

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY THERAPEUTIC RIDING PROGRAM



Volunteer Handbook

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www.SYVTherapeutic.org

Therapeutic Horseback Riding

What is Therapeutic Riding?

PATH International is a federal, non-profit organization that promotes equine assisted activities and therapies for individuals with special needs. Certified instructors and trained volunteers assist children and adults with physical, mental, and emotional challenges to find strength and independence through the power of the horse.

PATH International was formerly known as NAHRA, the National Association for Handicapped Riding Association.

PATH stands for Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship. To learn more visit www.PathIntl.org.

Benefits of Equine Activities:

In therapeutic riding, the horse is used as a tool to improve the mental and physical well-being of the disabled person. Therapeutic riding is recognized by the American Occupational Therapy Association and the American Physical Therapy Association. The benefits are available to individuals with just about any disability, including but not limited to:

- Muscular Dystrophy
- Visual/Hearing Impairments
- Mental Retardation
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Emotional Disability
- Spinal Cord Injuries
- Stroke
- Cerebral Palsy
- Down Syndrome
- Autism
- Spinal Bifida
- Brain Injuries
- Amputations
- Learning Disabilities



*Ensuring excellence and changing lives
through equine-assisted activities and therapies*

Physical Benefits: Horseback riding gently and rhythmically moves the body (pelvis and trunk more specifically) and internal organs in a manner similar to that of the human walking gait. Students develop and strengthen muscles by working specific muscle groups that are not worked in everyday life. For example, horseback riding also helps to normalize muscle tone, improve posture and build up the cardiovascular system.

Psychological Benefits: Exercise in the fresh air, away from hospitals, doctor's offices, therapy rooms or home help is a refreshing change for the riders. Confidence is gained by mastering a skill normally performed by able-bodied riders. The ability to control an animal much larger and stronger than oneself is a great confidence builder.

Riding increases interest in what is happening around the rider, as the rider explores the world from the back of a horse. The excitement of riding and experiences involved stimulate riders and encourage the riders to speak and communicate about it.

The riders start to learn that an "out of control" rider means an "out of control" horse. Shouting, crying, and emotional outbursts upset the horse which in turn frightens the horse. Riders are highly motivated, therefore, to learn how to control their emotions and how to appropriately express them.

Safety is our FIRST Priority

Therapeutic Riding Center Safety:

Phones:

There is one cell phone for emergencies located in the tack room on the wall to the left. Emergency numbers to call are posted on the tack room door and inside the feed room.

Fire Extinguishers:

We have two fire extinguishers: one in the tack room on the wall to the left, and one in the feed room on the wall to the right.

To operate a fire extinguisher remember "Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep"

- **PULL** the pin
- **AIM** the nozzle towards the base of the fire
- **SQUEEZE** the handle
- **SWEEP** back and forth across the width of the fire

First Aid Kits:

One First Aid kit for humans is in the tack room on the bottom shelf on the left.

A kit with Equine First Aid Supplies is located in the marked cabinet in the feed room.

Safety and "The SYVTRP Way"

People who are knowledgeable about horses find that there are many different ways to do things. As part of our safety program we want to avoid any confusion regarding

different methods used by different organizations. For this reason we often identify "The SYVTRP Way" as the way we will do things at this program.

We ask your cooperation to follow "The SYVTRP Way" in order to maximize safety for all our horses, riders, staff, and volunteers. Thank You!

Safety is everyone's responsibility. If you notice an unsafe condition or act, please speak up - notify a staff member immediately.

Sometimes people forget and do things that are not the SYVTRP Way. If you see this please gently and kindly *remind* that person that it's important for all of us to do our part to maintain the highest possible safety and consistent horse handling at all times

Horses and Safety:

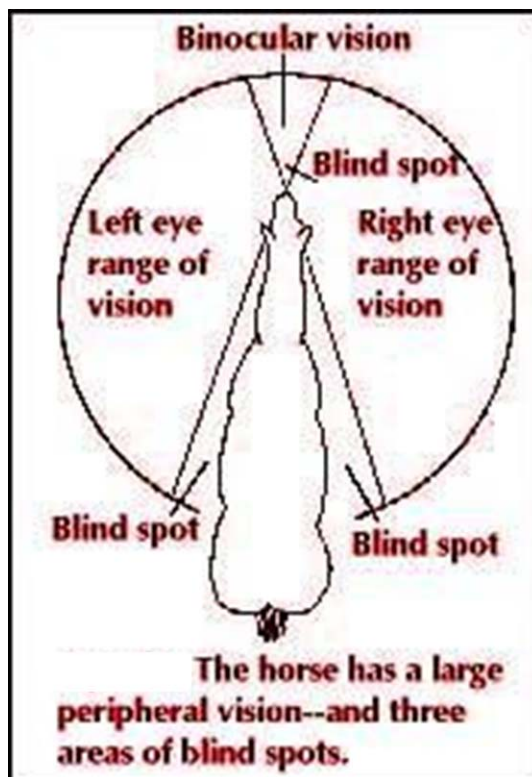
Working with and around horses carries with it inherent risks! Both horses and humans can be injured or die from these risks.

Think of a horse as having a 6-foot "danger zone" surrounding it. In this "zone" a horse can kick, buck, bite, or rear. No student should ever be near this "zone" without supervision from an approved volunteer or instructor.

Horse Vision and Blind Spots

Horses have a large peripheral vision and three blind spots to be aware of. They are on the forehead, directly below the nose and directly behind them.

It's important to be aware of the blind spots because it may startle a horse if you approach it from one of those areas.



