



Grooming Your Horse

The Professional Way

A series of 4 articles by Michael Glenn – H-10 Australia

Part 1 - Grooming

Thanks very much for subscribing to our 4 Part Horse Grooming Course. This course is written by a professional show horse competitor and covers the basics of the horse grooming process. By following this course, you'll learn how important grooming your horse really is, and you'll find out the best way to do it for really professional results.

The fact is that most of us horse lovers don't groom our horses properly. This could be due to lots of things - time, motivation, circumstances etc. What we need to realise is that time with our horse is bonding time. Remember that in the wild, horses groom each other and that's the basis for their relationships with each other. If we don't take the trouble to groom our horses properly, then we can't expect to forge the bonds we want between us and if this doesn't happen then we can't expect the partnership benefits we look for either. If we take the time, if we have the patience, if we use the right techniques AND the right products, then we'll forge a bond of trust between us and our horses that will last forever.

Domesticated horses rely on humans to provide the opportunity for skin care, unlike the wild horse where they have the opportunity to groom each other! Grooming should be incorporated into the daily routine of owning and managing your horse to maintain its health and happiness. This practice increases the circulation to the skin, releasing necessary oils that promote a vibrant and lustrous coat. Daily grooming allows the coat to be shed gradually, easing the burden of trying to remove long hair and excess dead skin. A horse that is worked regularly should be thoroughly and properly groomed at all times.

Grooming not only allows us to give our horses a shiny, short, healthy coat, it also gives us the opportunity to go over our beautiful animals from head to toe, to notice any abnormalities such as cuts, wounds, irritations, fevers that your horse may have developed. The H-10 product range for first aid, H-10 Ointment and Spray is perfect to treat these problems. <http://www.h-10.com.au>

Stages Of Grooming

Always start on the near side of left side of your horse, working your way towards the rear. The face, legs and hips that have less muscle and more bone closer to the surface should be groomed carefully.

Begin your session with a rubber curry comb, over the entire body in circular motions. Curry combing allows you to bring dust and dandruff to the surface for easy removal. It also allows for circulation to the skin. Natural oils are released promoting a healthy shine. Use a rubber mitt for the face and legs.

Follow with a stiff brush. This removes the dirt brought to the surface by currying and returns the hair to its natural position. Short brush strokes are best for this. Finish with a soft brush that removes any further dust left by the stiff brush and leaves the coat shiny. The face can also be brushed with the soft brush. Start at the forehead and follow the grain of the hair. The eyes, muzzle and nostrils can be wiped clean with a sponge and warm water, an antibacterial agent can be diluted if required. Also, the anus, vulva or sheath and between the teats can be cleaned this way.

The tail can be brushed regularly and a detangler can assist to make this process easier. H-10 Coat Gloss and Detangler is ideal for this, with great results especially on very thick tails. Always stand to the side when brushing the tail. The mane can be combed also. Be aware as to the thickness of the comb or brush that you use on the mane and tail and the density of your horse's mane tail. Too much heavy brushing/combing can pull out the hair, especially the tail.

Feet – each time a horse is groomed its feet should be picked out. Start with the left fore foot and work your way around. Each foot should be cleaned out facing the rear of the horse. Always pick it up by squeezing the tendon above the ankle. You can also check the fetlock at the same time for any fungal or bacterial problems, such as greasy heel or mud fever. H-10 Ointment and Spray range is a great product for treating these worrisome problems.

Once the foot is in your hand, pick out the crevices around the frog as well as the frog itself. Once finished, gently release the foot.

Remember, always use common sense when grooming your horse!! This will make grooming safe and easy!!

This is part 1 of the course and we hope that you've enjoyed it. Part 2 will be sent automatically next week.

If you want to sample a chapter from the life of a world famous horse trainer and learn some of his secrets for free follow this link:

www.h-10.com.au/beery/indexjb.htm