



# Volunteer Lesson/Horse Training Guide

2nd Edition

April 2015

*Illustrations by Laura Pick*

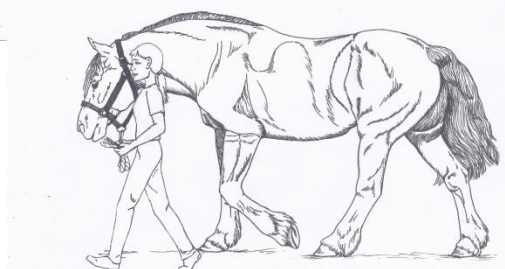
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## Important Phone Numbers:

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# Lesson Volunteers: Sidewalkers

**Job Description:** A person who walks at the Riders' leg, who is responsible for the Rider. Sidewalkers should do the minimum to help the Riders in a safe manner. Don't hold on unless necessary! Follow the PATH Certified Instructor's directions.

It is important to remember to allow the Riders to do as much as possible on their own. **Give the Rider plenty of time to perform independently.** Be sure that your Rider understands the PATH Certified Instructor. Be aware of the Rider and the horse and how they are responding. If you are uncomfortable for any reason with your Rider or horse, tell the PATH Certified Instructor immediately. You are the first person to become aware of a potential problem.

**SUPERVISORS:** PATH Certified Instructor, Volunteer Coordinator

## QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Dependable and able to make the commitment.
2. Has a reliable means of transportation.
3. Enjoys working with people with disabilities.
4. Able to work around horses.
5. In good health.
6. Able to follow instructions and help Riders relate to directions.
7. Must be 14 years of age or older.

## TRAINING:

1. Volunteer orientations/trainings.
2. On-the-job training.
3. Volunteer Handbook.
4. Pass Skills Assessment

## SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Sign in.
2. Report to the barn.
3. Check daily schedules.
4. Assist Riders in untacking and grooming their horse after the lesson, if on the lesson plan.
5. Help Riders prepare for lesson.
6. Serve as Sidewalker during lessons as needed.
7. Report to the Volunteer Coordinator before leaving.
8. Sign out.

# Basic Instructions for Sidewalkers

1. Familiarize yourself with the location of the nearest telephone, first aid kit, fire extinguisher, bathroom, and emergency phone numbers.
2. Familiarize yourself with the daily schedule posted on the bulletin board. Ask any questions about the schedule prior to the lesson.
3. Understand what to do in an emergency situation. You are responsible for your horse and/or Rider, depending on your duty. If another Rider has a problem or a fall, don't rush to assist. Stay with your Rider or your horse. They are your first responsibility.
4. Riders are mounted and dismounted under the direction of the PATH Certified Instructor(s).
5. If you are not comfortable with a situation for any reason, tell the PATH Certified Instructor immediately. You may be aware of a problem the PATH Certified Instructor needs to know.
6. ALWAYS let the Rider do as much as they can independently.
7. We treat our horses GENTLY. If a horse misbehaves tell the PATH Certified Instructor. Re-training and reprimands are generally done during schooling, not during lessons.
8. Don't chat with other volunteers or Riders during lesson. Be aware of the PATH Certified Instructor's directions. Remember to give the Rider plenty of time to perform independently. Be sure they understand the directions.
9. Sidewalkers should always be alert to the possibility that they will have to perform an emergency dismount.
10. Listen carefully for instructions from the PATH Certified Instructor at all times, not just when the horse misbehave

## **The Sidewalkers Responsibilities:**

Sidewalkers are the ones who normally get the most hands-on duties in therapeutic riding. They are directly responsible for the Rider. As such, they have the capability to either enhance or detract from the lesson.

When you arrive, check the schedule and find out what Rider you are responsible for. When the Rider arrives you will help them find a helmet.

In the arena, the Sidewalker should help the Rider focus his/her attention on the PATH Certified Instructor. Try to avoid unnecessary talking with either the Rider or other volunteers. Too much input from too many directions is very confusing to anyone, and to Riders that already have perceptual problems, it can be overwhelming. If you Sidewalkers are working with one Rider, one should be the "designated talker" to avoid this situation.

When the PATH Certified Instructor gives a direction, allow your Rider plenty of time to process it. If the PATH Certified Instructor says, "turn to the right towards me", and the Riders seems confused, gently tap the right hand and say "right", to reinforce the command. You will get to know the Riders and learn when they need help and when they're just not paying attention.

It's very important to maintain a position by the Rider's knee. Being too far forward or back will make it very difficult to assist with instructions or provide security if the horse should trip or shy.

The most common Sidewalker position is the arm-over-thigh hold. The Sidewalker grips the front of the saddle (flap or pommel, depending on the horse's size) with the hand closest to the Rider. Then the flesh part of the forearm rests gently on the Rider's thigh.

Avoid wrapping an arm around the Rider's waist. It is tempting, especially when walking beside a pony with a young or small Rider, but it can offer too much and uneven support. At times, it can even pull the Rider off balance and make riding more difficult. Encourage your Riders to use their own trunk muscles to the best of their abilities.

If the PATH Certified Instructor chooses to use a safety belt on your Rider, be very careful not to pull down on push up on it. As your arm tires it's hard to avoid this, so rather than gripping the handle firmly, just touch your thumb and finger together around it. This way you are in a position to assist the Rider if needed, but you will neither give him unneeded support nor pull him off balance. When you are ready for relief for your arm, ask the Leader to move into the center to stop and trade sides, one at a time, with the other Sidewalker.