Students must wear a helmet at all times when around the horses.

Volunteers must be approved before working anywhere in the vicinity of the horses!

Note: Parents and/or aides are not automatically "an approved supervisor"; therefore such participants also need supervision from an approved volunteer or instructor.

- Never approach a horse from its blind spot. (Study the horse vision chart to learn

where their blind spots are.)

- Never walk under a horse's neck
- **Do not hand-feed the horses.** They might mistake your fingers for a treat.
- We don't have students feed horses treats.
- Keep horses away from each other (unless they have been placed in the same stall).
- NEVER LET HORSES SNIFF EACH OTHER!!!!!!
- **Do not tie a horse to the fence or rails.** Either hold them by the lead line or put them back into the cross ties.
- Put reins on when removing horse from the cross ties for a lesson. Do not leave reins on a horse while standing in the cross ties. EXCEPTION: If the horse is going out in the next lesson and will only be in the cross ties for a SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, you may knot the reins and leave them on.

Emergency Procedures

SYVTRP HAS DETAILED EMERGENCY PROCEDURES that are reviewed during the annual training of all staff and volunteers. The emergency procedures are posted on the tack room door and on the side of the refrigerator in the feed room. These procedures include the steps to take along with the phone numbers

EMERGENCIES DURING A LESSON: Emergencies that occur during lessons are handled under the supervision of the staff. The handling of horses and students in the event of an emergency during lessons is demonstrated in our volunteer training DVD and reviewed quarterly on lesson days.

REMEMBER, in the event of an emergency during a lesson, the Leader is responsible for the horse and the Sidewalkers are responsible for the student. Volunteers should not attempt to respond to emergencies independently of the staff.

EMERGENCIES WHEN NO STAFF ARE PRESENT:

If you are at the center without staff present and observe a horse in need of medical attention follow the procedures posted. Please call the Program Director if minor ailments/injuries are observed and note it on the chalkboard outside of the tack room. Follow posted procedures if it is an emergency.

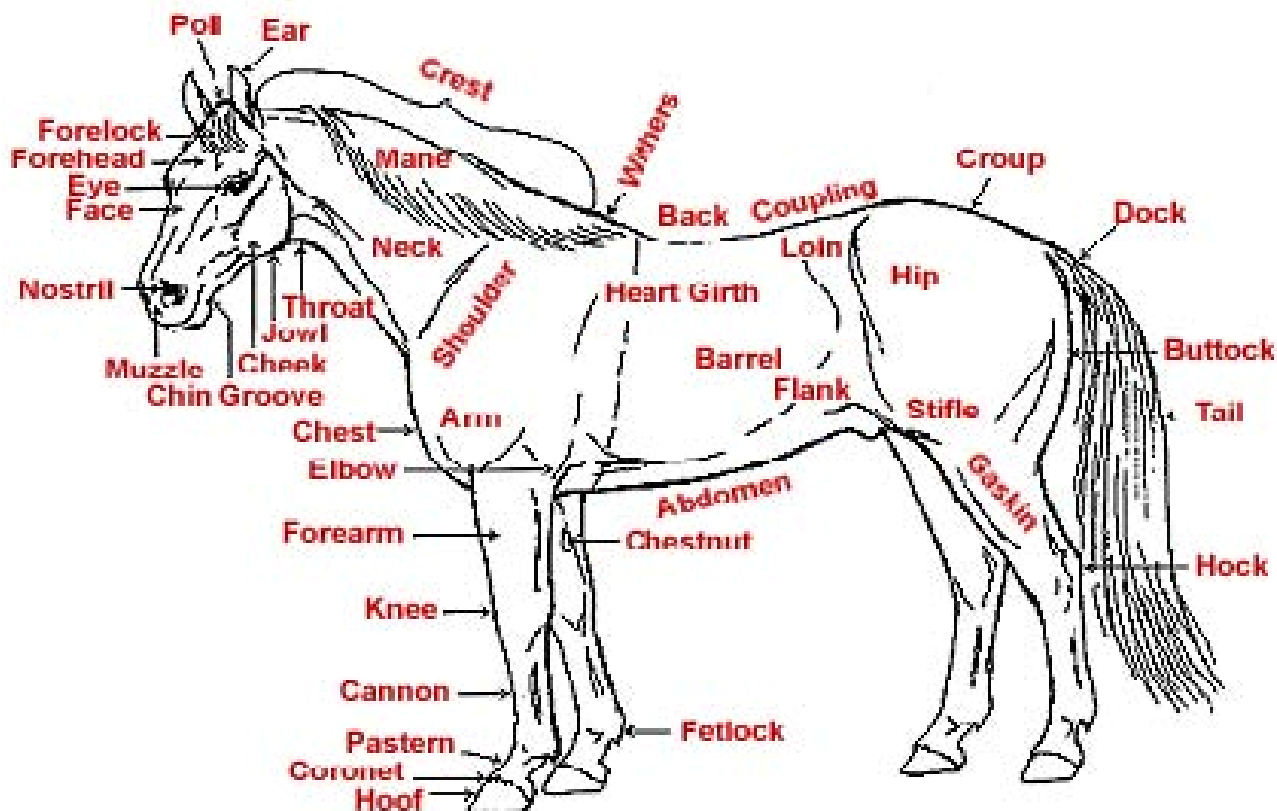
You should also look for signs of possible trouble, such as one horse not eating while the others are all munching away, blood, or other signs that something is just not right.

In addition should you be at the center without staff present and notice fencing or gates in need of repair please notify the Program Director.

