



Grooming Your Horse

The Professional Way

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

Part 2 - Washing & Pulling A Mane

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. Go to www.h-10.com.au

Stages Of Grooming

WASHING – washing your horse helps to remove excess dirt, dry skin and unwanted hair, thus keeping the coat clean. Always use a good quality shampoo, low foaming or high foaming. The H-10 Elegance range is an ideal product and low foaming too which means that far less water is used when rinsing the coat.

Begin by making sure that your horse is tied up securely and safely. Lightly soak the horses face, working your way down to the end of the body and wetting the tail. When your horse is completely wet, apply your shampoo. The H-10 Elegance Blue Label can be applied directly or the H-10 Elegance Green Label can be diluted up to 4x in a bucket of water, depending on what you like to do. Use a big soft sponge for a thorough wash. Follow this with washing the horses face gently. Shampoo the tail mane and tail as you would your own hair.

Once the horse has been entirely scrubbed, wash off the shampoo. You can condition your horse's tail to remove any knots with a quality conditioner or you can simply apply the H-10 Coat Gloss and Detangler. If your horses mane is going to be plaited following its bath, do not condition this as it will make it slippery. Scrape off the excess water with a sweat scraper and towel dry your horses face, mane and legs paying attention to the fetlocks. These can prone to bacterial and fungal problems if not dried thoroughly.

PULLING A MANE – Scissors should NEVER be used to pull a mane. A pulling comb is used to shorten and thin out a mane and forelock. A mane will pull a lot more easily if the pores of skin are open and the horse is warm, after exercise for example. Run a comb through your horse's mane to remove any knots before you start so that it is lying flat. Assess the thickness and length of the mane and any areas that may have cowlicks as these are prone to more thinning. Start at the wither, where it is less sensitive then move up near the ears. You should try to match the rest of the horse's mane to that of it closest to the wither. Secure a thin piece of mane with your left hand from underneath the mane. The top layer of mane will lie smoothly over this once finished. Using the pulling comb, push the hair up towards the crest. Wrap the thinned portion of hair around the comb once or twice for leverage and pull down towards the horse's neck.

Remember, gentle downward pressure will keep your horse more relaxed and less likely startle him and always use common sense when grooming your horse!! This will make grooming safe and easy!!

If you want to learn the secrets of a master horse trainer, download a complete chapter of his course FREE here:
<http://www.h-10.com.au/beery/indexjb.htm>