

Horse Care Level 1 107 The principles of grooming and washing horses under direction

1. Know how to groom and wash horses

1.1 Describe the dangers of a dusty environment

A dusty environment can be dangerous for the horse and the handler and can cause allergies, coughs, runny noses, sore eyes and itchy skin.

Your horse will not be able to perform at 100 percent of his abilities if he is struggling with dust-related problems. Your horse will lose stamina and performance ability if he is struggling with dust-related health problems such as eye irritation, a runny nose, coughing or difficulty breathing. Allergic respiratory disease, which is most commonly known as heaves, can be caused by dusty or moldy hay and bedding.

Mild allergies are common when horses are subjected to a dusty environment. Do not be surprised if your horse has irritated, red, runny eyes, and a runny nose to match, when he has been breathing and eating dust. Your horse may develop a cough or start sneezing as a result of breathing in too much dust.

<https://animals.mom.com/health-effects-dust-horse-barns-6274.html>

1.2 Describe the dangers of wearing perfume and jewellery

Catching jewellery, losing jewellery, smell

When working around horses, the wearing of jewellery should be avoided. Earrings, other piercings and finger rings are easily caught and can either break or cause injury.

Necklaces could get caught and tighten around the handlers neck.

Jewellery can easily get lost when working with horses. Rings especially could slip off whilst riding or mucking out.

<https://www.bluecross.org.uk/advice/horse/safety-around-horses?amp>

The horse's range of smell is more acute than that of humans. Horses use their sense of smell to identify other horses, people, predators and therefore you should avoid wearing perfume when handling horses. Some perfumes can even cause the horse to have an allergic reaction.

<https://horses.extension.org/horse-senses/>

1.3 Describe the different types of grooming techniques and when to use them

Quartering

Quartering is a quick groom before exercise and should take less than 10 minutes. It is a quick 'tidy up' to ensure your horse is clean and tidy.

Quartering can also be described as: where you groom the horse in four sections (hence the name.) This is done by splitting the horse in half, head and shoulders and then quarters. This done on both sides splits the horse into four sections. Grooming a quarter at a time means that the horse can be covered up with his rugs during the groom which will prevent him getting too cold.

<https://www.pets4homes.co.uk/pet-advice/grooming-a-horse-over-winter.html>

Brushing off

Brushing off is a term used for a quick brush of the horse to remove any visible dirt or debris. This can be done with a dandy brush or body brush depending on how dirty the horse is.

Horses should be brushed before riding to ensure the saddle area is free from debris. After riding, your horse needs cleaning to remove sweat and accumulated dirt.

For a stabled horse, at the end of the day, you should lightly brush him over when you straighten or change the blankets.

<https://horseracingsense.com/why-brush-horse-before-after-riding-hates-it/>

Full groom

A full groom is best done after exercise. Grooming is more effective when the horse is warm as his pores will be open. Full grooming is not recommended for grass kept horses as it removes too much of the natural grease that keeps the horse warm and dry

Method of Full Grooming

Picking out the feet - using the hoof pick, pick up his feet one at a time. First, talk to him then face his tail. Start with his front leg and run your hand, closest to his body, down the back of his leg.

Horse Care Level 1 107 The principles of grooming and washing horses under direction

When you reach the fetlock say 'up' and squeeze the joint. Catch and support his leg under the hoof.

Dandy brush - for a grass-kept horse you should use the dandy brush all over his body to remove dried mud and caked on dirt. Start at the poll on the left (near) side and work over all the body and down the legs. Use short, flicking strokes to get all the dirt out from the long hair. Do not brush too hard on sensitive areas. On a stabled or clipped horse, the dandy brush is only used where his coat is long.

Cactus cloth - this can be used on a stabled or clipped horse, instead of the dandy brush, to remove stable stains, dirt, and sweat marks. It can also be used on horses with sensitive skin.

Body brush and curry comb - the body brush is the main brush used on a stabled horse. It's used to remove dirt, dust, and scurf from the skin. The curry comb is used to keep it clean.