Learning Horse Language

<u>Foal</u>	A baby horse that is still with his/her mother
<u>Weanling</u>	A young horse that has just been taken away from its mother
<u>Yearling</u>	A horse that has just turned 1 year old
<u>Colt</u>	A male horse under 4 years
<u>Filly</u>	A female horse under 4 years
<u>Mare</u>	A female horse over four years old
<u>Gelding</u>	A male horse that has been castrated
<u>Stallion</u>	A male horse used for breeding
<u>Pony</u>	A mare or gelding less than 14.2 hands (58")
<u>Green</u>	An untrained or inexperienced horse
<u>Off side</u>	The right side of the horse
<u>On side</u>	The left side of the horse (you always lead on the left)
<u>Hands</u>	Unit of measurement. One hand = 4 inches
<u>Tack</u>	Saddles, bridles, and any other equipment worn by the horse

Parts of the Horse



Confidentiality at SYVTRP

Every PATH International-accredited therapeutic riding center is required to have a confidentiality policy for its staff and volunteers in order to maintain the privacy of social, personal, and financial information.

Please respect the privacy of our riders and their families.

If volunteers are curious about a rider's diagnosis, please wait until the end of a lesson, or better yet the end of the day to PRIVATELY ask the instructor. Use discretion whenever discussing a student at SYVTRP.

Volunteering at SYVTRP

Lesson Volunteer Positions:

- Leader (active and passive)
- Spotter
- Groom and tack horses
- Lunge horses
- Side walker
- Barn chores

Supervisors:

- Instructors
- Director of Volunteers
- Designated Lead Volunteers
- Program Director

Qualifications:

1. **Dependable:** Volunteers are asked to review their schedule and select a day/time once a week to commit to.
2. **Flexible:** sometimes help is needed in areas other than lesson volunteering
3. **Safety:** SYVTRP follows all PATH safety regulations. Volunteers are to be aware of the rules and help to enforce them.
4. **Attitude:** Though SYVTRP is a recreational setting, we are still providing therapy. Volunteers need to be able to stay calm, patient, understanding and tactful as well as upbeat and supportive.
5. **Proactive:** Volunteers are encouraged to ask questions take initiative and contribute in whatever ways possible. Other volunteer opportunities include participation in annual events, fundraising, newsletter, writing grants, office/computer work, or joining a committee.

Training:

1. Facility tour/orientation, training DVD
2. Volunteer Handbook
3. One-on-one training and shadowing
4. "Arena re-refreshers"
5. Mandatory annual volunteer training

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Sign in and put on your name tag!
2. **Turn off or silence cell phones while at the program facilities** to avoid distractions that could potentially decrease the focus necessary for utmost safety of operations.
3. Check the daily lesson roster
4. Assist with barn chores (mucking, filling water troughs, cleaning tack/feed rooms)
5. Groom and tack horses before and after lessons.
6. Work as assigned during lessons (as a leader or a side walker).
7. There is always something that needs to be done. Volunteers may be asked to help with office work, cleaning/feeding, and many other tasks.

Volunteer Policies and Procedures

Attendance: It is very important to the program to have consistent volunteers. Of course things come up and if you can't make it please call the Director of Volunteers or if unavailable the instructor of the day.

Arrival/Departure procedure: For the first lesson of the day, volunteers need to arrive 30-45 minutes prior to that lesson in order to have enough time to prep the horse. Volunteers assigned to lunge horses before lessons need to arrive 1 hour before the first lesson.

Weather: PLEASE PAY ATTENTION TO THE WEATHER FORECAST INFO LINE! Lessons will be cancelled in certain weather conditions - heat, rain, wind, and flooded facility. Call the weather line at 805-598-1099 to confirm whether or not lessons will be held as scheduled.

When lessons are cancelled 2 to 3 volunteers are pre-designated to come to the center for mucking, watering, feeding horses, and possibly other chores.

What to wear:

1. Comfortable closed-toe shoes such as athletic shoes, hiking boots, or riding boots. ABSOLUTELY no open-toed shoes or sandals, long necklaces, or dangling earrings.
2. Long pants, preferably jeans or riding leggings.
3. Wear your SYVTRP program shirt as this gives a professional and unified impression.

What to Bring:

1. Drinks/snacks if you plan on being here for a while. Please clean up afterwards.
2. Appropriate clothing additions: sunglasses, hats, sweatshirts, and sunscreen
3. Volunteer application if it is the first day of volunteering

Asking questions:

Volunteers are encouraged to ask questions and learn more about therapeutic riding and our students. Please wait until after the lesson is over to ask the instructor any questions that do not immediately deal with the lesson at hand.

Gates:

All gates to the horse pens or the arena are to be CLOSED and LOCKED except when going through them. The gate is to be CLOSED and LOCKED anytime a horse and rider are inside the pen or the arena.

Specific Volunteer Duties

Feeding and Watering and Mucking:

Volunteers are needed to feed our horses, fill the water troughs, and muck the pens even when we do not have lessons. This is typically a 30-60 minute time commitment, dependent on your availability. You will be trained in the specific needs of the duty you have volunteered for. The Director of Volunteers works with each individual depending on their situation.

Grooming:

All of the horses require grooming before and after lessons. This includes picking their feet, brushing their coat (especially the saddle area), combing their mane and tail, applying fly spray, sponging if necessary, and occasionally tending to minor cuts or wounds.

Tacking:

Tack refers to the horse's saddle and bridle/hackamore/dually. We utilize both Western and English saddles at SYVTRP. Some horses or riders require special pads, reins, or other gear to improve their comfort or performance. All of this will be indicated on the daily lesson roster. The horse should be ready at least 5 minutes prior to the next lesson.