Safety is the number one concern. You are responsible for the Rider, both when they are on and off the horse, right up until the parent or guardian takes them away. You must always stay completely focused and aware of your Rider.

When you greet the Rider, assess their mood. Are they anxious, over excited, unfocused or even agitated? While the Leader is concerned with the environment in terms of how the horse may react, you must stay aware of how your Rider is reacting. It is important to be proactive. For example, if you see a certain toy that is used in the lesson causes them anxiety, over stimulation or fear, avoid that toy.

Your only responsibility is your Rider. No matter what any other Rider or horse may be doing, do not take your attention off your Rider. If the horse that your Rider is riding starts to do something unexpected, do not try and take control of the horse. That is the Leader's job. It is very tempting to reach out and grab the reins if you see your horse doing something it shouldn't, but when you do that your focus is not on your Rider and that puts them in a very vulnerable situation.

It is not uncommon for Chakota's horses to reach down and try to sneak a bit of grass. It is the Leader's responsibility to regain control of the horse. It may appear harmless to help the Leader in this seemingly safe situation, since you are usually at a standstill when this happens, but nothing could be further from the truth. When the neck of a horse goes down, the Rider is instantly off balance and could easily slide forward over the horse's head. If you and the Leader are fighting with the horse, no one is there to keep the Rider balanced and seated.

The Riders are of various levels and have varying disabilities. As you get to know the Riders, you will understand their individual needs. Until then you will need to ask the PATH Certified Instructor for information. For example, what hold should I use? Or, does Rider A know how to shorten the reins to stop? Or does Rider B have an issue with being touched to prompt him? Never engage in a conversation about a Rider in front of them. Whether they show it or not, they can usually understand that they are being talked about, and no one likes that. Refer to the disabilities section for more information on the different types of disabilities we work with at Chakota.

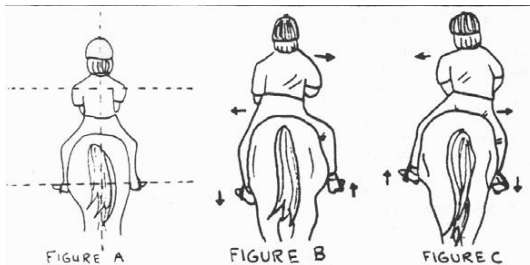
While safety is the number one concern, you as the Sidewalker are responsible for helping the Rider get as much as possible out of the lesson in terms of learning and enjoyment. While they might not show it, that one-hour they are at Chakota may be the most exciting thing in their week. Their enjoyment depends on your ability to listen to them, understand them, and help them with their lesson. **It is a great gift you are giving!!!**

## Position of the Rider

By Lorrie Renker and Martha Biery

All Riders strive for the “ideal” riding position. It should be no different for Riders with disabilities. PATH Certified Instructors often appear afraid to make position corrections. Not all of your Riders will be able to achieve the ideal position, but that doesn’t mean you shouldn’t try. The Rider’s position has little to do with looking good and everything to do with being in balance and moving in harmony with the horse. The better the body alignment, the better the therapeutic benefits. The best way to evaluate the Rider’s position on the horse is to step back and view the Rider from all angles. The Rider may look great from the side but could be off center when viewed from behind. Don’t be afraid to make corrections.

Here are some common problems to look for:

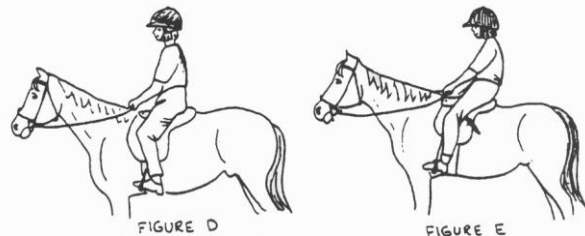


1. When viewed from behind, the Rider should sit as straight as possible (Figure A). Many Riders will sit to one side and then have to make corrections in the rest of the body to maintain balance. When this happens, one foot will appear lower than the other. Figure B shows a Rider with the left foot lower, the pelvis leaning to the left, and the upper body correcting to the right. Figure

C shows just the opposite – the right foot lower, the pelvis leaning to the right, and the upper body correcting to the left. This position does not help the Rider strengthen muscles evenly. Correcting this position usually requires aligning the Rider’s base (getting the butt square in the saddle).

2. When viewed from the side, the Rider should sit as straight as possible (Figure D). Often the Rider will sit up if asked. Sometimes the position will reflect the Rider’s posture off the horse.

Encouraging elongation of the leg usually improves the posture. To achieve a better position, it may be necessary to evaluate the type of saddle being used. Is the saddle level on the horse so that it will encourage a good position? Just placing a bounce pad or lollipop under the saddle does not ensure a level saddle. Often the weight of the Rider



compresses the pad completely, resulting in a saddle sloping backward. It is literally impossible to keep the leg positioned under the Rider’s pelvis in those circumstances. Use of a denser foam pad will help. Ideally, the saddle should be fitted correctly to the horse and the Rider.

3. Figure F shows a Rider with a toe down and the leg pinched up. This could indicate a Rider with tight adductor muscles, an extreme forward-seat saddle, or stirrups that are too short. The Rider should be encouraged to lengthen his leg.

achieved by riding without stirrups or by style of saddle. The important thing to constantly evaluate the Rider’s position, such as disability limitations, posture off equipment used. Then work toward Rider’s position.



This could be trying a different remember is to Consider all factors, the horse and improving the

## **Fitting the Riding Helmet**

FIT is important. An incorrectly fitting helmet can cause unwanted changes in posture and balance for your Rider, adversely affecting those areas which you as a therapeutic riding PATH Certified Instructor are working to remedy.

