Valley Center Rodeo Queens

2026 Study Guide

VALLEY CENTER STAMPEDE

About PRCA

The Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA), headquartered in Colorado Springs, Colo., is the oldest and largest professional rodeo-sanctioning body in the world. The recognized leader in professional rodeo, the PRCA is committed to maintaining the highest standards in the industry in every area, from improving working conditions for contestants and monitoring livestock welfare, to boosting entertainment value and promoting sponsors. The PRCA also proudly supports youth rodeo with our educational Youth Camps program and financial assistance to young standouts preparing to enter the professional ranks. The PRCA supports allied organizations such as Tough Enough to Wear Pink, Miss Rodeo America, the American Quarter Horse Association, the Justin Cowboy Crisis Fund and the ProRodeo Hall of Fame.

In 2023, the PRCA sanctioned 790 events in 37 states and three Canadian provinces. These rodeos represent the cream of the crop among thousands of rodeo-related events that take place each year across North America. As a membership-driven organization, the PRCA works to ensure that every event it sanctions is managed with fairness and competence and that the livestock used are healthy and cared for to the highest standards.

Here are some key facts about ProRodeo and the PRCA:

Fans. More than 40 million people identify themselves as fans of ProRodeo. Many of them attend PRCA-sanctioned rodeos around the country each year. Fans can follow professional rodeo all year long through the PRCA's television coverage on The Cowboy Channel, PRCA on Cowboy Channel Plus App, the PRCA's *ProRodeo Sports News* magazine, ProRodeo.com, as well as the official PRCA Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok accounts.

Competition. Unlike most other professional sports, where contestants are paid salaries, regardless of how well they perform, cowboys generally pay to enter each rodeo. If they place high enough in the performance to win money, they probably make a profit, but if they don't, they've lost their entry fee and any travel expenses. Every entry is a gamble, pitting the chance for loss and physical injury against the opportunity for financial windfall and athletic glory. Also unlike most sanctioned professional sports, the hundreds of "playing fields" – rodeo arenas – of PRCA-sanctioned rodeos vary widely. The size, shape and perimeter of an arena, as well as the chute configuration and whether it's indoors or outdoors, all significantly affect times for timed events and, to a lesser extent, scores for roughstock events. The differences are so significant that some timed-event cowboys own different horses for different types of arenas. For that reason, the fairest way to measure cowboys' success in competition across the varied settings is by earnings. The total payout at PRCA rodeos in 2023 was $74.5 million. Since 1986, the PRCA has paid out more than $1 billion in prize money to its contestants.

Cowboys. In 2023, the PRCA's membership included 6,636 cowboys (including permit holders), who comprise the majority of the association's roster. The largest membership segment includes a full range of contestants, from cowboys who compete in ProRodeo for a living, crisscrossing the country with their own horses or equipment, as well as those who work other jobs during the week and compete in nearby rodeos on the weekends. The PRCA includes one $7 million earner in 26-time world champion and ProRodeo Hall of Famer Trevor Brazile, as well as several $3 million earners and more than 40 $2 million-dollar earners.

Permit system. Cowboys who want to apply for membership in the PRCA must first obtain a permit card and then earn at least $1,000 at PRCA-sanctioned rodeos; there is no time limit to "fill" the permit. Money won under a permit card counts toward circuit standings, but not toward world standings or rookie standings. (A rookie is a cowboy in his first year as a PRCA card-holding contestant.)

World champions. "World champion" is the most coveted title in ProRodeo. The sport's world champions are crowned at the conclusion of the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo presented by Teton Ridge, based on total season earnings at PRCA rodeos across the continent, including monies earned at the NFR. The PRCA crowns eight world titlists; each receives a gold buckle handcrafted by Montana Silversmiths and a specially crafted trophy saddle from Cactus Saddlery. In 2023, every PRCA world champion from the NFR earned at least $300,000 and bull rider Ky Hamilton earned 595,414. Steer roping has less events and 2023 World Champion Cole Patterson earned $166,710.

Stock contractors. All PRCA rodeo events involve livestock, and the care of those animals falls to the stock contractors who buy or breed them, raise them, feed them, watch over them, provide medical care when necessary and transport them safely between rodeos and their home pastures. PRCA stock contractors agree to follow more than 60 rules providing for the care and humane treatment of livestock – the toughest standards in the industry – and constantly look for ways to improve their husbandry, knowing that best practices produce top-performing livestock.

Judges. There are at least two judges at every PRCA rodeo who have attended judging seminars and are trained to ensure that all results of competition and livestock welfare are followed. During the timed events, each judge has a different role; during the roughstock events, the judges are on opposite sides of the cowboy and animal, watching for the cowboy's control of the ride and how well his timing is synced with the animal's bucking motion, among other scored aspects of a ride that can be different on the two sides.

Contract personnel. The non-contestant personnel working a rodeo include the bullfighters, who help bull riders escape from powerful bulls; the barrelmen, clowns and specialty acts, who entertain the crowds; pickup men, who help bareback and saddle bronc riders dismount and prepare and assist bucking stock to leave the arena; announcers, who call the action; arena secretaries, who handle extensive administrative duties; and timers, who operate the clocks for the timed and roughstock events.

Committees. Local rodeo committees organize the PRCA-sanctioned rodeos held across the continent. Most are run by dedicated groups of volunteers who make the rodeos work from behind the scenes, procuring local sponsors for events, awards and programs; setting up safe facilities; staffing various functions and making the contestants and attendees feel at home. Many PRCA rodeos are broadly involved in their communities in both service and fund-raising areas.

Charities. PRCA-sanctioned rodeos annually raise more than $40 million for local and national charities, from college scholarships for local students to the Tough Enough to Wear Pink campaign, the Justin Cowboy Crisis Fund and the ProRodeo Hall of Fame.

Sponsors. The PRCA's loyal national sponsors support all aspects of rodeo, from entire events like the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo; the NFR Open; the PRCA Playoff Series and the Cinch Playoffs Governor's Cup, to the hand-crafted Montana Silversmiths gold buckles awarded to world champions each year. Read more in the PRCA National Partners chapter of the media guide. Sponsors also help defray the costs of producing rodeos and support contestants in their efforts to climb the ranks of ProRodeo.

Demographics. The PRCA's 40 million loyal rodeo attendees across the U.S. are about 51 percent male and 49 percent female; and ProRodeo fans are significantly invested in their communities with 25 million fans living in their current homes longer than five years and 15 million of them earn more than $75,000 a year. ProRodeo fans come from all walks of life, but as a group, they are demographically similar to NASCAR fans, and also enjoy hunting, fishing and camping.

ProRodeo.com. The PRCA maintains a website with the latest news stories, videos, world standings, rodeo results, cowboy and livestock bios, and other information and statistics. For information not found on our website contact the PRCA Media Department at 719.593.8840.

A Brief History of Rodeo

Rodeo traces its roots back to the mid-1800s in the American West and Mexico, born from the daily work of cowboys and vaqueros. After long cattle drives, ranch hands would challenge each other in friendly competitions—roping, bronc riding, and steer wrestling—to show their skill and earn bragging rights.

By the late 1800s, these informal contests grew into organized events. Prescott, Arizona (1888) is often credited with holding the first formal rodeo, complete with entry fees, judges, and prize money. Other towns, like Cheyenne, Wyoming, and Pecos, Texas, quickly followed, helping to shape rodeo into a beloved Western tradition.

In the early 1900s, rodeo became a popular spectator sport influenced by Wild West shows such as Buffalo Bill Cody's, which showcased cowboy skills across America and Europe. To bring consistency to events, the Rodeo Association of America was formed in 1929 to track champions and standardize rules.

A major milestone came in 1936, when cowboys formed the Cowboys' Turtle Association after protesting unfair pay. This group evolved into the Rodeo Cowboys Association (RCA) in 1945, and later the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) in 1975. The PRCA brought structure, safety, and professionalism to the sport, along with the creation of the National Finals Rodeo (NFR) in 1959—the championship event that crowns world champions each year.

Today, rodeo remains a vibrant symbol of Western heritage, celebrating skill, courage, and tradition through events such as bull riding, barrel racing, team roping, and saddle bronc riding across the United States, Canada, and beyond.

History of PRCA

Until the turn of the century, early rodeos were informal events – exhibition matches of skill, with nothing but pride and perhaps a few dollars at stake. But as audiences grew, promoters began to organize annual contests in specific locations as well as traveling Western shows.

Rodeo organizations remained fragmented until the late 1920s, when the Rodeo Association of America, comprised of rodeo committees and promoters from across the U.S., named its first champions. The first true national cowboys' organization emerged in 1936, when a group of cowboys and cowgirls left a performance at Madison Square Garden and boycotted the promoter's next rodeo, in Boston Garden. They forced one of the biggest rodeo producers of the times, Col. W.T. Johnson, to listen to their demands for better prize money and judges who understood rodeo. Johnson gave in and the Cowboys' Turtle Association was born – a name they picked because they had been slow to act, but had finally stuck their necks out for their cause. In 1945, the Turtles became the Rodeo Cowboys Association (RCA), which in 1975 evolved into the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. The PRCA has experienced tremendous growth in terms of membership, national exposure, media coverage and sanctioned rodeos. Today, the PRCA boasts more than 6,000 members (more than 5,200 of whom are currently contestants) and sanctions more than 700 rodeos a year. The PRCA headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colo., which includes the ProRodeo Hall of Fame and Museum of the American Cowboy, opened in 1979.

Fans keep up to date with their favorite athletes by subscribing to the PRCA's ProRodeo Sports News magazine, watching livestreamed PRCA events, logging on to www.ProRodeo.com and following the PRCA's social media platforms.

PRORODEO TIMELINE: 1936-2013

Before ProRodeo, there was…

1869: The first amateur rodeo is held in Deer Trail, Colo.

1880s-1890s: A number of Western towns hold their first professional rodeos with cash prizes, including Prescott, Ariz.; Pecos, Texas; Payson, Ariz.; Denver, Colo.; North Platte, Neb.; and Cheyenne, Wyo.

1920s: The Rodeo Association of America, comprised of rodeo committees and promoters, banded together to create contests that would lead to the sport's first national champions.

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1936: By joining ranks to boycott a rodeo in Boston, a group of cowboys and cowgirls forced the promoter to improve judging and increase the prize money. They picked the name Cowboys Turtle Association in reflection of the fact that they had been slow to act, but had finally stuck their necks out for their cause.

1947: Succeeding the CTA, the Rodeo Cowboys Association begins implementing rules regarding rodeo livestock welfare. Today, the PRCA enforces 60 rules that govern the care and treatment of the livestock participating in PRCA-sanctioned events.

1959: The PRCA develops its first true national championship event, the National Finals Rodeo; it's held in Dallas the first three years, then in Los Angeles for three years, then in Oklahoma City 1965-84.

1975: The RCA changes its name again, to the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, with 3,651 members competing for $6,432,580 in prize money that year.