Horse Leading / Horse Handler:

While leading a horse in a lesson, volunteers are responsible primarily for the horse. Leaders need to be focused and alert for the duration of the class and must be able to safely control the horse at a walk or a trot. To ensure consistency and the well being of the horses, volunteers must be open to handling the horses as directed by our staff. Horse Leaders must demonstrate their ability to lead a therapy horse and be approved by the Program Director, Certified Instructor, and or Director of Volunteers.

Side Walker:

Some students require a side walker while riding to ensure their optimal safety and comfort. This entails walking or jogging alongside the horse and rider for the duration of the class. A side walker's sole responsibility is for the safety of the rider, and to provide physical, verbal and emotional support for them at the direction of the instructor. It is critical that side walkers keep from conversing with the student after the lesson begins." Some verbal prompting and encouraging is appropriate.

Lesson Prep

Check lesson roster for tack assignments.

The daily lesson roster informs the volunteers of what horse and tack are to be used and at what time. Read every column and pay close attention to see if there are special notes about the tack (for example: add a seat saver, reins on halter, etc.), or if the stirrups need to be changed.

Volunteers assigned as leader are responsible to prepare the horse for the lesson. If for some reason they are unable to do so, another qualified volunteer may be asked to do so.

COLLECTING YOUR HORSE- The SYVTRP Way:

It is time for you to get your horse out and ready for the lesson.

If the horse is assigned to wear a dually in the lesson you may collect him with a dually as it serves as a halter.

If the horse is assigned to wear a bridle or leather hackamore then collect him with his halter.

Note: Horses can be collected in duallys if assigned to wear one for the lesson, but duallys are to be used to get a horse out for lessons only, not for walks, grooming, or baths.

After haltering your horse bring him out of his pen and close and lock the gate. Don't forget to close the gate after removing the horse from the pen!

SETTING THE HORSE IN THE CROSS-TIES - The SYVTRP Way:

NOTE: Safety Risks are naturally higher in the cross-ties.

The crossties are to be a place of comfort for our SYVTRP therapy horses.

Ensure Proper Procedures are observed AT ALL TIMES!

Lead your horse over to the cross ties and walk down the middle and turn your horse around, lining him up in the center of the rubber mat. Attach the cross tie clips to the halter/dually. If using a dually be sure you attach to the halter and not the nose band.

Unclip the lead line and hang it on the hook on the pole. You now are ready to begin

grooming.

GROOMING - The SYVTRP Way

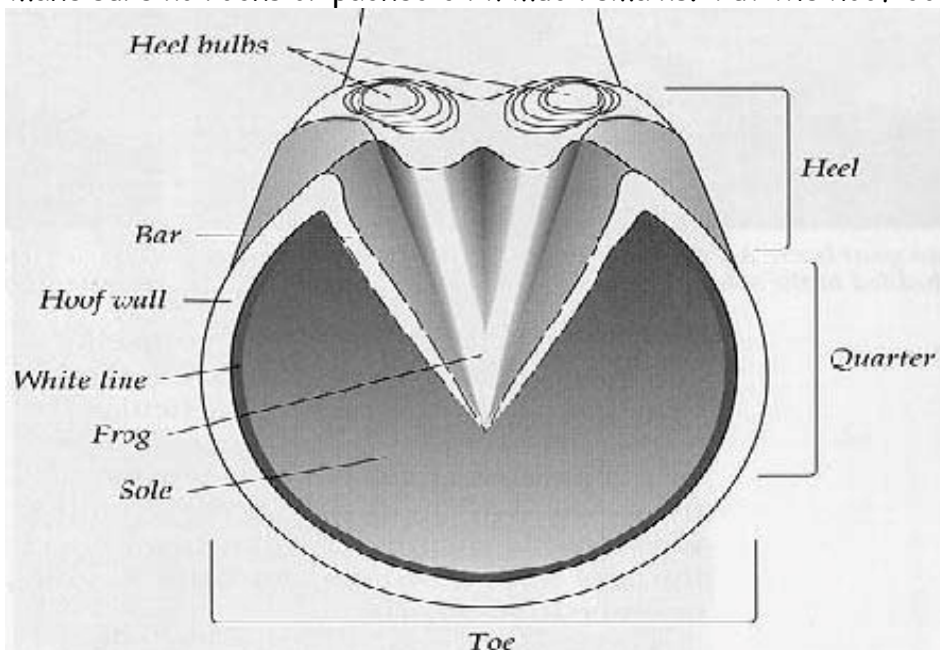
NOTE: ONLY **ONE** VOLUNTEER IS ASSIGNED TO GROOM THE HORSE IN THE CROSS TIES. (EXCEPTION APPLIES IF VOLUNTEER IS BEING TRAINED.)

In addition to helping to keep the horses clean, grooming gives volunteers the chance to look the horse's body over for any cuts/swelling/etc. If you notice any cuts or swelling you will need to inform the Instructor, Program Director, or Director of Volunteers.

1. **Bring out the grooming bucket.** Each horse has their own grooming bucket with their name on it. This is to help prevent spreading skin irritations / diseases around the herd. Place the bucket next to the cross tie poles so people and horses won't trip over it. Each grooming bucket should contain:

- hoof pick
- rubber curry comb
- metal shedding blade
- hard body brush
- soft face brush
- mane and tail comb or brush

2. **Pick Hooves.** See the hoof diagram below. Start with the left foreleg. Facing the horse's tail, run your hand down the leg while leaning into the horse slightly to get them to shift their weight. Pick up the foot, supporting it at the top of the hoof. Please lift our horses' hooves minimally - no cranking them up high. Clean out all clefts (called frog) in the hoof, make sure no rocks or packed dirt/mud remains. Put the hoof down gently.



