

Lander University  
Bearcat Therapeutic  
Riding Center



General Grooming and Tacking



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## General Barn Rules

Do not go into a horses stall without being told to groom the horse or asking first.

Always put the halter and lead rope on the horse while in the stall and walk the horse to the crossties in the barn.

Grooming boxes are located on the wall near the wash stalls with all the tools you will need.

If you notice anything unusual about the horse while grooming, please alert the instructor on site.

Always remain cautious when working around the horses. Pay attention to what you are doing and how the horse is responding.

Be calm around the horses when grooming them. They will respond more favorably to a calm environment than a rushed chaotic environment.

Ask questions. This is your time to learn and practice. Your help during lessons by grooming and tacking is really appreciated.

Remember -Safety is most important for everyone involved.

Report any injuries(no matter how small) to the barn manager or instructor on site.

Thanks for taking the time to learn and practice your skills!

# GROOMING TOOLS

**Grooming** - the process of cleaning and caring for a horse's skin, coat, and hooves including currying, brushing and cleaning their hoofs.

**Grooming Box** - All the tools that you will need will be in the box.



**Curry Comb** - a round or oval rubber utensil used in a circular motion to remove caked-on mud and improve circulation.

**Hard Brush** - a large oval shaped brush with a hand support strip which is used to remove dirt, dust and dandruff from the horses coat; the length of the bristles determines the stiffness of the brush.



**Soft Brush** - a brush with short, stiff bristles used after the hard brush.

**Mane and tail Comb or Brush** - used to comb tangles out of the mane and tail.



**Hoof Pick** - metal pick used to remove debris from the bottom of the hoof.

# GROOMING PROCEDURES

When grooming a horse, start at the top of his neck and work your way to his rear, then switch sides and repeat.

1. Start with the **curry comb**. The rubber curry should be used in a circular motion to loosen dirt that has settled under the horse's hair.

**NOTE:** Be very careful and gentle around the bony areas of the horse's body (such as his back). Don't use the curry on the horse's legs unless you can be extremely gentle with it. Never use the curry or any stiff brush on your horse's face.



2. Next use the **hard brush**. Stiff bristled brush: the motion for this brush is like the same motion you use when sweeping a floor. You “flick” the brush away and up from the coat in the direction of hair growth

3. Now the **soft brush**. Soft bristled brush; quick strokes; removes dirt & hair. Smooth it flat over the coat in the direction of hair growth. This brush often gives the horse a shiny, clean appearance.



4. **Mane/Tail brush.** Use gently to remove dirt and debris from Mane. Start from the bottom of the tail and gently work your way up removing tangles and debris.



5. **NOW the hooves!** When checking or cleaning hooves, do it from the side, and face the rear of the horse. Bend at the waist – **NEVER** squat or kneel down. Stay on both feet. Scrape away from you. Thoroughly clean out the hollow areas on both sides of the frog and around the sole of the foot.



# TACK AND EQUIPMENT USED

## Peacock Safety Stirrup:



Peacock stirrups are similar to a regular stirrup iron. The inner side is the regular stirrup iron but the outer side is designed with a heavy rubber band attaching to the top and bottom of the stirrup. Used as a precaution for the rider should the rider fall or the foot slide forward in the stirrup. The heavy rubber band will release the foot so that the foot is kept from being caught in the stirrup.

## “S” shape stirrup:



“S” shape safety stirrup has a curved/bowed outer edge that leaves room for your foot to come out of the iron during an “emergency dismount.” It is made of heavyweight stainless steel, with no moving parts to fail. They are weighted and balanced just like a regular iron, so you shouldn’t even notice the difference while you’re riding.

## Helmets:



ASTM-SEI

The riding ASTM-SEI helmet will protect the rider’s head and is required for all riders whenever riding or working with a horse. It should have a full chin strap harness.



## Saddle:

We use both English and Western saddles for our riders. This will be up to the instructor to which saddle the rider will be using.