Let's consider...

What if the helmet is sitting too far back on the Rider's head?

What if the helmet is twisted to one side with the brim not straight in the middle of the Rider's forehead?

What if the helmet is pulled down over the Rider's eyes?

What if the helmet is too big, or too small?

Or what about the Rider who is irritated by the chinstrap?

Each of you may have, at one time or another, been confronted with the problem of how to fit the existing helmet to a difficultly shaped head. But is important to understand that the posture and balance of your Rider will be directly affected by the fit of the helmet.

1. Place the helmet on the head sliding it front to back and allowing it to rest so there are two fingers between the eyebrows and the edge of the helmet.
2. Check to make sure it is centered correctly and do up the chinstrap. If there is a laced harness at the back, undo it before fitting the helmet and readjust is appropriately after the helmet is on. Look to check that it is correctly fitted and ask the Rider how it feels.
3. The helmet should fit as snugly as the Rider can comfortably wear it.
4. For the Rider whose head is a difficult size, try placing self-adhesive sanitary napkins inside the helmet at the troublesome spots.

Above all, remember that no matter what type of helmet you choose for your Rider, a properly fitting and comfortable one provides the ultimate in safety and gives your Rider a "head start" on his lesson!



## Mounted Emergencies

- **Rider has a seizure or loses consciousness:**
  - Sidewalkers alert the Therapy PATH Certified Instructor.
  - Follow emergency dismount procedures to remove the rider from the horse if instructed to do so.
  - Follow directions from the Therapy PATH Certified Instructor.
  - Leader stops horse for dismount and takes horse to the center of the corral.
- **Rider falls from the horse:**
  - Leader stops the horse, make sure the rider is clear of the horse, takes horse to the center of the arena and wait for instructions from the Therapy PATH Certified Instructor.
  - Side walkers get the rider out of the way of the horse, either by leading them or pulling them.
  - If the rider is caught on the tack or stirrup, the leader makes sure the horse stands calmly while the Therapy PATH Certified Instructor and sidewalker(s) free the rider.
- **Horse attempts to run away with the rider:**
  - Attempt to safely stop the horse.
  - If the horse has left with the rider, attempt to calmly corner the horse in a corner of the arena, catch him and remove the rider if instructed to do so by the Therapy PATH Certified Instructor.
  - Horse Leaders should always be alert to the possibility that they will have to perform an emergency dismount.
  - Listen carefully for instructions from the Therapy PATH Certified Instructor at all times, not just when the horse misbehaves.
- **Horse pulls backwards with rider:**
  - Leader follows the horse and speaks to them calmly; attempt to stop the horse with gentle tugs, not a steady pull.
  - Do not hang back on the horse or attempt to out pull them.
  - Side walker(s) remove the rider from the horse with an emergency dismount if instructed to do so by the Therapy PATH Certified Instructor.
- **Horse bites leader:**
  - Alert the Therapy PATH Certified Instructor and follow their directions.
- **Horse kicks sidewalker:**
  - Alert the Therapy PATH Certified Instructor and follow their directions.
- **Rider has an outburst, agitated episode or other unusual or excited behavior:**
  - Leader stops horse, stands at their head to calm them if needed, sidewalkers may be asked to help remove the rider from the horse.
- **Rider bites or otherwise injures sidewalker:**
  - Alert Therapy PATH Certified Instructor and follow directions.
- **Rider slips to the side, losing balance:**
  - Alert Therapy PATH Certified Instructor and other volunteers, leader stops or slows horse as directed by Therapy PATH Certified Instructor.
  - Attempt to help rider regain balance with help of other sidewalker and Therapy PATH Certified Instructor.
  - Sidewalkers should always have an eye on the rider.

In any emergency with more than one horse in the arena, all horses come to the center or corner of the arena as indicated by the Therapy PATH Certified Instructor and wait for further directions.

# The Volunteer Safety Checklist

Your job as a volunteer is crucial for insuring the safety of the Chakota program. It is important for you to keep the program safe, which in turn keeps it enjoyable for everyone.

To help the PATH Certified Instructor you can go through this safety checklist, before the PATH Certified Instructor(s) double check.

1. **Be aware of the weather conditions.**
  - a. Are you prepared?
2. **In the arena:**
  - a. Are the gates securely closed during the lesson?
  - b. Does the footing look safe?
  - c. Are the obstacles and toys placed safely? Are they broken?
  - d. Is the arena free of debris, branches, and manure?
3. **General Environment:**
  - a. Are spectators, dogs, and other nearby activities under control?
  - b. Are other riders or vehicles a potential hazard?
  - c. Is there a clear path from the barn to the arena?
4. **How does the horse look?**
  - a. Know what the “normal” horse is supposed to look like (in time)
  - b. While you are grooming do you notice anything unusual?
  - c. Cuts, ticks, runny eyes, bumps, thrush, etc.?
  - d. Learn the signs of colic.
  - e. How is the horse behaving? A lot of this depends on how you are treating the horse. Remember: You are #1 in the herd.
5. **How does the tack look?**
  - a. Does the saddle fit correctly? Clears withers by 2-3 fingers, no pinching at shoulder, balanced correctly?
  - b. Is the girth in the right place? Not too tight or too loose? Twisted?
  - c. Are the stirrup-bar safety catches in the open position? Are the safety stirrups on correctly (elastic towards the front of the horse); are the rubber bands in good shape?
  - d. Is all the leather smooth and supple, the stitching secure, the buckles in working order, and the tree sound, are the flaps tucked under?
  - e. Is the saddle pad smooth, pulled up into the pommel, and correctly secured?
6. **How does the rider look?**
  - a. Helmet on correctly (see “Fitting the Riding Helmet”)
  - b. Is the rider dressed for riding – long pants, tie-on shoes with a heel?
  - c. No gum, candy, or toys (unless the toy is used in the lesson).
  - d. How is the rider feeling? Are they prepared? Do they need the bathroom? Are they scared?