3. **Curry** with metal curry/shedding blade if there is dried mud. Otherwise use rubber curry comb in circular motion. NOTE: a curry/shedding blade is only to be used only on

the body and rump of the horse, not on legs or the face.

4. **Hard Body Brush** in the direction of hair growth, starting behind the ear and working towards the tail on both sides, paying special attention to where the saddle and girth/ cinch go. Brushing the area where the saddle/bareback pad and bridle/hackamore/ dually will be placed is very important because dirt/mud will rub and cause discomfort to the horse. It is important that you give the horse's belly a thorough brushing too, especially where the cinch will go.

5. **Soft Face Brush** use on face only. NOTE: The Hard Body brush to be used only on body, not on face.

6. **Wipe eyes, nose and ears** if needed with clean cloth. This is ONLY IF NEEDED. We do not give our horses facials!

7. **Apply fly spray** on legs and belly of horse and if needed spray some onto a cloth and wipe on the horse's face

8. **Comb out mane and tail** with a Mane and Tail Brush or Comb.

PLEASE NO CLIPPING OR CUTTING MANES, TAILS, WHISKERS WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR.

TACKING - The SYVTRP way:

See the descriptive English and Western tack diagrams at the end of this handbook.

NOTE: it is *the volunteer's responsibility* to make sure that the correct tack is on the horse. It is *the instructor's responsibility* to perform a final check of the tack before each rider gets on.

English tack:

BEFORE PLACING THE PAD ON THE HORSE HAVE THE SADDLE CLOSE BY TO PUT ON. NEVER LEAVE AND WALK AWAY WITH JUST THE PAD ON THE HORSE.

1. Place the English pad on first. Note: in some cases the pad is already attached to the saddle; if so step 1 and 2 are combined into one step.

2. Place the saddle onto the pad.

3. After the saddle is on, pull up on the saddle pad at the wither to give space between the horse and saddle

4. **SIZING** girth. On the **RIGHT** side of the saddle, attach girth and let it hang. The bottom of the girth should reach the horse's ankle.

5. **DO NOT** tighten the girth completely. Leave it loose enough to be able to slide your hand under the girth and to pull it out about $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the horse. The instructor will tighten the girth during the tack check. **ALWAYS SECURE THE GIRTH, NEVER LEAVING IT HANGING FROM THE SADDLE.**



6. **HORSE'S HEADGEAR.** At SYVTRP there are three (3) options for horse headgear:
1. dually 2. Hackamore 3. Bridle:

Check the lesson board to verify which option your horse will use, and then follow the appropriate instructions below.

6-1. **DUALLY** - MOST OF OUR HORSES ARE RIDDEN IN duallys.

When assigned to wear a dually for the lesson, the horse should have been brought to the cross-ties in a dually. So now the horse is already ready for step 7.

(Remember, a dually serves as a halter.)

6-2. **HACKAMORE**

- Unhook **BOTH** cross ties from the halter.
- Unclip the halter, slide it down the horse's neck and clip it on the horse's neck.
- Put on the hackamore and clip to cross ties
- Remove halter and hang it on a hook on the pole.

6-3. **BRIDLE** - Ask for assistance if you aren't thoroughly familiar with this type of gear.

- Unhook **BOTH** crossties from the halter
- Leave the halter **ON**
- Gently slide bit into mouth.
- Re-attach the cross ties to the halter rings and not the bit !!!!

Bridle



NOTE: In future editions of this Handbook there will be a figure to describe a dually.

7. REINS.

Reins are not to be put on until the instructor calls the horse to the ramp. Do not leave reins on a horse that is standing/waiting in the cross ties.

However, *if* the horse is going back out and will only be in the cross ties for a short period of time you may knot the reins snugly over their neck.

Western tack:

BEFORE PLACING THE PAD ON THE HORSE HAVE THE SADDLE CLOSE BY TO PUT ON. NEVER LEAVE AND WALK AWAY WITH JUST THE PAD ON THE HORSE.

1. Place the western pad on the horse's back. The front of the pad should be far enough forward to "cut" the horse's shoulder in half. Pull up and create a space with the



pad over the horse's withers.

2. Gently place the western saddle on the horse

3. **SIZING** the cinch: The middle ring of the cinch should be off center 2" to the right

Mounting Riders

During mounts and dismounts, there is an increased risk of injury/danger. It is VERY IMPORTANT to let the Director of Volunteers or the Instructor know if you become uncomfortable for any reason while helping the rider.

ONLY CERTIFIED INSTRUCTORS OR TRAINED AND APPROVED VOLUNTEERS MAY MOUNT A RIDER

Remember, *the instructor may have* a rider may do a different mount/dismount week to week due to their disability/horse behavior.