Start with the mane. Throw the mane over to the opposite side of where it would normally lay. Brush the crest and exposed neck area. Then gradually pull the mane back a little at a time and brush through each section.

Once the mane is done work on the rest of the neck and progress down to the shoulders. Use short movements with enough pressure to penetrate through the hair to the skin. After every few strokes scrape the body brush against a curry comb to clean it. When you are grooming the left side of the horse the body brush should be in your left hand and the curry comb in your right. Switch them over to the other hands when you groom the right side. Use the body brush all over the horse including the legs. The body brush can also be used on the head and forelock. When brushing the face untie the horse.

Sponges - dampen one of the sponges and clean his eyes, nostril, and muzzle. With the other sponge wipe underneath his tail and the dock area. It's a good idea for the sponges to be different colors so that you don't get them mixed up. They must be cleaned regularly.

Water brush - use the water brush to 'lay' the mane and tail. Dip it in a bucket of water and shake off any excess. Dampen down any stray hairs on the mane. You can also use it to lay down the hairs at the top of the tail. This would be the time you would apply a tail bandage if necessary.

Hoof oil and brush - when the feet are clean and dry you may paint them with hoof oil. It is beneficial in summer when hooves tend to be dry and brittle and also in winter when the ground is wet. This also helps with the overall appearance when a horse is being formally inspected.

<https://whiteroseequestrian.com/grooming-a-horse/>

1.4 Describe importance of drying legs after washing

Chapped skin, cracked heels, cold, chills

Wet legs offer the perfect environment for the bacteria to breed, so always dry them afterwards. To do this, pat the skin down with a towel or use stable boots. If the horses legs are not dried properly the horses skin softens becoming prone to lesions. When their skin is damaged, it allows the bacteria *Dermatophilus Congolensis* to enter their body. This causes an infection, which results in scabs, lesions and swelling.

If a horse gets too cold and has chills after washing legs it can lower a horse's resistance to infection. Cracked heels, also called mud fever is caused by exposure to wet weather conditions that can soften the skin, allowing infection to seep in.

<https://www.naylors.com/blog/top-tips-winter-horse-care/>

1.5 Describe different grooming requirements of stabled and grass kept horses

Times of the year, welfare of the horse, environment

Stabled horse during winter: Keeping your horse clean through the winter not only keeps him looking good, but it's essential for his health. It's important to remove blankets regularly to thoroughly brush and remove any dirt, dust, and mud that has built up. Left unaddressed, a dirty coat can lead to bacterial and fungal infections. Comb through the mane and tail regularly with a

Horse Care Level 1 107 The principles of grooming and washing horses under direction

detangler to fight knots and snags. Spritzing the coat with a waterless bath product will help keep him fresh and clean through the cold months when baths are not always a possibility.
<https://horseandrider.com/.amp/horse-health-care/winter-grooming-54828>

Grass kept horse during winter: If your horse lives outside, in a herd situation, and does not wear rugs (and is therefore benefiting from mutual grooming sessions with other horses as well as being able to benefit from rolling and rubbing, wind and rain) then the only grooming you need to do is just before you ride him or her. Brushing leaves the essential oils in the coat whereas washing (hosing/sponging) does not (especially if you use detergent), so limit washing if your horse lives outside without rugs - especially in winter to the point of no washing other than maybe a quick sponge down (with no detergent) in the saddle area after riding if they are sweaty.

In summer, after exercise, any sweat can be removed with a wet sponge or a hose (no detergent or a very mild detergent). There is no need to wash the whole horse, just the sweaty areas. After scraping the water off and/or rubbing with a towel the horse can then be put back out to roll.

A stabled horse needs daily grooming sessions. Otherwise dead skin and hair build up and cause discomfort and skin problems. So once a day the rugs should be removed and the horse should be given a good and thorough grooming, starting with a stiff bristled brush (to remove dead skin and hair and to make up for the scratching and rubbing etc. that a natural living horse does on a daily basis) and finishing with a softer brush to remove dust.