## Saddle Pads:



A saddle pad protects your horse's back from friction that could be caused by a saddle rubbing directly on your horse's hair and skin. It also helps to protect the saddle by absorbing some of your horse's sweat.

If your saddle fits well, you'll require only a simple saddle pad. In fact, if you add too much bulk with saddle padding you can cause the saddle not to fit and create pressure points.



Half pads help to distribute your weight across your horse's back, eliminating sensitive pressure points and making your horse more comfortable.

## Bareback Pads:

The bareback pad is made of fabric or soft felt material.



## Side Pulls:



A side pull is simply a bridle used without a bit. Reins are attached to rings on either side of the horse's muzzle. When both reins are pulled, pressure is placed on the horse's nose and halts.



## Reins:

Rainbow reins are the perfect training tool for new riders and the trainers. The colored rein sections provide a visual aid for correcting rein length. A proven tool for trainers.

## Rope Halter:

A rope halter is used as headstall while leading the rider and horse in class. At the bottom of the rope halter is a knot with loops where you can attach the lead rope. You do need to be careful when leading the horse. The nose is sensitive and there is pressure that you apply when asking to stop and turn.



## Lead Rope:



Lead rope is used to guide the horse around the arena, to and from the barn

## Mounting Ramp and Mounting Block:



Depending on the riders, the instructor will determine which mounting is used.



# HOW TO PUT A ROPE HALTER ON PROPERLY

## Halter Positioning & Placement



Once your horse is caught and held by the Lead Rope, you'll need to arrange your Halter so that it can be pulled into place over the horse's muzzle. Again be sure that you are on the left side of the horse, behind their head and facing the same direction that they are before proceeding.

The Lead Line Loop with attached Lead Rope should be aimed downward, away and at the lowest point of the Halter. The Nose Band should be arched over the Lead Line Loop in order to make an opening for the horse's muzzle to pass through. Your right hand should be holding the Poll Strap while the left hand holds the Tie Loop. Keep both hands separated and place the Halter beneath the horse's head. Once in place, pull the Halter up into place.

Before moving onto the next step, make sure that the Nose Band is brought up high on the muzzle, well past the nostrils.

## Aligning & Threading the Poll Strap



Align (straighten) the Halter and make sure that the Nose Band has been brought up high on the muzzle. Once done, take the Poll Strap and "flip" it up and over the back of the horse's head so that it meets up with the Tie Loop. Feed the Poll Strap down through the Tie Loop, place the Throat Piece behind the jaw and pull the Poll Strap snug.

Grooming/Tacking Handbook

## Tying the Knot -Sheet Bend-



The knot used to secure a Rope Halter is the Sheet Bend. Take the Poll Strap to the right, down and back under the Tie Loop. The knot will wrap around the Tie Loop with the free end of the Poll Strap trailing behind and down from the horse's face.



It is important to pay attention when tying this knot, again the Sheet Bend must be tied onto the Tie Loop below the place where the Poll Strap threads through the Tie Loop. Make sure that the knot is tied so that the trailing Poll Strap is not aimed up or at the horse's face / eyes.

Lastly, the halter should fit snug but not tight, it is not meant to choke or restrict the horse in any way, Halters should not be left on when the horse is put out to pasture as they can become tangled and cause serious injury. Wearing a halter for prolonged periods(weeks) or tying too tight can cause hair loss and sores. Be mindful and vigilant of these possible issues.