Mounting - the SYVTRP Way

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LEADERS

- The instructor will announce that we are ready to mount. The leader will remove the horse from the cross ties and lead the horse off of the cement.
- The instructor is responsible to thoroughly check the tack, especially tightening the cinch/girth.
- Then the instructor will call the HORSE to come towards the mounting ramp. Always wait for the instructor to call the horse in. The rider needs to be on the ramp first.
- When reaching the ramp, turn around at the off-mount steps to walk backwards.
- Lead the horse as close as possible to the ramp.
- Keep the horse as still as possible by standing in front of the horse. It is very dangerous for a rider to mount while the horse is moving.
- Wait for the instructor/rider to say "walk on." Lead the horse out of the ramp completely and into the arena stopping in open space, away from the gate, so the instructor can make stirrup adjustments
- Stand facing the horse while at the halt
- Instructor will adjust stirrups and check cinch/girth (you may be asked to stand sideways so instructor can see to check stirrups).
- Wait for rider and/or instructor to tell you to walk-on.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SIDE-WALKERS-

- Wait on off-side mounting steps for horse to enter, (if 2 side walkers one will wait at the gate and open it for the rider and assume place at rider's side.)
- Your job is to spot the rider at the mount
- Instructor will tell you if you need to do anything specific for the rider
- Walk along side horse (going down steps) until ramp is cleared into arena
- Instructor may have you switch sides while stirrups are adjusted

Following the Leader

Leading - The SYVTRP Way

As a volunteer, one of the most challenging duties is the position of leader. A Leader's FIRST responsibility is the horse, but must also always be aware of the Rider, the instructor's directions, and any potential hazards in or around the arena. In addition, a leader needs to consider the side walkers by making sure there is enough room along the fence and around obstacles for them to pass. Here are some tips for leading:

- Never wrap the lead line around your hand. If a horse was to bolt you might get tangled up and possibly get injured.
- Once the lesson begins, ***only instructors*** give instructions to the rider.
- Allow the rider some time to process the verbal instructions to them from the instructor. Be patient; do not execute an instruction *for* the rider *before* he/she has time to process the information and make an effort to comply on their own.
- An effective leader pays close attention to the rider's needs as well as to where the horse is going. This reinforces the rider's attempts to control the horse.
- Social conversation is encouraged during the warm-up laps. Once the lesson begins, we ask volunteers to refrain from talking to the student and other volunteers as we want the riders' attention and focus to be on their instructor and their horse.
- Talk to the horse to lead, if the horse is not responding to the student. Most of the horses know "walk on," "whoa," and "trot."
- Therapy horses are to be lead with slack (6 to 12 inches) in the lead line. Do not hang onto the halter or lead line clip. Following these techniques will promote proper horse head position.
- Use short tugs instead of continuous pull to keep a lazy horse moving - they respond better to a tug or a "cluck".
- Do not walk backwards (except when taking a few steps backwards to line the horse up for at the mounting ramp).
- When you are at a halt for longer than a few seconds, stand in front of the horse or slightly to the side facing them to discourage them from taking a step forward.
- If there is an emergency or the rider falls off, ***STAY WITH YOUR HORSE AND KEEP THEM CALM!!!***
- **NEVER ALLOW HORSES TO SNIFF EACH OTHER!!!**
- **ALWAYS STAY 2 HORSE LENGTHS BACK FROM THE HORSE IN FRONT OF YOU**

Remember, SYVTRP does not offer pony rides - the goal is for the student to direct the horse to the maximum of their ability.

Leading - THE SYVTRP WAY

PASSIVE LEADING- With passive leading the rider is in more control of the horse. It is up to the leader to establish either verbal or non-verbal communication with the sidewalker(s), rider, and instructor to ensure that the horse responds appropriately if the rider gives the correct cue.

We encourage the student to say the command first!

***To trot** - the rider if able shall say trot/cluck, the leader may need to give a quick tug on the lead line and begin to jog without looking back at the horse. Wait for the instructor to say walk, student if able says walk, slight tug back and walk.

***To halt** - the student, if able, says "whoa," pulls back and stops walking. If the halt will last more than 15 seconds, face the horse or slightly to the side facing them. In an emergency situation you, the leader, are responsible for calming the horse.

ACTIVE LEADING- The leader is the one controlling the horse's movements completely. The instructor will give verbal directions to the leader.

*Riders with this type of leading are usually working on balance and body position and not ready to begin steering on their own.

***To trot** - the leader shall say, "trot," cluck, give a quick tug on the lead line, and begin to jog without looking back at the horse. Wait for the rider or instructor to say walk, then the leader says walk, slight tug back and walk.

***To halt** - say, "whoa," pull back, and stop walking. If the halt will last more than 15 seconds, face the horse or slightly to the side facing them. In an emergency situation you, the leader, are responsible for calming the horse.

LEADING

CORRECT:



INCORRECT:



Side Walking

Side Walking - The SYVTRP Way:

Sidewalkers are the volunteers that tend to get more "hands-on" duties in therapeutic riding. A side walker's main responsibility is the rider.

- Help the rider to pay attention to *the instructor*. Avoid unnecessary talking with the rider and/or other volunteers. Too much input can be confusing for the rider.
- Be sure to give the rider time to process the instructor's direction. If the rider seems confused, go ahead and give some help. For example, if the instructor says, "turn right," help the rider by taking their right hand.

THE INSTRUCTOR WILL TELL YOU WHICH LEG HOLD TO USE IF NEEDED

- It is important to maintain position at the rider's knee. Being too far back or too far forward will make it difficult to assist the rider.
- The sidewalker should position themselves next to rider's leg about 6 inches away from the horse. They should stay between the horse's shoulder and rider's leg at all times. They may also be required to assist in cueing the horse to move forward by applying pressure next to the rider's leg. Usually they do not keep a hand on their rider constantly.
- If there is an emergency or the rider falls off **STAY WITH THE RIDER!!!**

INCORRECT SIDE WALKING



Be sure that you do not get too far behind the rider.

Sidewalkers are no longer helpful when they are not in correct position relative to the rider.