# Lesson Volunteers: Horse Leader

**Job Description:** Someone who walks at the horse's shoulder holding the lead rope, they are responsible for the horse. Leaders stand directly in front of the horse when halted. This is especially important during the mount and dismount. Use your voice in a firm tone if the horse will not stand still. We treat our horses **gently**, if a horse misbehaves, tell the PATH Certified Instructor. Re-training and reprimands are generally done during schooling, not during lesson. However, each situation is different and the PATH Certified Instructor will help you deal with it. Most of all remember that these are not pony rides: Wait for the Rider to give the commands to the horse.

**SUPERVISORS:** PATH Certified Instructor, Volunteer Coordinator, Equine Director

## **QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. Dependable and able to make the commitment.
2. Has a reliable means of transportation.
3. Enjoys working with people with disabilities.
4. Able to work around horses.
5. In good health.
6. Able to follow instructions and help Riders relate to directions.

## **TRAINING:**

1. Volunteer orientations/trainings.
2. On-the-job training
3. Volunteer Handbook
4. Pass Skills Assessment
5. Completed Sidewalker Training

## **SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Sign in.
2. Report to the barn.
3. Check daily schedules.
4. Assist Horse Handlers in untacking and grooming horses after the lessons have been completed, if help is needed.
5. Assist in keeping the barn and the area around the barn neat and clean.
6. Serve as horse leader or Sidewalker during lessons as needed.
7. Report to the Volunteer Coordinator before leaving.
8. Sign out.

## Basic Instructions for Horse Leaders

1. Always use a halter and lead rope to catch and lead the horses.
2. Fold the lead rope; NEVER coil the rope around your hand.
3. Remember to give the Rider plenty of time to perform independently. Be sure they understand the directions.
4. Familiarize yourself with the location of the nearest telephone, first aid kit, fire extinguisher, bathroom, and emergency phone numbers.
5. Familiarize yourself with the daily schedule posted on the bulletin board. Ask any questions about the schedule prior to the lesson.
6. Understand what to do in an emergency situation. You are responsible for your horse and/or Rider, depending on your duty. If another Rider has a problem or a fall, don't rush to assist. Stay with your Rider or your horse. They are your first responsibility.
7. Riders are mounted and dismounted under the direction of the PATH Certified Instructor(s).
8. If you are not comfortable with a situation for any reason, tell the PATH Certified Instructor immediately. You may be aware of a problem the PATH Certified Instructor needs to know.
9. ALWAYS let the Rider do as much as they can independently.
10. Horse Leaders should do the minimum to help Riders in a safe manner and always follow the PATH Certified Instructor's directions.
11. We treat our horses GENTLY. If a horse misbehaves tell the PATH Certified Instructor. Re-training and reprimands are generally done during schooling, not during lessons.
12. Don't chat with other volunteers or Riders during lesson. Be aware of the PATH Certified Instructor's directions.
13. Horse Leaders should always be alert to the possibility that they will have to perform an emergency dismount.
14. Listen carefully for instructions from the Therapy PATH Certified Instructor at all times, not just when the horse misbehaves

## **The Horse Leader's Responsibilities:**

When you first arrive, check the lesson board to see which horse you are responsible for and determine if the horse is ready for warm up.

Once you are confident the horse is ready, you may warm up your horse. Lead the horse into the arena and walk it around. You can go around the whole arena or zig-zag through whatever obstacles the PATH Certified Instructor may have out. Make sure that you are aware whom your Rider is and where they are so that time is not wasted when they are ready to mount.

In order to be in the best position to control the horse, walk on the left side of the mount about halfway between its head and shoulder. Chakota horses are accustomed to being handled on both sides. Certain situations may call for you to handle the horse on the right side, so don't be surprised if the PATH Certified Instructor asks you to switch.

Do not walk directly in front of the horse.

Be sure that the lead rope is hanging between the reins so that it does not cause increased pressure on the bit by hanging across the top of the reins.

Place your right hand on the lead line 8 to 12 inches from the ring, snap, or buckle that attaches it to the noseband or bit. Keep the extra line off the ground by folding it into a loose loop and holding it in your left hand. DO NOT make a loop around your hand.

When stopping for more than a few seconds (and while Rider is mounting the horse) stand directly in front of and facing the horse. You should have a loose grip on the lead or have your hands on the halter's cheek pieces. Do not grip the halter or otherwise entangle your hands in the halter. The horse could easily break your fingers with a quick flick of the head.

As the Leader, your only responsibility is your horse. Stay focused on your horse and remain with your horse in an emergency and let the Sidewalker focus on the Rider.

Remember how many people are around your horse. Often there is a Sidewalker on both sides and you will need to make sure that there is enough room for them between fences or other obstacles.

You should never be closer than one horse length behind another horse. This gives you an ample buffer if anything goes wrong in front of you. Most Chakota Riders know this rule, but often don't comply. Letting a Rider walk their horse into a fence because they are not paying attention may be a good cause and effect lesson. Running into another horse is not. It is dangerous to both sets of horses and Riders.

During the lesson, if a Rider needs to stop, come off the rail to the center of the arena unless the PATH Certified Instructor directs otherwise.

