



## [Safety Tips Around Horses](#)

Prepared by

About Your Horse

Spirit & Freedom of the Western Outdoors

Recognition of the spirit & freedom for the western-outdoor lifestyle of the Rocky Mountain region and a love of horses for which we share this wonderful land. Find western and horse theme gifts as well as easy and practical basic horse care information.

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- 1) Before going horseback riding, inspect all riding equipment for wear and stretching and be sure it is all securely fastened. Always check the girth before you go riding, and then again shortly into your ride.
- 2) Wear the appropriate footwear, such as boots. Never wear tennis shoes, sandals, or go barefoot around horses. Your footwear should have a heel and cover your ankle, and should also have a smooth sole so your foot can slide out of the stirrup easily. It's important to have a heel to help prevent your foot from slipping through the stirrup and possibly being dragged if an accident occurs.
- 3) If you need to walk behind your horse, stay as close as possible to him. Keep your hand on his rump as you walk around. If he should happen to kick because he got startled, you will be too close to get the full thrust of a kick.
- 4) When riding, keep your center of gravity as close as possible to that of the horse.
- 5) Always be ready for the unexpected, so don't relax too much. Your horse may become startled.
- 6) When leading your horse, you should always use a lead rope to give you more control than just leading by the halter.
- 7) Though you may trust your horse, never let your guard down. Keep a watchful eye on him whenever you are near and avoid turning your back on him. You never know when he may bolt or kick, or even try to take a bite out of you.
- 8) Don't go trail riding alone. Use the buddy system and go with a riding buddy.
- 9) Horses sometimes like to push or rub up against you. Let your horse know your displeasure with this action and never let them get used to pushing you, as you could get hurt.
- 10) Consider wearing non-slip gloves when leading and riding your horse to help prevent your hand from being hurt and being forced to let go.

- 11) When combing your horse's tail, don't stand directly behind him. Stand either to the left or right to avoid getting kicked if becomes startled.
- 12) When approaching a horse, approach from the front so he can see you and walk toward the shoulder of the horse while speaking to him. Don't walk straight toward him in case he should happen to bolt—you want to be able to get out of the way easily. Never approach your horse from behind. A startled horse can jump or kick. Be aware of your surroundings and always have an escape path to avoid getting caught in a corner or up against a wall.
- 13) Always hang on to your reins.
- 14) Be watchful when bringing your horse around other horses that you are not familiar with. You don't know how they may react and might need to get out of the way quick. Avoid approaching Stallions with another horse.
- 15) When tying your horse, use a slip knot and make sure whatever you're tying him to is safe and secure. You don't want your horse pulling back and breaking off an old post or fencing and go running off with it dangling from him.
- 16) When putting a halter on your horse, slip the lead rope of the halter around his neck so he doesn't try to get away or move.