1979: The PRCA opens a new national headquarters in the foothills near Pikes Peak, America's Mountain, in Colorado Springs, Colo. – where it remains today.

2003: The PRCA develops the Xtreme Bulls Tour to pit its best bull riders against its rankest bulls and to satisfy the public's demand for bull-riding-only events.

1985: The National Finals Rodeo moves to the Thomas & Mack Center on the University of Nevada (Las Vegas) campus, where the prize purse has grown from $1.79 million in 1985 to $6.25 million in 2013 and the event has been virtually sold out every year.

2013: The PRCA sanctions 611 rodeos with a total payout of $39.59 million, and has 5,071 contestant members.

The PRCA Circuit System

1. COLUMBIA RIVER
2. CALIFORNIA
3. WILDERNESS
4. MONTANA
5. MOUNTAIN STATES
6. TURQUOISE
7. BADLANDS
8. PRAIRIE
9. TEXAS
10. GREAT LAKES
11. SOUTHEASTERN
12. FIRST FRONTIER
13. MAPLE LEAF

The circuit system is an integral part of the association. Every PRCA contestant belongs to a circuit and has an opportunity to advance to a national championship in the multimillion-dollar arm of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. It affords opportunities to cowboys who may not have the circumstances that allow them to be on the road for thousands of miles a year. But make no mistake, these cowboys are as good as they come. They also make up the majority of the PRCA's membership.

In 1975, the PRCA created a system that breaks up the United States into 12 circuits. The circuits include as few as one state, such as the California, Texas, and Montana circuits, to as many as 13 – such as the First Frontier Circuit in the northeastern part of the country. In 1987, the National Circuit Finals Rodeo was incorporated, and Dodge became the title sponsor of all 12 circuit finals rodeos and the Dodge National Circuit Finals Rodeo. In 2010, the Dodge brand rodeo initiative went to the RAM Truck division of the Chrysler Group. RAM still has the title sponsorship of all 12 U.S. PRCA Circuit Finals Rodeos and the National Circuit Finals Rodeo. In 2018, the PRCA expanded the circuit system to 13 by welcoming Canada as the Maple Leaf Circuit. This was in cooperation with the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association. The Maple Leaf Circuit debuted at the 2020 RAM NCFR.

As the regular season ends, top competitors from each event qualify to compete at their circuit finals rodeos. Champions from those rodeos, as well as the overall year-end winners from each circuit are then invited to vie for RAM NCFR championships. Each contestant can compete in and out of his circuit throughout the year, but only the points they earn within the circuit they designate at the beginning of the season are applied in the circuit standings. Nonetheless, everything a contestant wins – in any circuit – is applied in the PRCA| RAM

World Standings. So, while most circuit contestants rodeo close to home, there is still opportunity for them to earn enough money to get to the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo.

In October of 2021, the PRCA announced some changes with the National Circuit Finals Rodeo. The name of the rodeo was changed to the NFR Open beginning in 2022 and was hosted by the Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo, July 13-16 in Colorado Springs, Colo. The NCFR had been in Kissimmee, Fla. The inaugural NFR Open powered by RAM, was one of the biggest rodeos of the 2022 PRORODEO season with $1 million in payouts to contestants, livestock and other PRCA members. The NFR Open, formerly titled the RAM National Circuit Finals Rodeo, is the most prestigious rodeo under the PRCA circuit system and will feature two contestants in each event from each of the 12 U.S. circuits, plus Canada, bringing more than 200 contestants to the Norris-Penrose Event Center for five competition rounds over the four days. The event culminated with a semifinals and finals on Saturday, July 16, when the national circuit champions were crowned. This event was also one of the highest-paying events in PRORODEO and will be a key ingredient for cowboys and cowgirls shooting to qualify for the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas taking place later in the year.

The NFR Open Powered by RAM is one of the biggest of the 2022 and 2023 seasons. The tournament style NFR Open determines the national circuit champions in each event. The competition produces exciting challenges for the athletes and vivid entertainment for the fans. All 26 qualifiers from the 13 circuits compete in the two preliminary rounds of the rodeo. The top eight contestants overall (from each event) advance to the semifinal round, with all previous scores and times thrown out. The top four move on to the final round – a sudden-death competition that determines the national circuit champion in each event. Because the top four contestants begin with a clean slate in the final round, each one has an equal opportunity to claim a NFR Open title.

In additions to their winnings, NFR Open event winners receive a $20,000 voucher for a new RAM vehicle, a Polaris RANGER UTV, a trophy saddle from Cactus Saddlery, and a Montana Silversmiths buckle. The National Circuit Finals Steer Roping is a similar event with 35 contestants that determines the national champion in a separate event, steer roping. The NCFSR has been held in Torrington, Wyo., since 2010.

Event Descriptions

Bareback riding

Bareback riding is one of the most physically demanding events in rodeo. A bareback rider sits directly on a bucking horse, with only his own "riggin'" to hang onto. As the horse comes out of the chute, the cowboy's feet must be above the break of the horse's shoulders. He holds his feet up at least through the horse's first move, usually a jump, then spurs the horse on each jump, matching the horse's rhythm and showing control rather than flopping around. He may not touch the horse, his equipment or himself with his free hand. If the ride lasts eight seconds, two judges award up to 25 points each for the cowboy's "exposure" to the strength of the horse and his spurring technique and up to 25 points each for the horse's bucking strength and moves.

Steer wrestling

Steer wrestling demands coordination between two mounted cowboys – the contestant and a hazer who controls the steer's direction – and their horses. The cowboys back their horses into the box on each side of the steer. When the contestant nods, the chute gate opens and the steer gets a head start before the cowboys start to chase him. As the steer wrestler draws even, he dismounts from his horse, which is moving at perhaps 30 miles per hour. He grasps the steer's horns and digs his boot heels into the dirt to slow down the 500- to 600-pound steer. Then he wrestles the steer onto its side; when all four legs point in the same direction, the clock stops. Times vary widely depending on the size of the arena.

Team roping

Team ropers work as partners: one header and one heeler who move in precise coordination. They and their horses start in the "box." When the header nods, the chute gate opens and the steer gets a head start. The header throws the first loop, which must catch the steer's head or horns, protected by a horn wrap. Then the header dallies – wraps his rope around his saddle horn – and moves his horse to pull the rope taut, changing the direction of the steer. That gives the heeler the opportunity to catch both of the steer's hind legs with his own rope; most heelers try to time their throws to catch the legs when they are in the air. After the catch, the heeler also dallies, to stop the steer. When the ropes are taut and both horses face the steer, the time is recorded. Times vary widely depending on the size of the arena.

Saddle bronc riding

In rodeo's classic event, the saddle bronc rider sits on a specialized saddle – it has no horn, and the stirrups are set forward. In the chute, the cowboy adjusts his grip on the rein and perhaps the horse's position. When the gate opens, his boots must be above the breaks of the horse's shoulders. After the horse's first move, usually a jump, the cowboy begins spurring in long, smooth strokes, in sync with the horse's jumps – legs straight when the bronc comes down, toward the back of the saddle at the top of the jump. His only handhold is a six-foot braided rope; his free hand may not touch his equipment, his body or the horse. If the ride lasts the required eight seconds, it is scored by two judges – one on each side – who assess difficulty and control. Each judge awards up to 25 points for the cowboy's performance and up to 25 points for the animal's performance, for a

potential of 100 points.

Tie-down roping

To start this sprinting event, the tie-down roper and his horse back into the box; the cowboy carries a rope in one hand and a “piggin’ string” in his mouth. When the cowboy nods, the chute opens and the calf gets a head start. The cowboy throws a loop over its head; his horse stops and pulls the rope taut while the cowboy jumps off, dashes down the rope, lays the calf on the ground and uses the piggin’ string to tie any three of its legs together. Then he lifts his hands to show he is finished, and the field flag judge drops a flag to stop the clock. The horse is trained to keep the rope taut until the cowboy remounts and moves the horse toward the calf, giving the rope slack. If the calf’s legs stay tied correctly for six seconds, it’s a qualified run and the time stands.

Barrel racing

Barrel racing is just that – a race against time in a cloverleaf pattern around three barrels set up in the arena. A rider can choose to begin the cloverleaf pattern to the right or left. The time begins when the horse and rider cross the predetermined start line and stops when they come back across the same line. Each run is timed to the hundredths of a second, making every fraction of a second count. (Starting in 2012, Canadian rodeos now time to the thousandth of a second.) Each tipped-over barrel adds a five-second penalty to the time. Although barrel racing is one of seven events common to many PRCA-sanctioned rodeos, it is administered by a separate organization, the Women’s Professional Rodeo Association, which produces its own online media guide.

Bull riding

Bull riding is rodeo’s most dangerous event. In the chute, the bull rider settles on the bull’s back, wraps his braided rope around the bull’s girth, then loops the rope around his hand and back into his palm so he can grip it tightly. When he nods, the gate is opened and the bull lunges out of the chute. Spurring is optional – the primary goal for the cowboy is to stay on for eight seconds without touching himself, his equipment or the bull with his free hand. The cowboy will be scored highly for staying in the middle of the bull, in full control of the ride. If the ride lasts the required eight seconds, it is scored by two judges who assess difficulty (the bull’s spinning, jumping and kicking, lunging, rearing and dropping, and side to-side motion) as well as the cowboy’s degree of control. Each judge awards up to 25 points for the cowboy’s performance and up to 25 points for the animal’s performance, for a potential of 100 points

Steer roping

Some PRCA rodeos include steer roping, which resembles tie-down roping but requires the cowboy to catch and control a large steer (about 450-600 lbs.(. The mounted cowboy backs into the box and nods when he's ready; the steer gets a head start, just as the calf does in tie-down roping. The cowboy must catch the steer by first roping it around the horns, which are protected by horn wraps and reinforced with rebar. Then he tosses the rope over the steer's right hip and rides to the left, bringing the steer to the ground, a frontier technique modern ranch cowboys still use to bring down full-grown steers that need medical attention. When the steer is lying on its side and the rope is taut, the rider dismounts and runs to the steer, tying any three of its legs. As in tie-down roping, the steer's legs must remain tied for six seconds after the tie is complete and the roper remounts his horse.

All-around

Many cowboys compete in more than one event. Some rodeo committees award a special prize to the top money-earner among all the cowboys who entered more than one event at their rodeos, starting with the cowboy who won the most money in two or more events – the all-around champion, a prestigious title indeed.

Linderman Award

One of the most prestigious awards in PRORODEO is the Linderman Award. This title is presented to the PRCA cowboy who wins the most money in at least three events through-out the year, and of those events, one rough stock and one timed event is required. Unlike the All Around, where money won in multiple events does not have to be on both ends of the arena, the Linderman award blends both rough stock and timed event cowboys into one. It is not often you see a cowboy that competes on both sides of the rodeo arena making it such a special honor to be recognized with. Queensland, Australia cowboy, Darcy Kersh, did not set out in the 2025 season to win the Linderman, but as the season unfolded his good friend Travis Monroe pushed him to chase it after it was looking like a reachable goal.Kersh competes in team roping, tie-down roping, saddle bronc riding, and his favorite event, steer wrestling.