We treat our horses gently. That's why they are such loving and effective horses. If a horse misbehaves, tell the PATH Certified Instructor. Retraining and reprimands are generally done during horse schooling, not Rider lessons.

It is NOT the job of the Leader to communicate with the Rider (unless it is an advance Rider with no Sidewalker). It is the Sidewalkers' job. It confuses the Rider if too many people are talking to them. However, remain aware of the Rider's cues so you know when and when not to cue your horse. Also make sure the Sidewalker is aware what you are going to do next so you don't trip over each other.

All conversations with other volunteers etc. must wait until after the lesson. It is too distracting and therefore dangerous for everyone.

**Figure A** depicts a few faults common among Leaders. Here is a Leader grimly marching along – one hand on the lead snap, the other hand coiled in the rope – dragging a strung-out horse. In a battle with a horse, you lose. You must get the horse to cooperate. Walk alongside the horse, about even with his eyes. This helps keep him in the proper frame, which is more beneficial for everyone.

Talk to the horse; most of them know “whoa”, “walk”, and “trot”, or can learn the words. Watch where you’re going and what’s happening around you. Do not walk backward to look at the Riders. It’s dangerous for everyone and the horse isn’t eager to follow someone who can’t see where they are going.

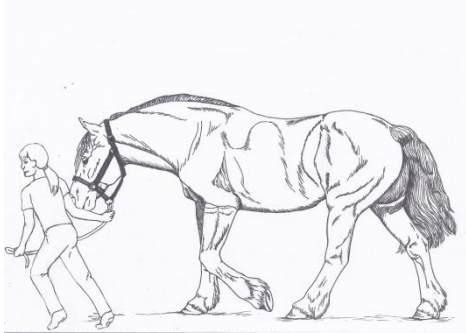


Figure A

**Figure B** shows the correct position for Leaders. The lead rope is held with the right hand 6-12 inches from the snap, allowing free motion of the horse’s head. This is more therapeutic for the Rider and less irritating to the horse.

The tail end of the lead should be looped in a figure eight in the left hand to avoid tripping on it. Never coil the rope around your hand. That could end in a close relationship with your fingers!

Use short tugs rather than a steady pull to keep a lazy horse moving. The horse can set himself up against a steady pull, but tugs keep him awake. Move out, about 1,000 steps per 15 minutes, to provide the most therapeutic benefit.

If the worst happens and there is an accident, stay with the horse. There are other people to care for a fallen Rider. The situation could easily become more dangerous if there are loose horses running around the arena. Move your horse as far from the fallen Rider as possible and keep calm. Listen for the PATH Certified Instructor’s directions.

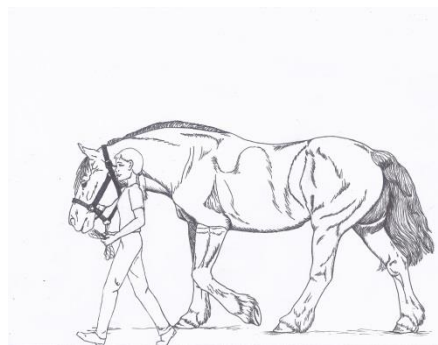


Figure B

Safety is the most important job for everyone at Chakota. You, as the Horse Leader, are the eyes and ears of your horse. Any number of different scenarios, from weather to stray dogs, may affect the behavior of your horse and/or your Rider. A Leader should be constantly scanning the environment looking for potential hazards. Are there any dogs or other strange animals that may scare the horse? Is the wind blowing up dust or making the trees sway wildly? What are the other horses doing?

Are there any cars, trucks, bicycles, etc. that may suddenly change direction and scare the horse? If something concerns you, bring it to the attention of the PATH Certified Instructor immediately. Everyone takes safety seriously and no one will think your question or concern is foolish. In the unlikely event that your horse spooks or your Rider falls, you must remain with your horse. Everybody has his or her job. The Sidewalkers need to stay with the Rider, and the Leader must stay with the horse. If you let go of your horse to help the Rider, you may end up with a loose, scared horse with a Rider still on top, or partially on top.

While the level of safety must always be 100%, the degree of control that the Leader may need over the horse varies from Rider to Rider. Many Riders are successful at telling the horse to stop, turn, or walk on by themselves, while others can only attempt the command but haven't mastered the skill to make the horse listen. As you work with specific Riders, you will learn their differing levels. One Rider may be able to stop his horse but sometimes it takes him two or three tries. Your job is to let that Rider take those three tries until he successfully stops his horse. A different Rider might not yet be able to stop his horse, but does know how to execute the command (i.e. shorten the reins and say "whoa"). Your job for this Rider is a little different. If you hear the Rider attempt the command, but it doesn't work, you may then help him by bringing the horse to a stop. In this way, over time, he will gain confidence with his skill and eventually succeed on his own.



Don't Let Your Horse Eat Grass!

## Lesson Volunteers: Horse Handler

**Job Description:** A horse handler is vital to a smooth running therapeutic lesson. A handler must arrive early and get the horse from the stall, corral, or pasture. Then it is the handler's responsibility to groom and tack the horse for the therapy lesson. The handler will then hand off the horse to a horse leader for exercise and lessons. Once a lesson is over it is the handler's responsibility to untack, groom, and return the horse to the corral, stall, or pasture. A handler may also be supervising a Barn Buddy while the Buddy is grooming.

**SUPERVISORS:** Equine Director, Volunteer Coordinator, Path Certified Instructor

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. Dependable and able to make the commitment.
2. Has a reliable means of transportation.
3. Enjoys working with people with disabilities.
4. Able to work around horses.
5. In good health.
6. Able to follow instructions and help Riders relate to directions.

