Right From the Start

Horses
Characteristics

- Social
- Quick
- Agile
- Biters
- Attentive
- Expressive

Blind spots:
- Directly behind
- Under the neck
- Under the belly

Long-term project
- Teach them respect.
- A good working relationship is important.

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Characteristics cont.

- Good night vision
- Very wide field of vision
  - 65 degrees of binocular
  - 285 degrees of monocular
- Good sense of hearing
- Acute sense of smell
- Great sense of balance
- Well-developed sense of touch
- Advanced sense of taste
Danger Points

- Body mass
- Feet
  - Kicking
  - Stepping on
- Teeth
Long-term Project

- Teach them respect
- Develop a good working relationship
Horse Selection

- Temperament
- Age
- Size
- Cost
- Gender
- Breed
- Conformation
- Riding discipline
- Skill level of the handler and horse
Equipment

- Nylon or leather halter with stout buckle
- Rope halter
- Cotton lead rope
- Grooming tools
Safety

• Approach animal slowly and calmly toward the shoulder
• Be aware of blind spots:
  • Under the neck
  • Directly behind
  • Under the belly
• Supervision
• Match horse and handler appropriately
• Abandon project if unsafe
Acclimatization

- Environments
- People
- Sounds
- Lights
Haltering

- Make the horse aware of you
- Use lead rope for control during haltering and un-halting
- Allow horse to put its nose in the halter
- Tie the knot in the appropriate place on the rope halter.
Leading

- Handler should be even with the horse’s neck
- Lead rope should be about 9-12 feet long
  - Hold lead rope close to the snap with right hand
  - Hold excess rope loosely in left hand
  - Do not let lead rope dangle; poses a tripping risk
- Typically want to pivot horse away from handler
  - Reduces tripping risk
  - Reduces stepping on risk
  - May have to pivot towards handler in turns of less than 90 degrees
Tying

- Never use bridle reins to tie a horse
- Use halter and cotton lead rope
- Tie to a sturdy object
- Tie horses at their eye level, above the withers
- Allow only 18-24 inches of slack
- Use a slip knot
Tying
Grooming

- Make animal aware of your presence
- Relaxing for the horse
- All handlers should stand on the same side of the horse
- Pull tail to the side for brushing
  - Do not stand behind the horse
Lifting the Feet

- Keep a hand on the horse at all times
- Stand to the side; not behind
- Point the hoof pick away from you
- Be slow and gentle
- Keep your feet out of the way
Wash Rack

- Ensure good footing
  - Rubber mats
- Always have an escape route for the handler
Maintaining Control

- Vary the horses speed
- Pivot the horse
- Stop horse
- Back horse up
Right From the Start

Production Horses
Characteristics

- Social
- Quick
- Agile
- Biters
- Attentive
- Expressive

Blind spots:
- Directly behind
- Under the neck
- Under the belly

Long-term project
- Teach them respect.
- A good working relationship is important.
Characteristics cont.

- Good night vision
- Very wide field of vision
  - 65 degrees of binocular
  - 285 degrees of monocular
- Good sense of hearing
- Acute sense of smell
- Great sense of balance
- Well-developed sense of touch
- Advanced sense of taste
Broodmares

- Social
- Aggressive when feeding
- Protective when in production
Stallions

- Very aggressive
- Not worked with as often
- Pose a high risk for inexperienced handlers
Weanen Foal

- Excitable
- Tend to run
- Easily startled
Training Facility Horses

- Most not highly trained yet
- Spook easily
- Inexperienced handlers need supervision
The Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education

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