Livestock Wellfare

The Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) is deeply committed to the proper care and treatment of the livestock used in rodeo. As an association, the PRCA:

• Has established rules and regulations governing livestock welfare

• Created an animal welfare committee to assist in the association's efforts to ensure proper

care of livestock

- Educates its membership regarding best practices for livestock handling
- Monitors compliance with its livestock welfare rules and regulations
- Educates the public and elected officials about the care provided to rodeo livestock
- Networks with other organizations about best livestock practices and policies
- Works proactively with rodeo committees, stock contractors, contestants and veterinarians to ensure all livestock at PRCA rodeos are being handled properly

PRCA Rules

The PRCA first began implementing rules to ensure proper care and treatment of rodeo livestock in 1947. Today, the PRCA enforces more than 70 rules that govern the care and treatment of the livestock participating in PRCA-sanctioned events. The PRCA continuously encourages all rodeo associations to adopt similar rules. The rules are enforced by professional judges who attend each PRCA-sanctioned rodeo performance. Punishments range from fines to disqualification. Specific rules protecting the animals govern use of the cattle prod, require a conveyance to transport injured animals, require the facilities to be free of hazards to the animals and require the animals to be inspected before each performance; any animals not in top condition will not perform.

Livestock Welfare Surveys

Among the most valuable tools used by the PRCA Livestock Welfare department are the periodic surveys it receives from independent veterinarians who are on site at PRCA rodeos, assisting the local rodeo committees with all livestock-related issues while serving as the rodeo veterinarians. Many of these veterinarians also assist the PRCA by participating in the survey, reporting to the PRCA the condition of the rodeo livestock and facilities.

Outreach

The PRCA has successfully built up its livestock welfare program to serve as a model to all rodeo associations. All PRCA-sanctioned rodeos have rules governing the care and handling of the livestock, and the PRCA regularly meets with other associations to network about rules, handling policies and other livestock welfare initiatives. Reaching beyond the rodeo world to other agricultural and animal use organizations is another important component of the PRCA livestock welfare program.

Education

The PRCA livestock welfare education program works with not only the PRCA membership, but also the public, media, fans and elected officials. The internal education program focuses on informing members about animal health issues and advances in livestock welfare practices. Externally, the program distributes factual information regarding the care and handling of rodeo livestock and answers inquiries from any interested people or organizations.• PRCA rules require flank straps to be lined with fleece or neoprene in the flank area (similar to a human waist). Flank straps are tightened just enough to encourage the animal to kick behind itself instead of hopping around the arena. Overtightening would result in the animal's refusal to move at all, much less buck. Flank straps do not contact an animal's genitals.

Link to the PRCA Animal Wellfare Rule Book:

2023-PRCA-Rule-Book.pdf

As an association, the PRCA :

- Established rules and regulations governing livestock welfare,
- Created an animal welfare committee to assist in the association's efforts to ensure proper care of livestock,
- Conducts regular livestock welfare surveys to identify successful practices and areas for improvement,
- Educates its membership regarding best practices for livestock handling,
- Monitors compliance with its animal welfare rules and regulations,
- Educates the public and elected officials about the care provided to rodeo livestock,
- Networks with other organizations about best livestock practices and policies,
- Employs a director of livestock welfare to coordinate all efforts relating to care and handling of livestock at PRCA-sanctioned events, and
- Employs a livestock welfare superintendent to proactively work with rodeo committees, stock contractors, contestants and veterinarians to ensure all livestock at PRCA rodeo are being handled properly.

Recognizes veterinarian's contribution to the welfare of rodeo livestock with a new award program titled "PRCA Veterinarian of the Year" to be awarded at the National Finals Rodeo each year.

Animal Right Vs Animal Welfare

An important distinction to make when dealing with animal issues is the difference between animal welfare and animal rights. After learning the difference between the two philosophies, it is easier to distinguish between organizations that directly help animals and those who wish to end the use of animals.

Animal Welfare - based on principles of humane care and use. Organizations who support animal welfare principles seek to improve the treatment and well-being of animals. Supporting animal welfare premises means believing humans have the right to use animals, but along with that right comes the responsibility to provide proper and humane care and treatment.

Animal Rights - organizations that support animal rights philosophies seek to end the use and ownership of animals. Animal rights organizations seek to abolish by law: the raising of farm animals for food and clothing, rodeos, circuses, zoos, hunting, trapping, fishing, the use of animals in lifesaving biomedical research, the use of animals in education and the breeding of pets.

Rodeo Equipment

What is a Flank Strap?

The flank strap is a fleece-lined strip of leather placed behind the horse's rib cage in the flank area. PRCA rules strictly regulate the use of the strap, which must have a quick-release buckle. Sharp or cutting objects are never placed in the strap. Veterinarians have testified that the flank strap causes no harm to the animals.

"I've never seen or heard of any damage caused by a flank strap, and as for the argument that it covers the genitals, that's impossible," said Dr. Susan McCartney, a Reno, Nev., veterinarian who specializes in large animal care. Also, the horse's kidneys are protected by its ribs, and the flank strap

vers the genitals, that's impossible," said Dr. Susan McCartney, a Reno, Nev., veterinarian who specializes in large animal care. Also, the horse's kidneys are protected by its ribs, and the flank strap does not injure internal organs.

So, if not for the flank strap, why do horses buck? The answer is simple: instinct. It has to be in a horse's nature to buck, and a horse that is not inclined to buck cannot be forced to do so with the use of a flank strap.

"These are not animals that are forced to buck and perform out in the arena," said Dr. Eddie Taylor, the attending veterinarian for La Fiesta de los Vaqueros, a PRCA-sanctioned rodeo in Tucson, Ariz. "They thoroughly enjoy what they are doing."

Do rodeo cowboys use spurs during arena competition?

Dull spurs are used in professional rodeo's three riding events (bareback riding, saddle bronc riding and bull riding). Spurs that meet PRCA guidelines have blunt rowels (the star-shaped wheel on spurs) that are about one-eighth of an inch thick, so they can't cut the animals.

The rowels must be loose so they will roll over the horse's hide. Bull riding spurs have dull, loosely locked rowels to provide more grip on the animals' thick loose hide.

Sources, including Sisson's "Anatomy of the Domestic Animal" and Maximow and Bloom's "Textbook of Histology," indicate that the hides of horses and bulls are much thicker than human skin. A person's skin is one to two millimeters thick, while a horse's hide is about five millimeters thick and bull hide is about seven millimeters thick. The animals' thick hides resist cutting or bruising, and the spurs used at PRCA rodeos usually only ruffle the animals' hair.

What is a cattle prod?

The cattle prod is a device developed by the cattle industry to move livestock. Use of the prod has become one of the most universally accepted and humane methods of herding animals on ranches, in veterinary clinics, and, on occasion, at professional rodeos. The PRCA also regulates the use of prods. PRCA rules require that the prod be used as little as possible and that the animal be touched only on the hip or shoulder area.

Powered solely by flashlight batteries, the prod produces 5,000 to 6,000 volts of electricity, but virtually no amperage. And because amperage — not voltage — causes burns, the prod causes a mild shock, but no injury.

"There are two distinct types of cattle prods," said Dr. Jeffrey O. Hall, DVM, Logan, Utah. "The first is basically a stick or a pole-type device that is used to prompt movement by nudging animals with this device. This type of prod is not harmful to animals, as it is basically to get the animal's attention in order to provoke movement."

"The second type of prod is electric. An electric prod provides a low current shock to induce the movement of the animals. This type of prod does not harm the animals, as it provides a mild electrical shock sensation that leaves no prolonged effects."

PRCA Livestock Rules

The PRCA has more than 60 rules to ensure the proper care and treatment of rodeo animals included in its official rules and regulations. While the rules and regulations are too numerous to list here, several of the safeguards for the proper treatment of animals in the rules and regulations are listed below. For a complete list of the rules and regulations dealing with the proper care and treatment of animals, please send your request to PRCA Animal Welfare Coordinator, PRCA, 101 Pro Rodeo Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80919.

- A veterinarian must be on-site at all PRCA-sanctioned rodeos.
- All animals are inspected and evaluated for illness, weight, eyesight and injury prior to the rodeo, and no animals that are sore, lame, sick or injured are allowed to participate in the event.
- Acceptable spurs must be dull.
- Standard electric prods may be used only when necessary and may only touch the animal on the hip or shoulder area.
- Stimulants and hypnotics may not be given to any animal to improve performance.
- Any PRCA member caught using unnecessary roughness or abusing an animal may be immediately disqualified from the rodeo and fined. This holds true whether it is in the competitive arena or elsewhere on the rodeo grounds.
- Weight limitations are set for both calves (between 220 and 280 pounds) and steers (450-650 pounds).
- The flank straps for horses are fleece- or neoprene-lined and those for bulls are made of soft cotton rope and may be lined with fleece or neoprene.
- Steers used in team and steer roping have a protective covering placed around their horns.
- The use of prods and similar devices is prohibited in the riding events unless an animal is stalled in the chute.
- A no-jerk-down rule provides for fines if a contestant jerks a calf over backwards in tie-down roping.
- All rodeos must have a conveyance available to humanely transport any injured animal.

Chutes must be constructed with the safety of the animals in mind.

Professional Judges

Professional judges officiate every PRCA rodeo. Their responsibilities also include making sure the animals receive proper care and treatment. Judges who are aware of animal abuse by any PRCA member are required to report the violator to the PRCA infractions department.

Violators may be disqualified on the spot and fined by the PRCA.

"We have the backing when we turn someone in," said judge Larry Davis of Adrian, Ore. "That's really important."

Not everyone can become a PRCA judge. PRCA members interested in becoming a PRCA judge undergo extensive training in the skills needed to evaluate livestock and to judge rodeo, as well as several other areas. To become approved, judges undergo testing of their knowledge of animal evaluations and the rodeo.

In addition, PRCA rodeo judges undergo continued training and evaluation to ensure their skills are sharp and that they are enforcing PRCA rules, especially those regarding the care and handling of rodeo livestock.

PRCA judge George Gibbs of Maxwell, Iowa, emphasizes that most rodeo livestock are treated well. If he thinks an animal is being mistreated, he and his colleagues won't hesitate to report the violation.

"I know I can speak for all the judges," Gibbs said. "We take it seriously. One of our most important responsibilities is to make sure that rodeo is done humanely."

Mistreatment of animals at PRCA rodeos is virtually non-existent, according to the judges. Everyone involved in professional rodeo makes an effort to ensure that the animals are treated well.

