

Novice Horseback Riding

This playbook provides step-by-step guidance for beginners interested in horseback riding. It covers initial interactions with horses, learning fundamental riding skills, and general horse care tips.

Step 1: Approach Horse

Approach the horse calmly and confidently, making sure to speak softly to alert the horse of your presence. Always approach from the side rather than the front or back to avoid startling the animal.

Step 2: Haltering

Place a halter on the horse gently. Stand on the left side of the horse, loop the lead rope over its neck, and fasten the halter properly while ensuring not to pinch the horse's skin.

Step 3: Grooming

Using a curry comb, body brush, and hoof pick, groom the horse to ensure it's clean and to acquaint yourself with it. Start with gentle strokes and be sure to clean out the hooves to prevent discomfort or injury.

Step 4: Tacking Up

Prepare your horse for riding by placing a saddle pad and saddle on its back, and ensure the equipment fits comfortably. Attach the bridle with care, making sure it doesn't hit the horse's eyes or teeth.

Step 5: **Mounting**

When mounting the horse, hold the reins and saddle horn, put your left foot in the stirrup, and swing your right leg over decisively but smoothly to sit gently in the saddle.

Step 6: **Basic Riding**

Learn the basic commands to control the horse. Understand how to ask the horse to move forward, stop, and turn using gentle pressure from your legs, seat, and hands in coordination.

Step 7: **Dismounting**

To safely dismount, ensure the horse is completely still, remove your feet from the stirrups, lean forward, and swing your right leg over the horse's back, finding the ground softly.

Step 8: **Post-Riding Care**

After riding, remove the tack from your horse and repeat the grooming process to ensure comfort. Provide fresh water and proper feed as part of essential horse care.

General Notes

Safety First

Always wear a helmet when riding and ensure you are supervised by a trained professional if you are a beginner.

Respect

Always treat the horse with respect and kindness. Building a trusting relationship with the horse is crucial for a good riding experience.

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