### **TRAINING:**

1. Volunteer orientations/trainings.
2. On-the-job training
3. Volunteer Handbook.
4. Pass Skills Assessment

### **SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Sign in.
2. Report to the barn.
3. Check daily schedules.
4. Grooming and tacking horses before lessons and untacking and grooming horses after the lessons have been completed.
5. Assist in keeping the barn and the area around the barn neat and clean.
6. Serve as a horse leader (if trained) during lessons as needed.
7. Assist in feeding the horses and cleaning the barn after the lessons have ended.
8. Report to Equine Director and volunteer coordinator before leaving.
9. Sign out.

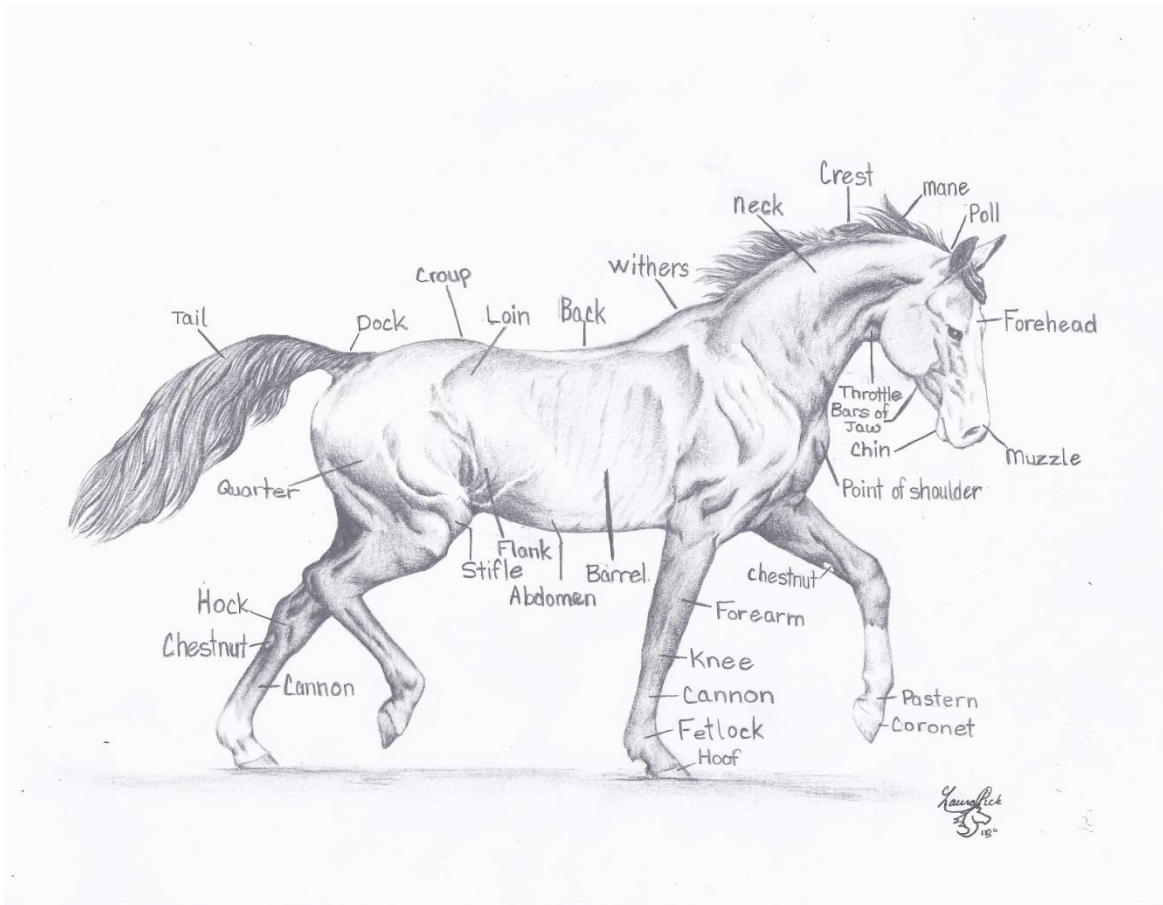
### **Basic Instructions for Handlers**

1. Familiarize yourself with the location of the nearest telephone, first aid kit, fire extinguisher, bathroom, and emergency phone numbers.
2. Familiarize yourself with the daily schedule posted on the bulletin board. Ask any questions about the schedule prior to the lesson.
3. If you are not comfortable with a situation for any reason, tell Dave Langenhorst immediately.