Keep in mind that washing and hosing can remove essential oils from your horse's coat. So a horse that lives 'au natural' should not be washed too frequently otherwise the natural waterproofing agents in their skin will be removed.

<https://www.equiculture.net/blog/when-is-it-essential-to-groom-a-horse>

1.6 State the reasons why changes in the condition of the shoes (e.g. loose, lost, damaged) must be reported

Safety, soundness, welfare of the horse

Schedule a visit with your farrier as soon as you notice a loose shoe. But in the meantime, you'll want to take steps to either keep it in place or remove it.

When a horse's shoe comes loose the signs can be subtle or dramatic. A twisted or dangling shoe will be hard to miss, but if a sprung shoe pretty much stays in place, the only clue might be a sliding sound as the affected hoof hits hard ground. A bent shoe or one that's working its way off can alter a horse's gait or even make him appear lame.

A shoe that has gotten bent can place bruising pressure on the frog and other tissues in the hoof, and exposed nails and shifted clips can cause puncture wounds. Even without those specific hazards, a shoe that has lost nails and/or is so loose that you'd worry about it falling off may cause injury.

<https://equusmagazine.com/horse-care/loose-shoe-31225/>

1.7 Identify the items of the grooming kit

Dandy Brush - A dandy brush is a long oval brush with stiff, long bristles. The action of the dandy brush is to capture the loose dirt and hair that has been brought to the surface with the curry comb, and you can brush or flick that excess dirt and hair away. The bristles can be natural (rice root bristles) or synthetic. But the bristles of the dandy brush need to be stiff in order to do their job.

Body brush - The body brush is a large soft brush used to brush the dust out of the horse's coat. It is usually used in combination with a curry comb (iron curry comb, rubber curry comb or plastic curry comb).

Curry combs - Plastic and rubber curry combs are used to remove mud, sweat, loose hair and grease from a horse's body. Metal curry combs are used to clean body brushes and are not typically used on the horse itself.

Horse Care Level 1 107 The principles of grooming and washing horses under direction

Mane and tail combs - There are two main types of mane and tail combs– plastic and metal. A comb is often used on the mane to remove tangles, but care should be taken to minimize pulling the hairs out of the mane. Snarls or large tangles should be combed through and never cut out of the mane or tail.

Water brush - A water brush is a soft-bristled horse grooming brush used to apply water to the horse. As it isn't always necessary to apply water to the coat, you'll likely need these occasionally. The water brush is used to dampen the coat, mane, or tail of a horse for a quick wash down or to flatten unkempt hair.

Stable rubber - Toweling - Used in Racing yards, underneath a saddle cloth or poly pad, for hygiene. Aids absorption of sweat from the horse during exercise, therefore, minimising chafing. As a polishing cloth when producing horses for showing.

Hoof pick - It is important that you clean out your horse's hooves before and after riding, and even after going out to pasture. You do this by using a hoof pick.

Sponges - Sponges are used to wash the horse with horse shampoo for bathing abs for removing any sweat patches or grass stains.

<https://www.thesprucepets.com/how-to-groom-your-horse-1886027>

2.1 Describe the equipment which will be required for the activity and are commonly used

Quartering

- Dandy brush
- Body brush
- Curry comb
- Mane & tail comb
- Hoof pick

Brushing off

- Body brush
- Curry comb
- Sponge

Full groom

The essential kit

- Curry comb
- Dandy brush
- Body brush
- Metal curry comb
- Mane brush or comb
- Sponge
- Stable rubber
- Hoof pick
- Marlin spike
- Hoof oil
- Shine spray or conditioning spray
- Fly spray

Grass kept horse

- Dandy brush
- Curry comb
- Hoof pick

Horse Care Level 1 107 The principles of grooming and washing horses under direction

Different times of the year

During winter the horse may either grow a full coat which you can use a dandy brush on but if the horse is clipped you should only use a body brush as you could harm the horses skin. Dandy brush bristles are too firm to use on clipped horses or summer coats so you should only use a body brush where the bristles are softer.