Miss Rodeo America

Callie Mueller

Callie Mueller was crowned Miss Rodeo America 2025 on Sunday, December 8, at the South Point Hotel and Casino. The 24-year-old from Florence, South Dakota, represented her home state at the Miss Rodeo America Pageant as the 2024 Miss Rodeo South Dakota, becoming the 6th woman from her state to win the prestigious national title.

Callie is a dedicated horsewoman and a rising leader in the equine industry. She holds two Bachelor of Education degrees and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. A member of the American Quarter Horse Association, Callie spends her days training and riding horses while inspiring others through her published writings. She is passionate about education and hopes to continue impacting both the equine and educational communities.

Beyond her work with horses, Callie is committed to promoting the western way of life and mentoring others. She is also determined to win an AQHA World Championship and works tirelessly to teach the next generation of equestrians. Her strong passion for helping others learn and grow defines both her professional and personal life.

In addition to her title as Miss Rodeo America, Callie was awarded the Appearance Award. The
Landstrom's Black Hills Gold crown is accompanied by over $20,000 in educational scholarships and prizes, including a wardrobe of Wrangler jeans and shirts, an assortment of Montana Silversmiths jewelry, and a selection of Justin Boots.

This year's national pageant, which ran throughout the week, featured twenty-nine contestants from across the country. The competition included a horsemanship contest, a written test on equine science and rodeo knowledge, extensive interviews, extemporaneous speaking, and a fashion show.

As Miss Rodeo America 2025, Callie will serve as the official representative of the PRCA. During her reign she will travel over 40,000 miles and appear at nearly 100 rodeo performances, as well as attend various schools, civic groups, and special events to educate the public about rodeo, its spon-

Miss Rodeo California

Janae Wallace

Known for the largest Grizzly bear being captured, small town Valley Center, California is where Janae Wallace calls home. Although this 23-year-old was not raised in the Rodeo industry, her passion for the sport compels her to be an advocate. From having the opportunity of representing several local California PRCA titles, Janae developed a devotion of becoming a bridge between fans and contestants. She continues to live by her platform “Be the Connection” in efforts to mend the gap between the general public and the rich Western industry she has grown to love, showcasing that you do not have to be brought up in the Western culture to be part of such a unique lifestyle.

Miss Rodeo USA

Megan Kelly

Born and raised in Ramona, California, Megan is a proud alumnus of Ramona High School. From a young age, she was deeply involved in her community, starting with 4-H at just six years old. Her passion for the place that shaped her led her to compete in my first pageant at 13, an experience that was both humbling and inspiring. At 15, she had the honor of being crowned Teen Miss Ramona 2015, an achievement that sparked her desire to stay connected and give back to her community. A few years later, she represented again as Miss Ramona 2018, further deepening her commitment to serve her town. These experiences inspired her to take on leadership roles, including serving as vice president of the Ramona FFA Chapter, where she was able to mentor others and contribute to the community that had always supported her.

In 2020, she combined her passion for rodeo and love of her community by competing in her first rodeo queen pageant. She was honored to be crowned Miss Bulls Only Rodeo 2020/2021. After her reign, she was invited to join the Bulls Only Rodeo Committee as the official emcee, coach, and mentor; roles she has proudly held for the past three years. During this time, she has guided countless young women through their journey to becoming rodeo queens while helping them develop lifelong skills. Additionally, she continued to support the 678 Scholarship Pageant, coaching young ladies and recently emceeing the Miss Ramona pageant.

In 2022, she graduated from California State University, San Marcos, and soon after launched her own real estate business. A licensed realtor in California, she has the flexibility to continue her community involvement. Thanks to the unwavering support of her community, she had the privilege of competing for Miss Rodeo USA in 2023, where she placed second runner-up. This experience taught her that making a difference doesn't require a crown, and she remains committed to mentoring aspiring rodeo queens in areas such as stage presence, public speaking, and interview skills.

Competing for a national rodeo queen title demands a broad range of knowledge and skills, many of which have been developed through various leadership roles and experiences since childhood. Megan feels that she owes much of her growth to the mentors and coaches who have guided her, which inspired her to create her official platform, "Mission: Mentorship". This platform emphasizes the importance of investing in youth and encourages experienced individuals to mentor the next generation.

As Miss Rodeo USA 2025, she will travel across the nation to promote the sport of rodeo, the International Professional Rodeo Association (IPRA), her platform, and the numerous sponsors and affiliates. She will participate in events, rodeos, school visits, and other activities, throughout the United States, while also having the opportunity to visit Canada and her hometown rodeos.

None of this would have been possible without the incredible support of the Bulls Only Rodeo Committee, the Lakeside Optimist Club, the 678 Scholarship Pageant, her sponsors, family, friends, and countless community members. Competing at the national level is a surreal experience that takes a village, and she will forever be grateful for the love and encouragement she has received throughout her journey.

Miss Teen Rodeo USA

Violet Camerino

Violet Camerino is a 17-year-old, born and raised in Alpine, California. When she's not chasing cattle with her mare, Lucy, she's in the show ring flying over jumps with her gelding, Teddy. After high school, Violet plans to attend college to study equine science and ranch management.
On Friday, July 11, 2025 she was crowned Miss Teen Rodeo USA 2025-26 at the International Finals Youth Rodeo in Shawnee, Oklahoma. This year, she will carry her platform, "The Power of Gold," with the support of the Golden Circle of Champions. To her, being a rodeo queen is an opportunity to make meaningful connections, preserve the traditions of rodeo, represent them with integrity, and inspire others to do the same.

Previous Valley Center Stampede Rodeo Queens

2004 Mackenzie Cayford

2005 Cara Ouellette

2006 Kohlby Rockenmacher

2007 Jessica Simonsen

2008-2010 Meagan Glennie

2011 Caitlin Smith

2012-2013 Allie McCall

2014 Renee Terbush

2015 Bridgette LaHaye

2016 Aubrey Yates

2017 Hannah Dickerson

2018 Madison Wagner

2019 Janae Wallace

2020-2022 Makenna Hyland

2023-2024 Mia DiGiovanni

2025 Ella Bjerknes

Miss Rodeo California Winner

The Valley Center Stampede Rodeo & Memorial Festival is organized solely by volunteers and remains one of only a few non-profit rodeos in the nation. The Board of Directors is comprised of 14 talented volunteers with the diverse backgrounds needed to put on an event of this magnitude. Additionally, 12 other talented members of the community serve as committee chairs and work with the board of directors to oversee all aspects of the rodeo and festival.

With operational costs reaching over $325,000, largely due to the lack of permanent facilities, the Valley Center Stampede Rodeo volunteers proudly take on the monumental task of raising the rodeo grounds out of a dusty hay field each year. Despite the challenges, the committee takes great pride in the development of the high-quality rodeo grounds they produce each year.

Since 2002, the Valley Center Stampede Rodeo Committee faced uncertainty each year of where the rodeo would be located. Star Valley Park, home of the Valley Center Vaqueros (a local equestrian club), has been our home since 2018. This semi-permanent home for the rodeo represents the community spirit of our quaint little town and the generosity of our local people and organizations. The goal of both organizations is to develop a permanent equestrian facility for equestrians to enjoy year-round. In 2021, the Valley Center Parks and Recreation District turned over all facility responsibilities to the County of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department. The County is a big proponent of the rodeo and festival, and our board works hand in hand with the County to ensure the success of the event.

The 2025 Valley Center Stampede Rodeo & Memorial Festival will mark the 21st year of bringing quality rodeo entertainment to our town and the neighboring communities of North San Diego County. Our team is eager to showcase our town's western heritage, while honoring our first-responders and military personnel.

The Valley Center Stampede Rodeo is part of a community-wide effort to celebrate our town's patriotism and western heritage over Memorial Day Weekend. The rodeo is made possible by the year-long efforts of the volunteer Valley Center Stampede Rodeo Board of Directors, the dedication of local volunteers and the generous donations from local businesses. The board of directors, committee members and organizers are all volunteers - there are no paid positions associated with the Valley Center Stampede Rodeo & Memorial Festival, and we are always looking for new volunteer talent and financial supporters. If you are interested in volunteering or becoming an event sponsor, please contact us today.

Our Mission

Valley Center Stampede Rodeo, Inc. is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation dedicated to preserving our town's historic western heritage, building community unity, supporting our youth, and expressing appreciation to our nation's military servicemembers through the legendary American sport of rodeo.

To achieve our mission, we will strive to accomplish the following Mission Objectives:

- The annual production of the Valley Center Stampede Rodeo & Memorial Festival, a community event that showcases our historic western heritage, educates the community on the sport of rodeo, promotes traditional family values, and provides a venue for the people of our community to gather in unity.
- Our year-long Valley Center Stampede Rodeo Queen program aimed at the empowerment and education of female equestrians through appearances and engagements at neighboring rodeos, parades, schools, community outreach opportunities, and educational scholarships.
- Scholarships for local graduating seniors enrolled in a college, university or vocational institution.

- Sponsorship of youth engaged in other youth-focused organizations and activities.
- Support of our local military service members through donations to military morale, welfare, and recreational programs.
- Advocating for the development of an Equestrian Center in Valley Center, CA through activism, financial contributions, and volunteer support. While an Equestrian Center is necessary for the success of our organization, it also epitomizes our mission as a multi-purpose venue for a wide range of community activities, provides a permanent home for the Valley Center Vaqueros horse club, and provides a place for the old and the young to gather and engage in equestrian activities.

Our Leaders

Jay West
Event Chairman

Billy Wagner
President

Frank Holtz
Vice President

Trina West
Treasurer

Madelyn Wagner
Secretary / Arena Director

Julie Picot
Board Director / Rodeo Queen Director

Martina Day
Board Director

Glynna Hoekstra
Board Director

Cameron Cline
Marketing Director / Board Director

Erik Jockinsen
Board Director

Jason Boes
Board Director

Camille Buswell
Board Director

Ernesto Villalobos
Board Director

Mike Goss
Board Director

Valley Center Stampede Rodeo & Memorial Festival

FRIDAY, MAY 22ND

- Memorial Festival gates open at 3:00 p.m. – FREE ADMISSION
- Rodeo gates open at 5:00 p.m.
- Rodeo starts at 6:00 p.m.
- Band TBD 8:30 pm

FREE Dance to a Live Band Each Night After the Rodeo!

SATURDAY, MAY 23RD

- Memorial Festival gates open at 12:00 p.m. – FREE ADMISSION
- Rodeo gates open at 3:00 p.m.
- Rodeo starts at 4:00 p.m.
- Bands TBD 6:30 pm and 8:30pm
- FREE Dance to a Live Band Each Night After the Rodeo!

TICKET PRICES

- Valley Center Stampede Rodeo General Admission: $35
- Active Duty Military & Dependents (ID Required): $30
- Children 3 years to 12 years: $20
- Children 2 years and under are FREE
- Memorial Festival Admission: FREE
- Parking: $10 per vehicle

NOTICE: Ticket sales are online only! Tickets will not be sold at the event. Purchase tickets from our website only.