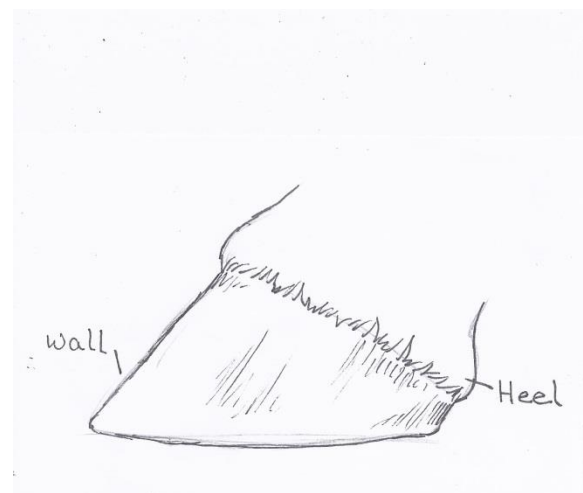
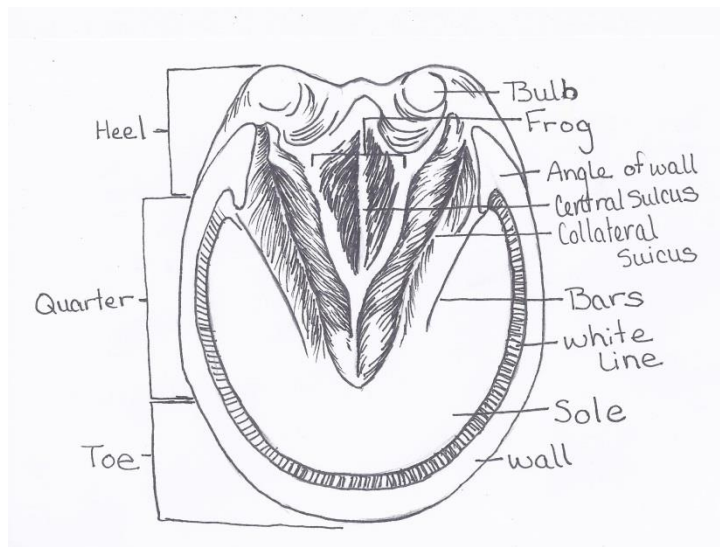


4. We treat our horses GENTLY. If a horse misbehaves tell the PATH Certified Instructor and equine director. Re-training and reprimands are generally done during schooling, not during lessons.
5. Please don't chat with other volunteers or Riders during a lesson.
6. Always be aware of the PATH Certified Instructor's directions.

## ***PARTS OF THE HORSE***



## ***Parts of the Hoof***

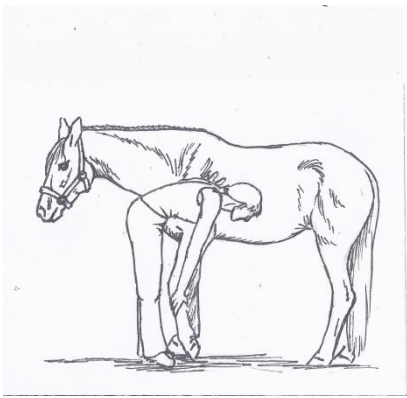


# Grooming

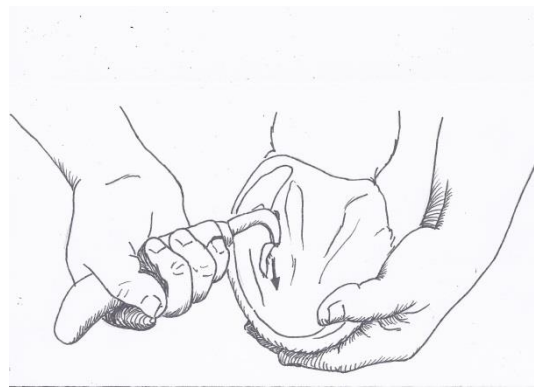
Remember when you are grooming to look for any problems on the horse, i.e.: cuts, scrapes, a runny nose/eye, bumps, swellings, heat in the hooves, etc. Notify the PATH Certified Instructor of any problems you notice. When grooming, start at the front of the horse and work your way back with each tool.

## Grooming sequence:

1. Pick out all four hooves using a hoof pick. Dirt and rocks can be trapped in the hollow grooves on the underside of the hoof, causing problems such as lameness.

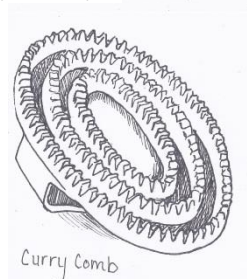


To get the horse to pick up their hoof, start at the top of the leg and while running your hand down their leg, say “Hoof” or “Up”.

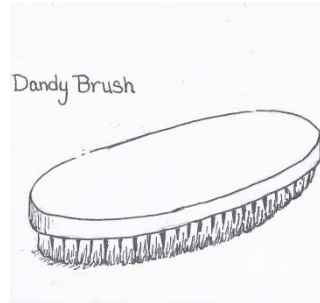


To pick out the hoof, run the hoof pick from heel to toe, beside the frog, getting any dirt or rocks out. Be careful not to dig the pick into the frog.

2. Using a circular motion, use a currycomb over the neck, barrel, or currycomb on the legs or face.



3. Brush the entire body except for the face with a stiff/dandy brush. Use short, flicking strokes, following the direction of the coat. Be sure to brush the belly as well, especially where the girth will touch.



4. Next use a soft brush over the entire body, including the face. Use long, sweeping strokes going with the direction of the coat, to clean sensitive areas and to polish the whole coat.



5. To brush out the mane and tail, use a comb. If there are a lot of tangles, use a mane and tail conditioner and then brush with a dandy brush so that you do not break or pull out the hairs.



Start at the bottom and work your way up, always brushing in a downward motion.

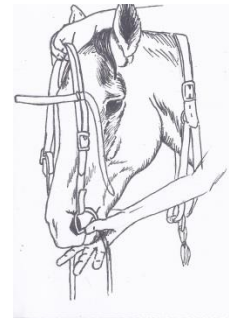
For any serious, lingering stains that won't come off with brushing, get a bucket of water and a rag and wipe off the spot. Be sure not to make any area wet that will be covered by tack.

# Bridling

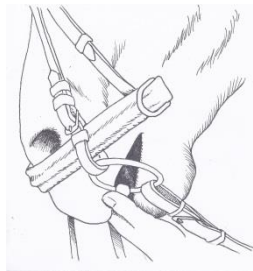
1. Put the halter around the neck so that the horse is under control.