Note that the side walker is also doing the hold incorrectly, due to being too far behind the rider.



Do not play with the horses while you are a sidewalker!

Pay attention! Your responsibility is the rider!

SIDE WALKING - The SYVTRP Way

PASSIVE SIDE WALKING-

Sidewalkers doing passive side walking are responsible for keeping an eye on the body position of their riders. They may also be responsible in assisting to communicate commands to the rider from the instructor either by tactile or verbal commands. Sidewalkers can offer verbal support and encouragement.

In an emergency situation side walkers are responsible for keeping hold of the rider.

ACTIVE SIDE WALKING-

Sidewalkers doing active side walking are responsible for physically keeping a rider centered or balanced on the horse, for the entire lesson, using a variety of holds. The active side walker's position relative to the student and horse is the same as the passive sidewalker.

Sidewalkers are not allowed to remove their hold for any reason unless the instructor tells them to do so. If an active sidewalker becomes tired or fatigued they must speak up and ask for a rest or to switch sides.

Support Holds

The instructor will direct you on the type of holds depending on the rider. The two holds that are most frequently used are the "arm over thigh" and "ankle" holds.

ARM OVER THIGH This position provides support for the rider without interfering with the rider's trunk control, allowing the rider to build up strong trunk support. The sidewalker grips the front of the saddle with the hand closest to the rider. Then the forearm rests gently on the rider's thigh. Be careful that the elbow doesn't accidentally dig into the rider's thigh or the horse. See the photo on page 18.

ANKLE SUPPORT This is the least restrictive form of support, allowing the rider to use all muscles to provide his or her own support. If a rider slips, a light "tug" will bring the rider back into alignment with the saddle. DO NOT yank on the ankle, and DO NOT keep constant pressure. See the photo on page 19.

In an emergency situation the side walkers are responsible for keeping hold of the rider. The sidewalker on the left may be required to do an emergency dismount if the instructor cannot reach the student in time.

SIDE WALKING HOLDS

CORRECT: Arm over thigh, holding the saddle



INCORRECT:

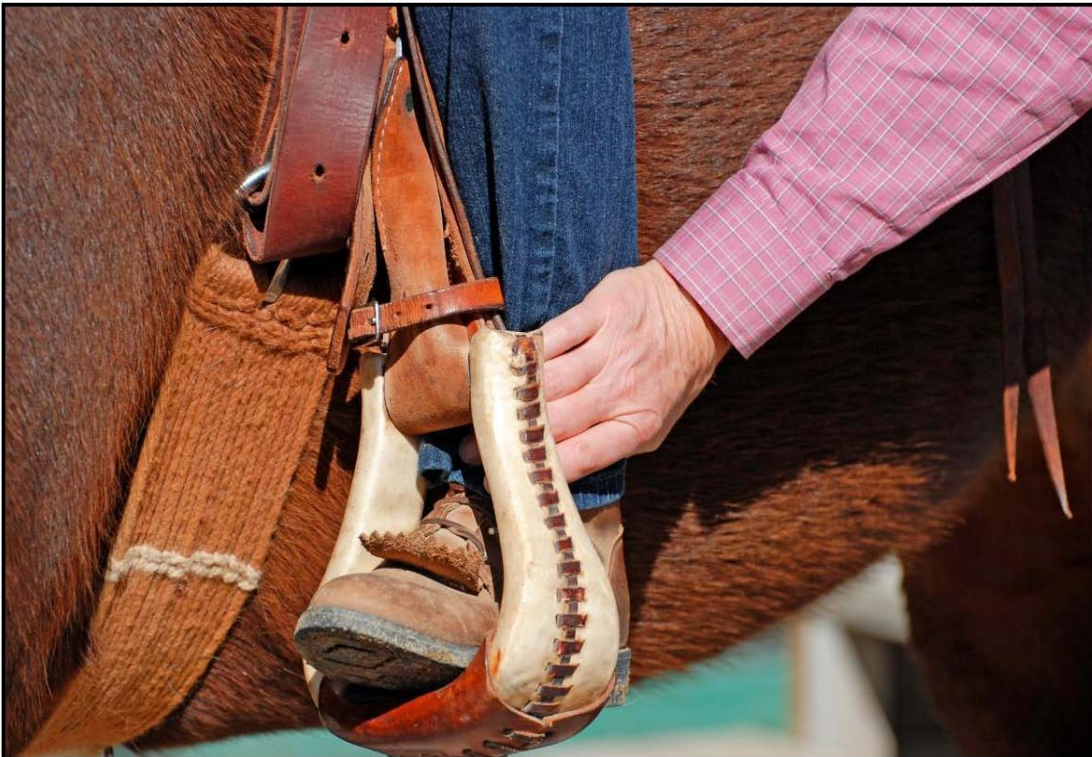


Ankle hold:

CORRECT



INCORRECT:



In The Arena

Arena rules:

- Turn off or silence cell phones at all lesson times at SYVTRP
- The gate is to be **CLOSED** and **LOCKED** anytime a horse and rider are inside.
- Be sure to look around at all times so horses don't run into each other.
- All horses should be going the **same** direction, unless specified by the instructor.
- Always keep at least 2 horse lengths between horses.
- **NEVER** lead a horse past another horse. Instead, make a circle: If you begin approaching a horse too closely from behind, turn towards the center of the arena and make a large circle to establish and maintain adequate distance between the horses.
- **NEVER** hit/scold/"school" a horse. If a horse is misbehaving, inform the instructor.
- If a rider falls off or if a horse gets loose - **stay calm** and stay with the horse (if you're the leader) or rider (if you're a sidewalker).
- No Yelling