MEMORIAL FESTIVAL

Our annual Memorial Festival is a FREE two-day event open to the public, created in honor of Memorial Day Weekend to pay tribute to our nation's fallen heroes. At the heart of the festival is our Memorial Wall, featuring photographs of local service members who made the ultimate sacrifice, ensuring their legacy lives on in remembrance.
Beyond honoring our heroes, the Memorial Festival offers a vibrant community experience with local food vendors, shopping, family-friendly activities, and entertainment. Attendees can enjoy free line dancing lessons, live music, and an exciting after-party following the rodeo.

History of Valley Center

Valley Center, California, is an unincorporated rural community in northern San Diego County with a population of approximately 25,000. The town covers about 100 square miles. Much of it is in agriculture.

A brief history:

The earliest known documented reference to the North American Indians living in the region is in a diary by a Franciscan missionary who explored the area for the San Diego Mission in 1795.

In 1845, Rancho Guejito was established. This historic site dates from the era when California was part of Mexico. It is the only rancho among 800 original ranchos still in existence with its boundaries intact.In 1862, homesteaders came to Valley Center after President Lincoln signed the Homestead Act permitting newcomers to claim 160 acres of land for a nominal filing fee.

The bear incident of 1866:

The name Bear Valley or Bear Valley Township was commonly used to describe the area from 1866 when the largest California Grizzly Bear ever captured was taken in the town. It weighed 2,200 pounds. Before that incident, the town had no official name. The town name was changed in 1874 to Valley; in 1878, to Valley Centre; and, in 1887, to Valley Center.

A town gets a name

Valley Center was the site of the capture of the largest California Grizzly Bear in history. In 1866, a grizzly weighing 2,200 pounds was killed in the area. Although the town had been settled in 1845 and homesteaded in 1862, it had no formal name until the famous 1866 bear incident. The notoriety surrounding the event gave Valley Center its original name of Bear Valley. The name was subsequently changed to Valley in 1874, to Valley Centre in 1878 and, finally, to Valley Center in 1887.

The legend of the great bear

A giant grizzly bear, which had been threatening both man and cattle, was killed near the home of James and Ada Lovett in 1866. Lovett and several men dragged the giant animal to where it could be loaded onto a wagon and drove eight miles to the Vineyard Ranch of Col. A.E. Maxcy who had been offering a reward for the capture of the bear. The bear was hoisted onto Maxcy's cattle scales where it weighed 2,200 pounds and was declared to be the largest grizzly bear ever killed in California.

The bear was skinned and cut up, with more than one pound of lead found inside its head. Col. Maxcy kept the skull of the bear as a souvenir until around 1900 when it was reportedly sold to a museum in the south, believed to be either Georgia or Tennessee. Efforts in recent years to locate the skull have been unsuccessful.

An eyewitness account

The killing of the grizzly was witnessed in 1866 by the 6-year-old daughter of James and Ada Lovett. Some six decades later, in 1932 at age 72, Catherine E. Lovett Smith returned to the family homestead for a visit and provided an oral history of the event to the owner of the ranch, Edward P. Haskell. Mr. Haskell prepared a 3-page documentation of his interview with Catherine and provided a copy for the local history archives at Valley Center Library. His report is titled, How Bear Valley Got Its Name.

Descendants of two other pioneer families concur on the story of the bear and how Bear Valley got its name, but differ on the size of the animal. Clyde James, whose father homesteaded here in 1879, said the bear was well over 1,000 pounds. Waldo Breedlove, Sr., born here in 1889 and who grew up near the Lovett ranch, gave the exact weight as 1,950 pounds.

Rodeo Terms

Added Money- The potion of prize money that is put up by the rodeo to attract contestants to the rodeo competition. Entry fees are combined with the added money for the payoff to winners of the events.

Arena Director- The person whose responsibility it is to see that the rodeo goes smoothly and according to the rules of the sanctioning association.

Average- The contestants points are combined from all go-rounds and the contestant with the highest points wins the average.

Bail Out- A horse that comes straight up on it's hind legs when coming out of the chute, then begins to buck

Bailing Out- Intentionally jumping off a bucking animal.

Barrier- The rope stretched across the front of the box that the contestant's horse comes out of. In the timed events, the stock is given a pre-determined head start. The amount of the head start depends on the arena conditions, and is called the score. The contestant's horse cannot break the barrier before the stock crosses the score line or the contestant gets 10 seconds added to his time.

Blooper- An animal with very little bucking ability that jumps and kicks or just runs around the arena.

Blows Up- An animal that runs out away from the chute before starting to buck.

Boot the Bull- A term used to mean a particular bull can be spurred. Bull riders are not required to spur their animals, and if they can, they earn extra points.

Breaking the Barrier- When a contestant rides through, or breaks the barrier before it is released. Breaking the barrier adds a penalty of 10 seconds to the contestants time.

Bronc Rein- A thick rope, 1 ½ to 2 inches in diameter that is attached to the halter of a saddle bronc horse. The rope can be longer than 6 ½ feet, and is used to provide balance, and to give the cowboy something to hold onto.

Bufford- An animal that is easy to ride, rope, or throw down.

Bull Rope- A flat woven rope, no large 9/16 of an inch in diameter with a bell attached to it. The rope is wrapped around the bull's body, just behind the front legs, and then around the cowboy's hand, to help secure the cowboy to the bull.

Cantle Boarding- When the backward stroke of the saddle bronc rider's spurring motion reaches the saddle's cantle.

Catch as Catch Can- A calf roper is allowed to catch the stock any way he chooses so long as he turns loose of the rope when throwing the loop, and so long as the rope holds the calf until the roper reaches it.

Champion- The rodeo champion is traditionally the high-money winner in an event for the given season.

Chasing the Cans- The rodeo nickname for barrel racing.

Chute Fighter- A rough stock animal that will not stand still and tries to fight the cowboy he leaves the chute.

Crow Hopper- An animal that doesn't buck, but jumps stiff legged instead.

Dally- A turn of the rope around the saddle horn after the animal has been caught.

Dink- An animal that bucks very little or just runs around the arena.

Dog Fall- An illegal fall in steer wrestling that causes the feet of the steer to be in a different direction than the head. To receive a time the cowboy must turn the steer over to let I t up and throw it again legally so the feet and head are facing the same direction.

Double Kicker- A horse or bull that kicks up with the hind legs, walks on the front legs and then kicks again with the hind legs, before the hind legs touch the ground.

Dragger- A roping steer that is 'headed' and stops or does not continue to run after being roped, making it very difficult for the heeler to throw or catch.

Ducks Off- An animal that is running in a forward direction then suddenly moves off to the left or right.

Entry Fee- The money paid by the contestant before competing in a rodeo. Contestants must pay separate entry fees for each event they enter.

Fading- A bull that spins and slowly gains ground in the direction that he is spinning.

Fair Catch- In team roping, the header must catch the steer around the horns, head, or neck. This is also called a legal catch.

Fighting Bull- The kind of bull that would like to give to your mother in law. These bulls are considered to be head hunters.

Fishing- The expression used to describe a legal catch made by accident, or by flipping the rope, after the initial throw has missed.

Flagman- The official who signals the end of elapsed time in timed events.

FlankStrap- A padded strap placed in front of a horse's back legs to initiate a bucking action. Either a soft cotton rope or padded strap is worn by bucking bulls.

Floater- A horse with little power that jumps with all four feet up and just floats in the air.

Floating- A technique used by some saddle bronc riders that make them appear to be bucked off with every jump of the horse.

Freight Trained- When a person gets run over by a fast moving bull or horse.

Go Round-When all contestants in an event have competed on time, it is called a go-round.

Grabbing the Apple- The term used when a saddle bronc rider touches any part of the saddle with their free hand during the 8 second ride. This is also knows as 'pulling leather' and causes the rider to be disqualified.

Ground Money- The money paid when the purse for an event is split equally and paid to all contestants in the event. This is done when all contestants entered in an event fail to qualify.

Hat Bender- A horse or bull that does not buck and just runs around the arena.

Hazer- In the steer wrestling event he is the cowboy that rides on the opposite side of the steer and keeps the stock running straight down the pen for the contestant.

Headhunter- A bull that is constantly looking for a 2 legged target to hit.

Head Thrower- A bull that tries to hit the cowboy with his head or horns while the contestant is on his back.

Head Wrap- A leather device that is placed around a steer's horns in team roping to prevent damage to the steer's head.

Header- The cowboy that ropes the steer around the horns, head, and neck in team roping.

Heeler- The cowboy that ropes the hind legs of the steer in team roping.

High Roller- The term used to describe a horse that leaps high into the air when bucking.

Hondo- The eye in the end of a rope that allows the other end of the rope to pass though, forming a loop.

Honest Bucker- An animal that bucks the same way every time out of the chute.

Honker- A really rank and hard animal to ride.

Hooey- The knot used by calf ropers to hold the wraps used to tie three of the stock's feet together after the calf has been thrown. This knot is known as a half hitch to most people outside of rodeo.

Hooky- A bull that is really handy with its horns.

Hung Up- A rider that is off the animal but is still stuck in the rigging or bull rope.

IFR- International Finals Rodeo

In the Well- The term used to describe when a contestant come off an animal on the inside of the spin.

I.P.R.A.- International Professional Rodeo Association

Jerk Down- After roping the calf, the rope flips the calf straight over backwards.

Jump and Kicker- A bull or bronc that jumps and kicks it's hind feet in a straighta-way action.

LegalCatch- In team roping, the header must catch the steer around the horns, head, or neck. This is also called a fair catch.

Lounger- A horse that thrusts with its hind feet forward rather than kicking out be-hind.

Mash Up- A cowboy that clamps with his legs and has no spurring motion.

Measure the Rein- Used in saddle bronc riding. The length of the rein from the horses's head, in an upright position, to the rear of the well on the saddle. Then you measure from there depending on how much the horse drops its head while bucking. When asked how much rein the bronc needs, the answer is usually something like three fingers and thumb.

MoneyHorse- A horse that when ridden, usually takes the cowboy to the pay win-dow..

Mugger- The cowboy that gets a firm hold on the horse's neck during the Wild Horse Race. This allows the rider put the saddle on the horse.

NFR- National Finals Rodeo

Neck Rope- A loose rope around a calf roping horse's neck through with the lariat is passed. It prevents the horse form turning away from the calf once it is caught and the roper has dismounted. Timed events cattle also wear a neck rope, and it provides the mean to give the calf or steer a head start. The rope is tied together with a piece of string and it breaks loose from the animal when the barrier is released.

No Time- If no time is given to a contestant's run, it means the stock was not properly caught, tied, or thrown, or a barrel racer has run off pattern.

Offside- The right side of the horse.

Out the Backdoor- When the rider is thrown over the back end of an animal.

P.B.R.- Professional Bull Riders

Pickup Man- The cowboy on horseback who assists the bareback and saddle bronc riders in dismounting from their stock.