**FINISHED!!!**



# Saddling a Western Horse:

Step 1: Place Pad on Horses Back



Step 2: Prepare Saddle



Step 3: Place the Saddle on the Horse



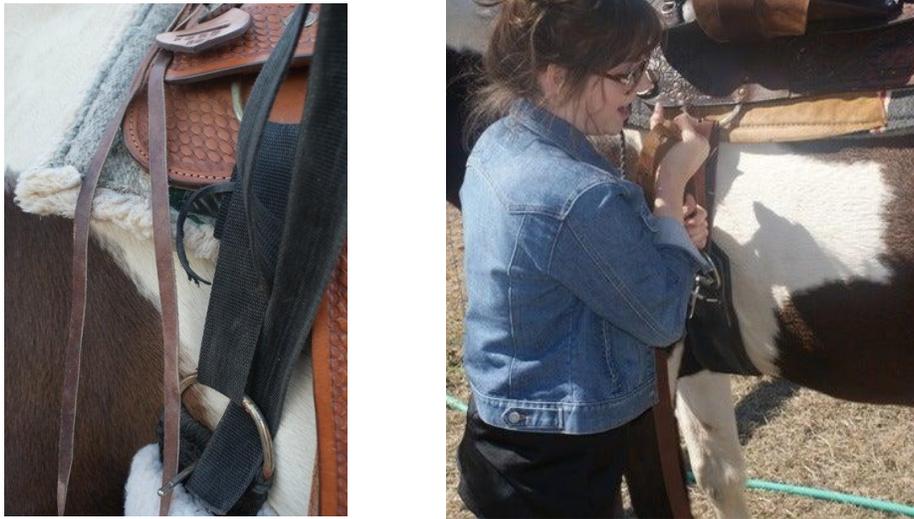
Step 4: Let the Straps Down



### Step 5: Tighten the Tie Strap



### Step 6: Tighten the Tie Strap a Little More (VERY SLOWLY)



### Step 7: Secure the Strap



### Step 8: Put on the Bridle/Side pulls



# Saddling an English Horse:

Step 1: Place Pad on Horses Back



Step 2: Place the half Pad on Horses Back



Step 3: Place the saddle on horse



Step 4: Buckle the girth on the left side first



**Step 5:** Tighten the girth on then left side **(VERY SLOWLY)**



**Step 6:** Putting on the side pulls/bridle

### **Putting on the Ultimate Bitless Bridle**

- 1) Bring the nosebands and crownpiece together.**
- 2) Grasp the ends of the nosebands/crownpiece and pull outward to loosen up the cross under straps. Hold the nosebands open so there is enough room for the horse's nose.**
- 3) Pull the bridle over the nose.**
- 4) Grasp the crownpiece and pull it up over the ears. Finish by taking any slack out of the cross under reins.**



# Untacking the horse

## Begin with the Bridle

Flip the reins over the horse's head. This way when you remove the bridle, you will still have some control over the horse as you put on the halter.

1. Undo the noseband and the throat latch.
2. Hold the halter in your left hand and stand to the left side of the horse's head.
3. Grip the bridle from the crown (the very top) and gently pull it over the horse's ears.



4. Carefully lower the bridle down and avoid letting the bit knock against the horse's teeth.
5. Slide the halter onto the horse and remove the reins from the horse's neck.
6. Attach a cross tie to each side of the halter or tie the horse in a safe area with a safety release knot.
7. Hang up your bridle. Never leave it lying on the ground or in the aisle way where the horse could become entangled.

## Remove the Saddle



1. Secure the stirrups.
2. Unbuckle the girth—first the left side, then the right.
3. Place the girth on top of the saddle.
4. Return to the left side of the horse and grip the saddle by the pommel and cantle (the front and the back).
5. Lift the saddle up before pulling it towards you; don't pull it into the horse's spine. If you cannot reach, get assistance.



6. Place the saddle on a saddle rack or out of the way, tipped onto the front of the knee rolls (but never flat down on the ground).

## Clean Up

After the horse is turned out, return to clean up and take care of the tack.

A few times a month, thoroughly clean your tack with saddle soap so that it doesn't



leave sores on your horse and condition your tack so that it doesn't dry out and crack, causing a safety hazard.

Put your saddle and bridle away in a clean dry place, such as the tack room. Make sure to flip the saddle pad over and lay it on top of the saddle so that it dries completely.

# Bearcat Therapeutic Riding Program Lander University Equestrian Center



I \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I have received and reviewed a copy of the Bearcat Therapeutic Riding (BTR) Program Volunteer Grooming and Tacking Handbook. I understand that this Handbook is not intended and should not be construed as a contractual agreement by BTR.

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Volunteer Signature

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Date