<https://horseandcountry.tv/horse-grooming-101-a-guide-for-beginners/>

2.2 Describe the methods of maintaining the range of equipment in a fit state for use

Cleaning, washing

CLEANING YOUR GROOMING KIT

Once you've used your brushes for a while. they'll need a clean.

Taking one brush at a time, place it in a bucket of warm water with some washing up liquid and use your fingers to really rub the mixture into the bristles. If you have wooden backed brushes, try to keep the wood dry, otherwise your brushes will go mouldy and rotten!

Once you've washed most of the grease off your brushes, put them bristle down to dry. This will ensure that the water runs off the brush. Generally, brushes need to be washed every month or two.

STORING YOUR GROOMING KIT

Your grooming kit needs to be stored in a proper grooming box or tack tray so that it is all in the same place when you groom rather than being strewn across the yard! Make sure you clean out your grooming box regularly to avoid dirtying your brushes more.

<https://www.ponymag.com/pony-know-how/cleaning-your-grooming-kit/>

3.1 Outline the current health and safety legislation, codes of practice

Cleaning, washing

Substances harmful to health - In the UK exposure to hazardous substances, is regulated via controls on those who manufacture and distribute such chemicals and those who use such chemicals. In the riding context many of the chemicals will not be harmful in normal concentrations but will still be subject to regulation under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations, as amended in 2002 (The COSHH Regulations) (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/basics.htm>). These Regulations include provision to assess the risks to health from hazardous substances.

<https://www.cieh.org/media/1247/health-and-safety-in-horse-riding-establishments-and-livery-yards-what-you-should-know.pdf>

The code of practice for 'the welfare of horses, ponies, donkeys and their hybrids' should be followed when washing horses.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 ("the Act") requires you to ensure that any horse, pony, donkey or mule for which you are responsible, whether on a permanent or a temporary basis:

- has a suitable environment to live in
- has a healthy diet
- is able to behave normally
- has appropriate company
- is protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease

Breach of a provision of the code is not an offence in itself, but if proceedings are brought against you for a welfare offence the Court will look at whether or not you have complied with the Code in deciding whether you have committed an offence.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-for-the-welfare-of-horses-ponies-donkeys-and-their-hybrids>

Horse Care Level 1 107 The principles of grooming and washing horses under direction

3.2 Describe how environmental damage can be minimised

Routine awareness of working with the horses in and out of the stable

Always throw away any rubbish and place in a bin with a lid. Separate and recycle rubbish when you can to minimise damage to the environment. When mucking out always place dirty bedding in a suitable place such as a dedicated muck heap.

Securing horses - Horses that are not securely tied up or secured in the stable or field could cause damage to the environment such as, trampling areas of woodland and eating plants that are not good for them. Always make sure that the horse is kept in a secure stable or paddock area.

Tying up - Tie the horse up in the correct way so that they are unable to escape. Horses that are loose can cause environmental damage especially if they are frightened as they will move at great speed.

Removal of waste - The muck heap should be spread or emptied once it gets to a point where there is no room so that it does not become an environmental hazard. Empty smaller bins into a larger bin with a lid on. Take to the tip when full or arrange for it to be emptied by a bin man.

Stables - Muck out the stable daily, empty dirty bedding onto the muck heap and disinfect the flooring on a regular basis. Empty disinfectant down the drain according local by-laws.

Fields - The grazing area should be maintained by removing muck regularly and by ensuring that the perimeter fencing is secure so that the horses cannot escape.

3.3 Describe the correct methods for disposing of organic and inorganic waste

Care of muck area - Rake the area back when emptying the wheelbarrow. Arrange for removal of muck heap once it becomes full. Only place compost waste in the muck heap that is able to decompose. Make sure that the muck heap is in the correct location and that the water table has been located first.

Drainage - Clean drains as regularly as possible. Only put water and allowed liquids down the drains, never put any solid food waste down as it will cause a blockage. Use a drain guard so that it will catch any left over feed from buckets and hay. Clean the drain guard regularly.

<https://www.coastaldrains.co.uk/blog/7-ways-maintain-healthy-drainage-system/>