Piggin' String- A small rope about 6 feet long used by calf ropers to tie the animal's feet together.

P.R.C.A.- Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association

Producer- The individual that runs the rodeo and is responsible for brining all the elements together into a fast, smooth running, and exciting production.

Pulling Leather- The term used when a saddle bronc rider touches any part of the saddle with their free hand during the 8 second ride. This is also known as 'grabbing the apple' and causes the rider to be disqualified.

Purse- The money paid to the winners of each rodeo event. It equals the total of the added money and entry fees.

Rank- A very hard animal to ride.

Re-Ride- Another ride given to a saddle bronc, bareback bronc, or bull rider in the same go-round when either the stock or the cowboy is not afforded a fair opportunity to show their best. This can be caused by things like a chute-fighting animal, a fallen animal, etc.

Re-Run- A second run by a timed event contestant because a judge has ruled the contestant did not have a fair chance the first time.

Rodeo Secretary- The person responsible for collecting the entry fees, recording official times/scores, paying the contestants their winnings, and sending the office(head quarters) the results of the rodeo, as well as the sanctioning fees. Usually works as a timer as well.

Rowel- The circular, notched, bluntly pointed, and freewheeling part of a spur. Any competitor using spurs that will cause a cut is disqualified.

Run Away- A horse or bull that does not buck and just runs around.

Scooter- An animal that pivots on the front feet and scoots the back end around, instead of pivoting on the front feet and kicking the hind feet.

Seeing Daylight- The term used when a cowboy comes loose forma bucking animal far enough for the spectators to see daylight between the cowboy and the animal

Set You Up- A horse or bull that drops a shoulder like they are going to turn or spin in one direction, and then immediately does the exact opposite.

Shankman- The cowboy in the Wild Horse Race that grabs and holds on to the leadline attached to the horse's halter so the mugger can get a hold of the horse's neck.

Slinger- A bull that tries to hit the cowboy with his head or horns while the contestant is on his back.

Snorty- A bull that blows air at a clown or downed cowboy.

Stock Contractor- The person or organization that provides all the livestock used in the rodeo events.

Spinner- A bull or bronc that comes out of the chute and spins to the right or left.

Spurring Lick- A motion of the cowboy's feet.

Stargazer- A saddle bronc that bucks with it's head up, and causes the cowboy to have a hard time keeping the slack out of the rein.

Sucks Back- An animal that bucks in one direction then instantly moves backward.

Sunfisher- A horse that bucks and all four feet stick out to the side instead of underneath or behind the animal

Swap Ends- An animal that jumps into the air and turns 180 degrees before touching the ground

Timers- The persons responsible for making a contestant's time for each timed event. There must be at least two timers who agree oneach contestants time for calf roping, team roping, steer wrestling, and barrel racing. The timers are also responsible for marking the 8 seconds during the saddle or bareback bronc, and bull riding events.

Tippy Toe- A horse or bull that walks on its front legs when most of their weight is off the ground

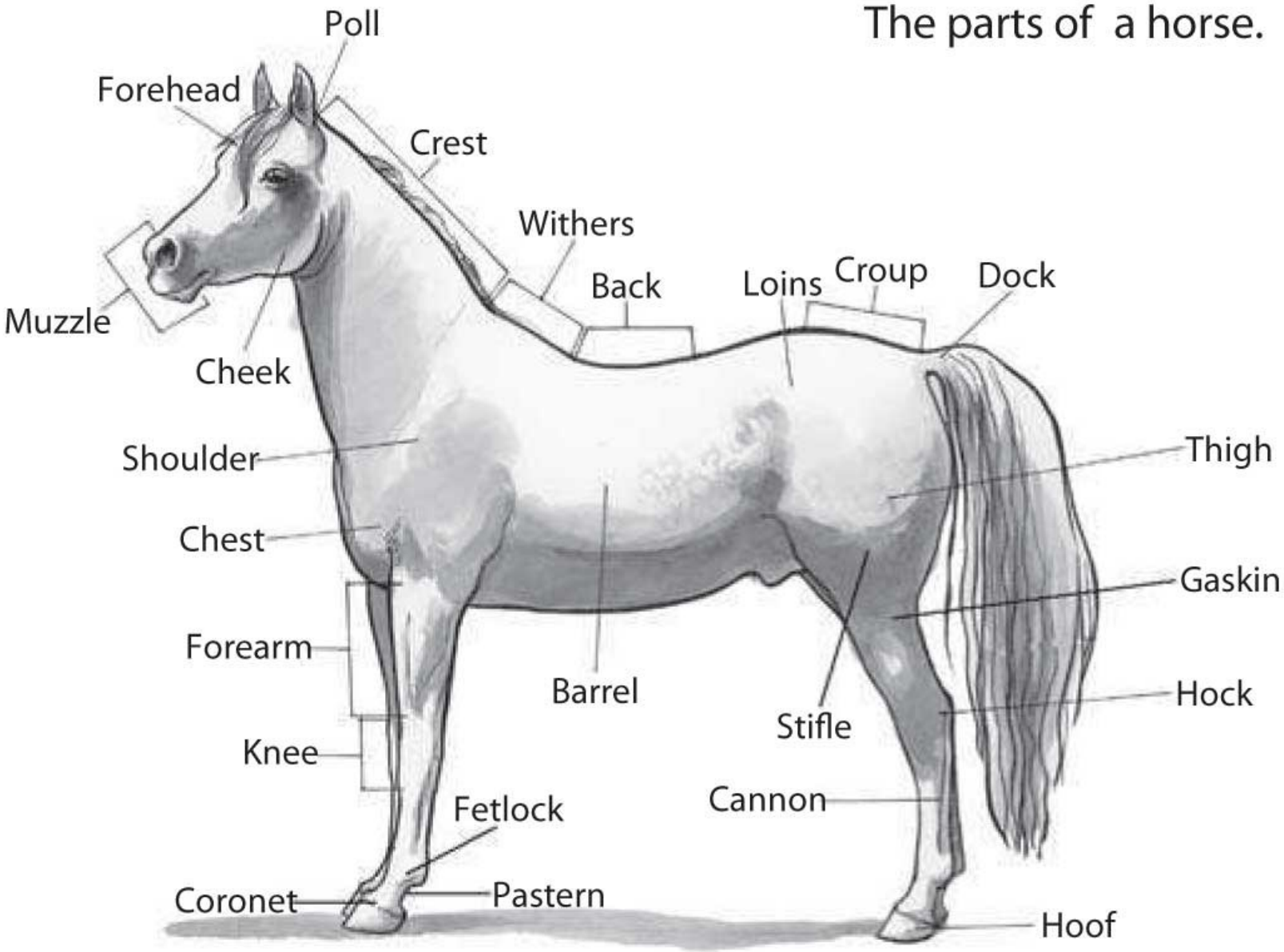
Toes Out- The preferred style of holding the feet at a 90 degree angle to the animal to ensure proper positioning.

Trash- A bucking animal with no set pattern

Trotter- A team roping steer that hangs back on the rope and trots with its hind feet rather than running.

Union Animal- An animal that bucks until the sound of the 8 second whistle, then quits.

The parts of a horse.



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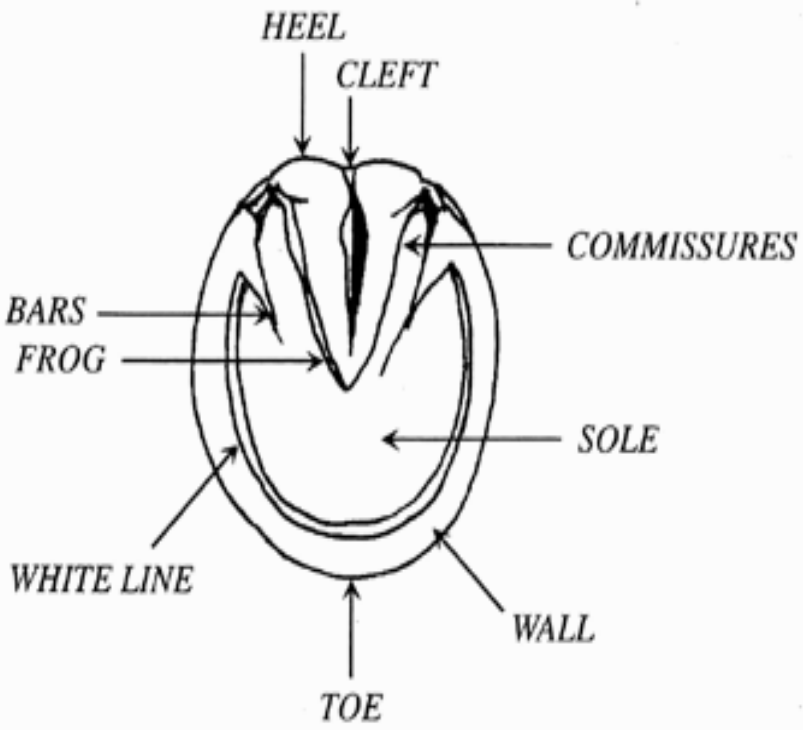
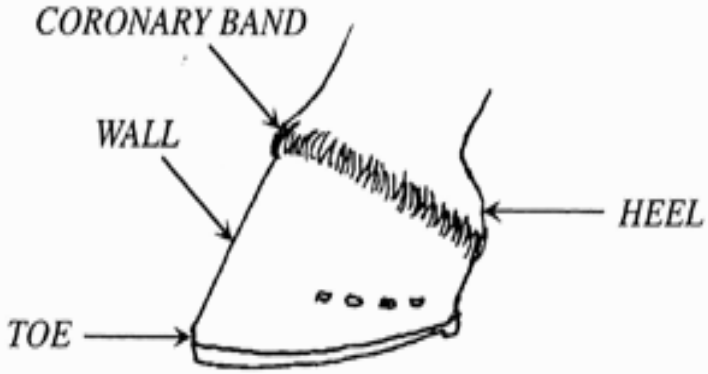
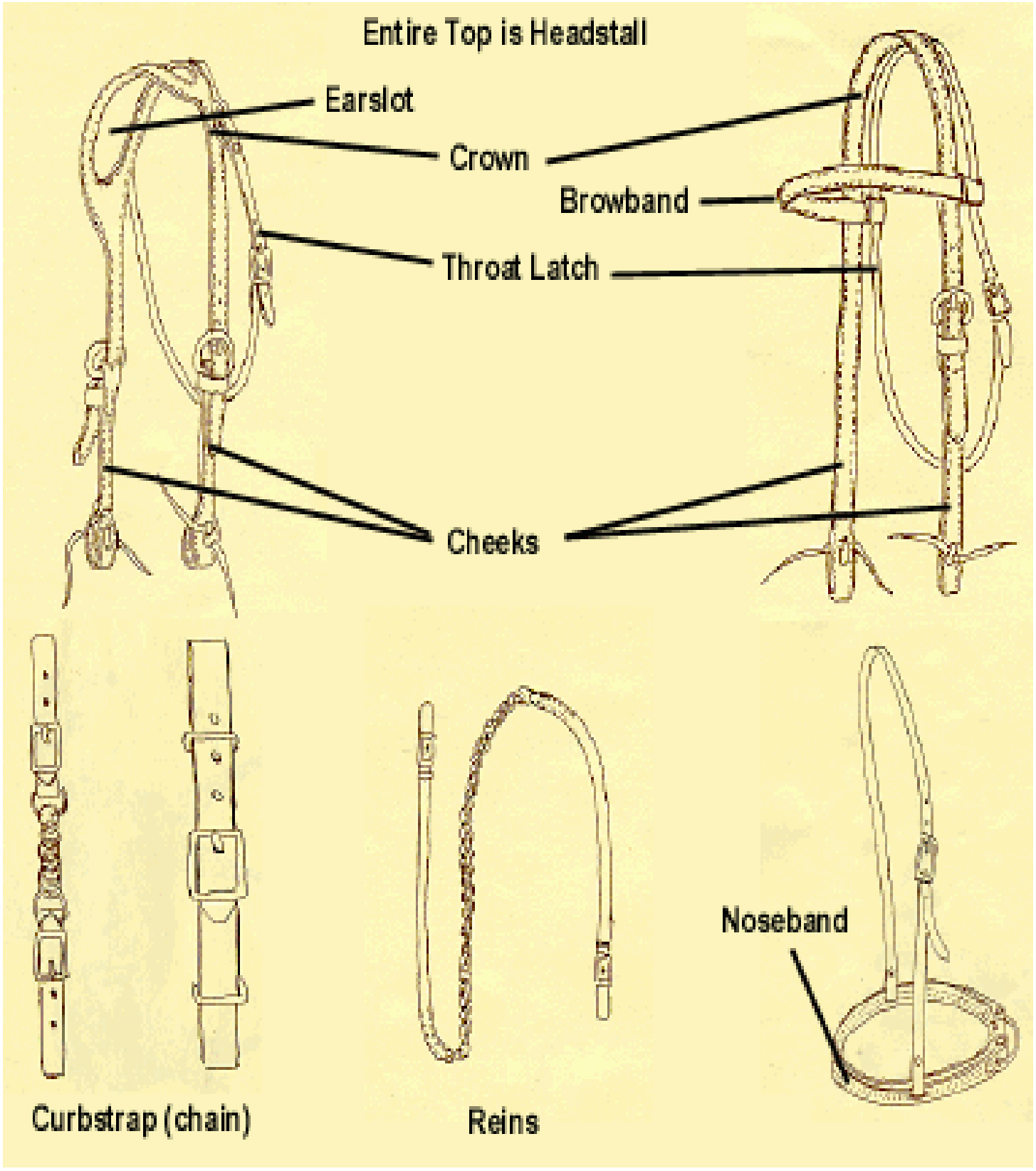




