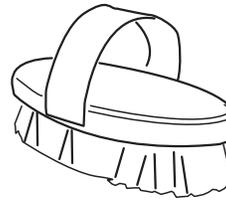
BODY BRUSH



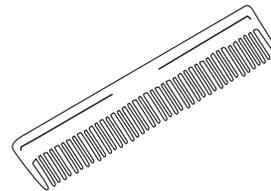
HOOF PICK



MANE COMB



CURRY COMB



What do you give a pony with a cold?

COUGH STIRRUP

MANE AND TAIL!

E Y R R U C E P
 N J E F L Z K U
 I V P N Y Q N I
 H D E T H D J F
 S A L X M T O V
 U L L S S O S B
 R L A T H E R K
 B I N S E C T R
 T M T B D R S X
 T A O C K D R O
 Y N S C H B P Y
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 S P E R J N L U
 E X N G T X N Q
 N M C N P T Y C

WORD LIST

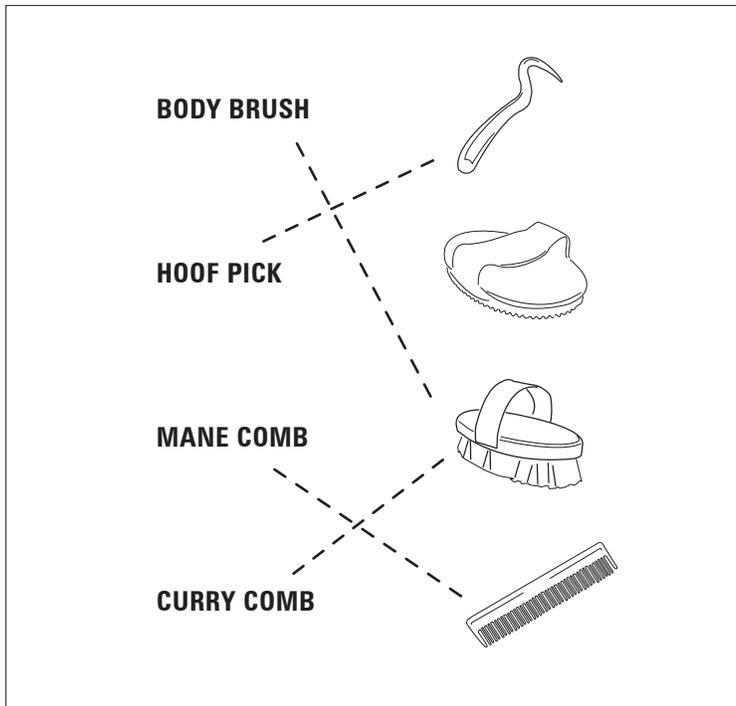
BODY	HOOF	SHED	CURRY
HALTER	REPELLANT	COMB	MANE
PICK	COAT	LATHER	
BRUSH	INSECT	SHINE	

What animal goes to bed with his shoes on?

A HORSE!

SOLUTIONS!

GROOMING TOOLS



MANE AND TAIL!

E Y R R U C + +
 N + E + + + + +
 I + P + Y + + +
 H + E + + D + F
 S A L + + + O +
 U + L + S O + B
 R L A T H E R +
 B I N S E C T +
 + M T + D R + +
 T A O C K + + +
 + N + C + + + +
 + E I + + + + +
 + P + + + + + +
 + + + + + + +

OVER, DOWN, DIRECTION

BODY (8,6,NW)
 HALTER (1,4,SE)
 PICK (2,13,NE)
 BRUSH (1,8,N)
 HOOF (5,7,NE)
 REPELLANT (3,1,S)
 COAT (4,10,W)
 INSECT (2,8,E)
 SHED (5,6,S)
 COMB (4,11,NW)
 LATHER (2,7,E)
 SHINE (1,5,N)
 CURRY (6,1,W)
 MANE (2,9,S)

MORE! MORE! MORE!

1. Take a class in basic horsemanship.

RESOURCES USED TO CREATE THIS MODULE

1. Dawn M. Richard and Karyn Malinowski, Ph.D., Rutgers Cooperative Extension State University of New Jersey. Publication date: November 1988.
2. www.puzzlemaker.school.discovery.com
3. www.ahajokes.com