Arena Talk

Outside leg/hand	The leg or hand that is closest to the fence
Inside leg/hand	The leg or hand that is on the opposite side of the fence
Offside mount	The person standing on the steps helping to get the rider on the horse
Half circle	Turning the horse to the inside to change directions
Trot	A "jog" for the horse. It is a 2 beat movement.
Canter	A "run" for the horse. It is a 3 beat movement.
Un-hook	Un-hooking the lead line from the horses' bridle to allow the student to ride independently
"Whoa"	A verbal cue to the horse to slow down or halt
"Walk on"	A verbal cue to the horse to walk forward
Spook	When a horse gets startled

DISMOUNTING

Dismounting - The SYVTRP Way:

- Dismounting is always done under the supervision of A CERTIFIED INSTRUCTOR OR A TRAINED AND APPROVED LEAD VOLUNTEER.
- Dismounting takes place in one of these locations:
 - The Arena
 - The Courtyard
 - The Ramp
- Leader stands in front facing the horse to discourage the horse from taking a step forward. The leader is responsible to keep the horse still and calm.
- Always make sure the reins are out of the way.
- Side walkers must be aware that the rider may need assistance getting their foot out of the stirrup or their leg over the saddle or the horse's back or neck depending on THE TYPE OF DISMOUNT.
- Once the rider has dismounted, give him/her a chance to say "thank you" and "goodbye" to the horse and a pat on the neck. Remember: no face/nose touching.
- If a rider wants to lead and/or help un-tack and groom the horse, ask the instructor if it is ok.
- Run up stirrups on English saddles.
- The rider must keep his/her helmet on when walking or grooming a horse.

AFTER LESSONS

If a rider wants to help un-tack/groom their horse, ask the instructor if it is ok. Students **must** wear helmets whenever they are around the horses!

UNTACKING - The SYVTRP Way

- Take the horse into the crossties.
- You may hook the hackamore/dually to the crossties.
- Always attach the cross ties to the halter rings on a dually and not the nose band.
- If the horse is in a bridle, remove the bridle and put on the halter. DO NOT attach cross ties to a bridle with a bit . Attach crossties to lower rings on the halter.
- Remove saddles and pad from left side by **lifting off** the horses back. Do **not** slide off as this can hurt the horse's back.
- After the lesson, all pieces of tack need to be put back to the proper place.

POST-RIDE GROOMING - The SYVTRP Way

- Groom or sponge down the horse removing all sweat and saddles marks.
- Check all four hooves to make sure there are no rocks only if the horse has gone for a walk around the barn or out on a trail ride.

PUTTING THE HORSE AWAY- The SYVTRP Way

After removing the tack and properly grooming your horse:

- Hook lead rope to ring underneath horses head.
- Unhook crossties and take horse into the pen.
- Don't forget to **CLOSE, you need not lock it,** the gate.
- Walk horse to middle of pen and turn around to face the gate.
- Remove the halter leaving lead rope attached.
- With an eye still on the horse, walk out and **CLOSE AND LOCK** the gate.
- Hang the halter/lead rope in tack room.

BARN CHORES - The SYVTRP Way

There is always something to do if you are not assigned to a lesson. Please check the barn chores lists or ask the Program Director or Director of Volunteers what needs to be done.

Or... or take a much needed break and enjoy the scenery.

Hitting The Trail

We are very blessed here at SYVTRP to have the opportunity to take the lesson out into the "wild." Not only do the riders enjoy getting out of the arena, horses do too.

When on trail outside the arena the ***LEADER*** needs to pay extra close attention to the horse as there may be additional hazards out on the trail.

Here are some helpful tips for LEADING on the trail:

- Don't let horses eat, and if your horse tries to eat, slightly yank up on their head.
- Keep a shorter lead.
- Watch your distance between your horse and the horse in front of you.
- Stay alert for
 - ♦ Wildlife
 - ♦ Traffic: cars, pedestrians, bikes, tractors, lawnmowers, etc.
 - ♦ Things that can spook your horse, such as blowing trash
 - ♦ Other horses out on the trail

Non-Horsey Volunteer Opportunities

Please contact our Executive Director if you are interested in any of these areas

Fundraising/Special Events:

Interested individuals are welcome to join the fundraising committee and help the program to meet financial needs. The fundraising committee plans and executes the many events done each year by contacting clubs that are interested in offering financial assistance, getting donations, contacting vendors and so on.

Office/Computer Help:

We can use help in the office with filing, thank you notes, data entry, etc. Please contact our Executive Director if you are interested.

Grant Writing:

Experienced grant writers are needed to help identify foundations or grants with a potential for donating to the program, and to assist to write these grants. Please contact our Executive Director if you are interested.

Public Relations/Marketing:

Submit periodic press releases as directed. Work to obtain more media coverage so SYVTRP can have higher community awareness. Help to update the website and periodically take pictures of new horses or special events. Please contact our Executive Director if you are interested in helping here - each of these duties must be pre-approved and authorized.

Board Members:

If you are interested in becoming a board member talk to the current Board President and or Executive Director. SYVTRP is always looking for professionals to volunteer their experience to help guide our program.

Barn/Facility:

Please contact our Program Director if you are interested in helping with this

SYVTRP would not look as amazing as it does without the help of our "handy" volunteers to do repairs and upkeep. Occasionally, volunteers will be asked to help feed and clean to ensure that our horse heroes are properly cared for - See the section on "Barn chores.:"