PARTS OF THE WESTERN SADDLE


Entire Top is Headstall
Earslot
Crown
Browband
Throat Latch
Cheeks
Curbstrap (chain)
Reins
Noseband

The Difference between a snaffle and curb bit

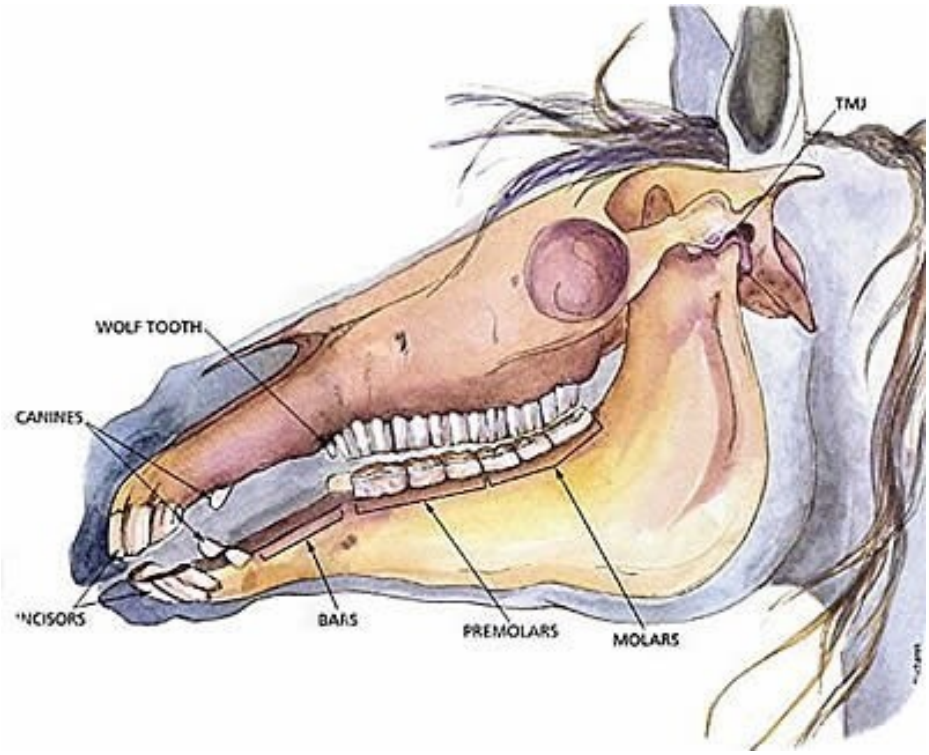
One of the most commonly (mis)used pieces of tack is the bit! Almost everyone uses one when riding, and they don't know the effect the bit they are using, has on their horse, nor what it was designed for. There are a WIDE variety of bits with a wide variety of purposes, but today we are just going to cover the snaffle bit vs. curb bit. The snaffle bit works off of direct pressure, whereas the curb bit works off of leverage. The mouthpiece (inside the horse's mouth) has no bearing on this. The only piece that decides if you are using a snaffle bit vs. curb bit is the cheekpiece (parts outside the horse's mouth).

A snaffle bit will have one of the following cheekpieces: loose ring (or o-ring), d-ring, eggbutt, full cheek. As mentioned before a snaffle bit works on direct pressure, aka the reins are connected directly to the mouthpiece. Snaffle bits use a nutcracker action (assuming it's jointed in the middle) on the bars of the mouth, the corners of the mouth (lips), the tongue, and sometimes even the roof of the mouth.

A curb bit is used completely different and applies pressure differently as well. A curb bit is determined by long cheekpieces (shanks) that create leverage on the horse. The rein is connected to the end of the shank, which works as a level on the horse's mouth and under their chin (due to the curb strap or curb chain).
Depending on the type of mouthpiece your have on your curb bit, it will put pressure onto the roof of the mouth, the bars of the mouth, or the tongue. A curb bit can have the exact same mouthpieces as the snaffle does (jointed, multiple joints, rollers, etc.). A curb bit can also place pressure on the horse's poll (the top of their head just behind the ears). How hard or far towards you, you pull on a curb bit will affect how much pressure the horse feels on his poll and chin. The longer the shank, the more pressure (basic physics).

Now we are going to throw a curve ball at you. There are a few bits (combination bits) that you will use as a snaffle bit AND a curb bit at the same time, so to speak. There are some combination bits such as the Pelham, a Kimberwick, or an Elevator bit. These offer the qualities of a snaffle AND a curb. With a Pelham bit and an Elevator bit, you typically use two reins. One rein on the snaffle ring, and the second rein on the curb ring. You can use your snaffle rein as your main rein to apply direct pressure to the mouth, and you would use your curb rein as needed, to add pressure to the chin and poll and create leverage. A Kimberwick can be setup as a snaffle OR a curb, but is typically not used with two reins.

One last curve ball. In dressage you actually use two separate bits at the same time (only in the upper levels of FEI dressage). You use what is called a double bridle and it uses a bradoon bit (snaffle bit with smaller rings for space constraints) and a curb bit on the same bridle. The snaffle bit is the main bit used and is used for elevating and bending the horse, the curb bit is to aid in getting extra collection for some of the harder movements and keeping the horse on the vertical



Glossary Of Horse Terminology – Horse Terms & Definitions

aged –more than seven years old. The average lifespan of a horse is 20 to 25 years, although many horses and some horses live for 30 years or more.

aids –the use of hands, legs, seat, weight, and voice to influence a horse; these are natural aids.

Artificial aids–whip, spurs–may be used to reinforce the natural aids.

Appaloosa –a spotted horse breed originating in the land of the Nez Perce Indians (northwestern United States). As compared to a Paint or Pinto, Appaloosas have small spots or flecks of white.

Arabian –the oldest pure breed of horse, originating in the Arabian desert. Noted for sensitivity and finely chiseled heads.

barn sour –herd-bound; a dislike of leaving the company of other horses, or of leaving the stable.

bars –the toothless gap between incisors and molars where the bit rests in a horse's mouth.

billets –leather straps under the flaps of English saddles, to which the buckles of the girth attach.

bit— metal mouthpiece of a bridle.

blaze–a wide swath of white on a horse's face, running from above the eyes to the nostrils.

blemish –a scar or defect, usually caused by injury or disease, that doesn't affect serviceability.

barrel racing –a sport in which the Western horse-and-rider pair gallop around barrels; the rider with the fastest time without overturning a barrel is the winner

bran mash— a warm meal made of wheat bran, warm water, and a little sweet feed concentrate and chopped apples or carrots; an occasional treat for horses.

breeches –knee-length, fitted riding pants worn with tall English boots

breed show –a show in which competition is limited to a single breed of horse; the event is sanctioned by that breed's registry. (For example, the Appaloosa Horse Club sanctions breed shows for Appaloosas.)

broke –trained; a "dead broke" horse is a well-trained and obedient one.

canter –the gait between walk and gallop; it consists of three beats followed by a moment of suspension, and has "leads" (in which legs on one side of the horse, front and back, reach farther forward than the legs on the other side).

chaps –leather or suede leggings worn over jeans or riding pants and buckled around the waist. Standard Western show attire; also worn informally by English riders. Half chaps zip or buckle over the lower leg.

cinch –the leather or fabric band that secures a Western saddle to the horse. Some Western saddles have a back cinch, which is not pulled tight. (The English equivalent of a cinch is a girth.)

cloverleaf –the three-barrel pattern that barrel racers run; the path around the barrels resembles a cloverleaf.