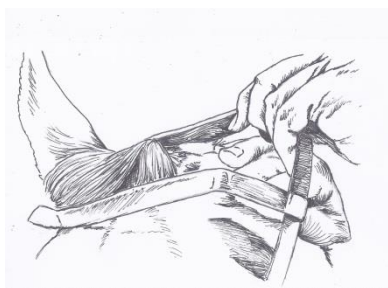
2. Stand on the left side of the horse and place the reins over the horse's head, letting them lay on the neck so that they don't fall on the ground.
3. Hold the crown piece in the right hand and the bit in the left hand.



4. Place the bit into the horse's lips, and bring the crownpiece to the horse's ears. If the horse fails to open his mouth and accept the bit, put your thumb into the side of the horse's mouth and press down on the bar (the area where the bit lies, where there are no teeth). Raise the crown piece and insert the bit.



5. Slip the crownpiece gently over the ears, one at a time, pushing them flat first (so they aren't folded). Straighten the browband and pull the forelock out so that it is over, not under the browband.



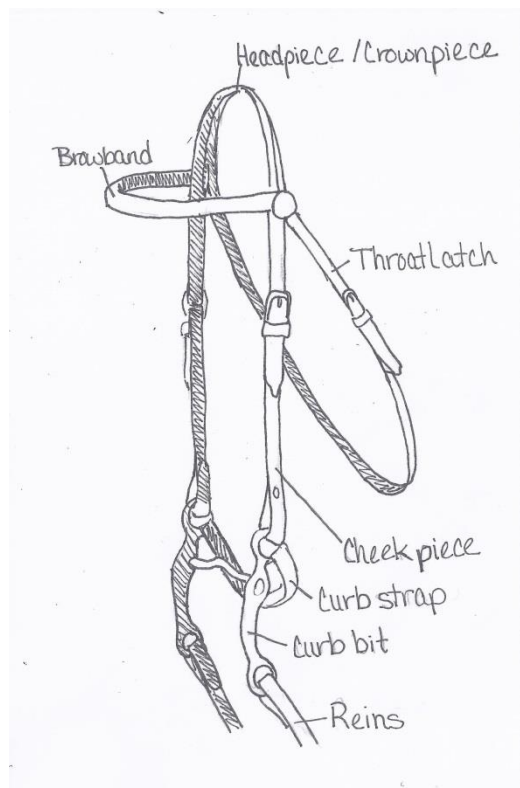
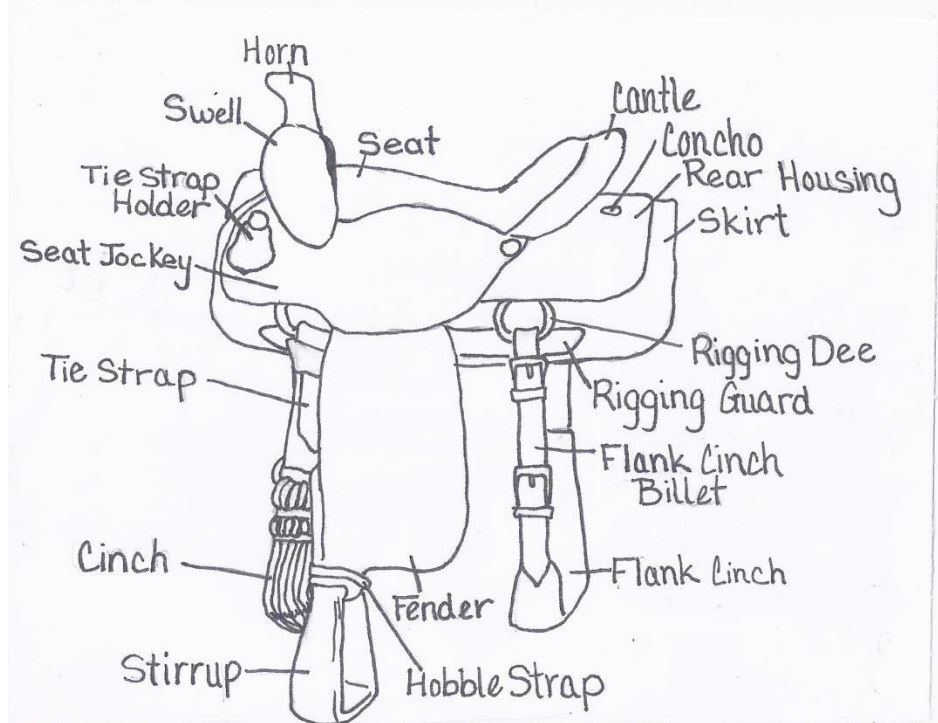
6. Buckle the throatlatch loosely enough so that a hand can be inserted between the throatlatch and the throat.

## Saddling

Place the saddle pad high on the withers, and then slide it down onto the horse's back to smooth out the hairs. If a bump or lollipop pad will also be used, place this on next, on top of the saddle pad. Then pick up the saddle, making sure the stirrups are run up or laid across the seat of the saddle so that they are not hanging (and as a result, will hit the horse when the saddle is put on).

Lay the girth across the seat of the saddle. Holding the pommel with the left hand and the cantle in the right hand, place the saddle gently on the horse, in the center of the pad. Pull the saddle pad up into the gullet of the saddle to allow air to circulate between the horse's withers and the pad, and to prevent rubbing. When positioning the saddle, the front edge should be lined up with the center of the horse's shoulder. Always make sure the pad is smooth, and there are no wrinkles under the saddle that could cause sores.

## Western Tack



## English Tack