Coggins test –a blood test to detect exposure to equine infectious anemia; proof of a "negative Coggins" is often required before a horse is allowed on the grounds of a horse show or a boarding stable.

colic–pain in a horse's abdomen, ranging from mild to life-threateningly severe. Colic is the number one killer of horses.

competitive trail riding –a sport in which English or Western riders negotiate a preset trail, and are judged on horsemanship and the fitness of their mounts, rather than speed.

conformation –the physical structure and build of a horse.

crest –the top of a horse's neck, from which the mane grows.

cross country jumping –riding over a course of fences and obstacles constructed over natural terrain.

croup – art of the hindquarters from the highest point to the top of the tail.

curb bit –a bit that uses sidepieces ("shanks") and a strap or chain under the chin to create leverage on the bars of the mouth; more severe than a snaffle bit.

cutting –a judged event in which the Western horse-and-rider pair must cut one calf from a herd and keep it from returning to the herd.

diagonal –a pair of legs moving in unison at the trot (e.g. right front, left hind). A correctly posting rider (said to be “on the correct diagonal”) rises as the outside front leg reaches forward.

dressage –a French term meaning training. In the discipline of dressage, the English horse-and-rider pair execute gymnastic movements that highlight the horse’s balance, suppleness, cadence, and obedience. Dressage principles, which trace to the earliest days of riding, are used in virtually every form of riding.

endurance riding –contests judged for speed and fitness of the horse over 25-, 50-, and 100-mile courses.

equitation –the art of riding. Equitation classes are judged on the rider’s correctness of form, proper use of aids, and control over the horse; classes are held for English equitation, Western equitation (usually called Western horsemanship), and equitation over fences (sometimes called medal classes).

eventing –a sport, also called combined training, in which English horse-and-rider pairs compete in dressage, cross-country jumping, and jumping in an arena.

farrier –a person who trims and shoes horses’ feet

fetlock –the joint just above the hoof that seems like an ankle (although it doesn’t correspond to the human ankle).

flank –the sensitive area of a horse’s side between his rib cage and hindquarters.

forehand –a horse’s head, neck, shoulders, and front legs. A horse traveling “on the forehand” is not carrying enough weight on its hindquarters

frog –the dense, shock-absorbing, triangular growth on the underside of the hoof.

founder –a serious disease affecting the hooves, often caused by eating too much grain or green grass; especially problematic for ponies. Also called laminitis

gaits— the different ways in which a horse travels, including walk, trot, canter, and gallop. So-called “gaited horses” have specialty gaits, such as the running walk and the pace.

gaited horse –one possessing a gait beyond the natural walk, trot, and canter; gaited breeds include the American Saddlebred, Icelandic, Missouri Fox Trotter, Paso Fino, Peruvian Paso, Tennessee Walking Horse.

gallop –the fastest gait; it consists of four beats followed by a moment of suspension.

garters –leather straps that buckle under the knee to keep jodhpur pants from riding up.

gelding –a castrated male horse.

girth –the leather or fabric band that secures an English saddle to the horse. (The Western equivalent is a cinch.)

grade horse –one not registered with a breed association, and usually not a pure-bred.

green –inexperienced; may be applied to a horse of any age having limited training, or a rider. The old horseman's adage says, "Green plus green makes black and blue."

ground training –schooling of the horse from the ground, rather than from the saddle. Includes in-hand work and longeing.

gymkhana –competitions offering timed obstacle classes and games such as barrel racing and pole bending.

hackamore –a bitless bridle; control comes from the pressure of the noseband on the bridge of the horse's nose.

halter –the headgear with which a horse is led; made of leather, synthetic webbing, or rope

halter –the headgear with which a horse is led; made of leather, synthetic webbing, or rope.

halter class— an event in which horses are led in hand and judged on the basis of their conformation.

hand –the unit of measurement for determining the height of horses and ponies. One hand equals four inches; thus a 14.3-hand horse is 59 inches tall from his withers (bony point between the neck and back) to the ground.

hock –the large, angular joint halfway up a horse's hind leg.

horn –the part of a Western saddle that extends up from the pommel (front), around which a rope may be wrapped and secured

hunter class –a judged class in which the English horse-and-rider pair must negotiate a course of fences with willingness, regularity, and style.

j**odhpurs** –ankle-length, fitted English riding pants worn with ankle-high jodhpur boots. This ensemble is popular among young riders.

jog –a slow trot performed by Western horses; also the term for the in-hand evaluation for soundness in hunter classes at some large shows.

jumper class –a class in which the English horse-and-rider pair must negotiate a course of fences; only knock-downs and time penalties count (as opposed to a hunter class, in which proper form is judged).

Kimberwicke –an English bit that combines snaffle rings with a mild curb-bit action.

laminitis –a serious disease affecting the hooves, often caused by eating too much grain or green grass; especially problematic for ponies. Also called founder.

lead –a pattern of footfalls at the canter in which the legs on one side of the horse, front and back, “lead” (reach farther forward than) the legs on the other side. In a circle to the right, the right (inside) legs should lead, and vice versa.

lead-line class –a class for the youngest children in which all mounts are lead by an adult or older child.

leg up –a boost into the saddle, given by someone standing next to the rider and grasping her lower left leg with both hands as the rider bends her leg at the knee.

loafing shed –a three-sided shelter, in a pasture or paddock, which a horse can enter at will for protection from the elements.

lunge –to work a horse on a long line (up to 30 foot or more) in a circle around you (rhymes with “sponge”).

lope –a slow canter performed by Western horses.

mare –a female horse four years of age or older.

markings— white areas on a horse’s face and/or legs; commonly used to identify individual animals.

martingale –a piece of equipment designed to effect a horse’s head carriage or to prevent the tossing of the head; attaches to the girth and to the reins or bridle.

medal class –an equitation class over fences.

Morgan –a breed descending from one prepotent sire, Justin Morgan of Vermont. Sturdy and compact, with active gaits.

mouth, hard or soft –describes the horse's relative responsiveness to the reins.

mucking out— removing manure and soiled bedding from a stall or pen.

near side –the left side of the horse (from which traditionally most handling, and mounting, is done).

off side –the right side of the horse.

paddock –a small pasture or enclosure; larger than a pen.

Paint Horse –a horse, usually of stock type, registered with the American Paint Horse Association; it has a two-toned body color (white patches and areas over the base color)

pastern –the part of the horse's leg between the hoof and the fetlock.

pelham –a one-piece English bit equipped to handle four reins; a sort of "part snaffle, part curb" bit.

pen –an outdoor enclosure large enough for a horse to walk around in; smaller than a paddock.

Pinto–A horse or pony of varying type, with a two-toned body color (generally large blocks of white), registered with the Pinto Horse Association of America, Inc. A pinto (lower case) is any horse or pony with a two-toned coat.

playday –an informal competition featuring speed events and games, such as pole bending and trotting race.

pleasure –a judged event in which the horse's smoothness, manner of going, and obedience are judged; there are both English and Western pleasure classes

pole bending —a timed event in which contestants must weave in and out a line of poles.

poll –the bony bump between a horse's ears.

pommel –the front, top part of a saddle. The pommel of an English saddle is arched; that of a Western saddle bears a horn.

pony –any equine that measures under 14.2 hands (58 inches) from its withers to the ground. Pony classes at hunter/jumper shows may be divided into small (under 12.2), medium (under 13.2), and large (under 14.2).Pony of the Americas (POA) –A pony breed created by crossing Shetland ponies with Appaloosa horses; generally sporting Appaloosa coat patterns. POAs are commonly used as children's mounts.

posting –rising and sitting in the saddle at the trot, in rhythm with the horse's strides. Posting takes the "bounce" out of the trot.

pre-purchase exam –the process of having a veterinarian check your prospective horse or pony for health and soundness; also called a vet check or "vetting."

pulling back –a bad habit in which the horse pulls back violently on the lead rope when tied, potentially injuring himself and anyone around him

Quarter Horse –A well-muscled, good-tempered, versatile breed that's popular among adults and children alike. The American Quarter Horse Association is the largest single-breed registry in the world.

Quarter Pony –a pony of Quarter Horse type and disposition; commonly used as a children's mount.

rearing –the raising up of a horse onto its hind legs when being led or ridden; a bad habit that should be handled only by a professional.

reins –the leather lines that attach to the bit and are held in the rider's hands to guide and control a horse.

reined cow horse –a judged event in which the Western horse-and-rider pair must perform tasks related to cattle herding, plus a reining pattern. Also called working cow horse.

reining –a judged event in which the Western horse-and-rider pair perform a pattern of circles and straight lines, with sliding stops and spins in place

riding sneakers –athletic-styled shoes designed specifically for riding, with steel reinforcement and an adequate heel

ring sour –the attitude of a horse that doesn't enjoy being ridden in an arena and looks for ways to leave the ring or quit working.

roping –a timed event in which the Western rider must chase and rope a steer.

school horse –an experienced, usually older horse used as a lesson mount; also called lesson horse. Good school horses make wonderful first mounts, but they are rarely for sale.

schooling show –a “practice” show for novice riders and advanced riders schooling green horses

Shetland Pony –smallest of the pony breeds, originating in the Shetland Islands.

show jumping –a timed event in which the English horse-and-rider pair must negotiate a course of fences without knocking any part of them down

showmanship –an in-hand class in which the Western handler is judged on his/her ability to present the horse effectively to the judge.

shying— responding to a sound, movement, or object by suddenly jumping to the side or running off. A horse that shies a lot is said to be “spooky.”

snaffle bit–a bit with a jointed mouthpiece and rings at the ends; works first on the corners of the mouth. Less severe than a curb bit.

spooky –easily startled. A spooky horse is not suitable for a beginning rider of any age.

stallion –an unaltered male horse four years of age or older.

star –a white patch on a horse’s forehead.stirrup leathers –the straps connecting the stirrups to an English saddle; also known as “leathers.”

stirrups –the part of the saddle that supports a rider’s feet; metal for English saddles (thus often called “stirrup irons”) and wood-and-leather for Western saddles.

t**ack** –the gear used on a horse, e.g. saddles, bridles.

tacking up –saddling and bridling a horse.

topline –the outline of a horse from the top of his head to the top of his tail.

Thoroughbred –an English breed tracing to three Arabian sires. The world’s premier race horse, but also used for a wide range of sports, especially jumping. The word refers specifically to a horse registered with The Jockey Club, and should not be used to denote “purebred.”

trot –the two-beat gait between the walk and the canter

vaulting –gymnastic maneuvers performed on the back of a cantering horse.

walk –the slowest gait, consisting of four beats.

walk-trot class –a class for beginning riders in which only the walk and trot (and not the canter, or lope) are called for.

Warmblood –a general term for European breeds of sport horses. Examples include Dutch Warmblood, Hanoverian, and Holsteiner

Welsh Pony –a pony originating in Wales; excellent for riding and commonly used as a children's mount.

withers –the bony point at the base of the neck, just in front of where the saddle rests. Horses are measured from the top of the withers to the ground.

working cow horse –a judged event in which the horse-and-rider pair must perform tasks related to cattle herding, plus a reining pattern. Also called reined cow horse

What Is A Vaccination(Immunization)

Vaccination involves the injection (with a sterile syringe and needle) of bacteria or viruses that are inactivated or modified to avoid causing actual disease in the horse. Two or more doses are usually needed to initiate an adequate immune response. Once the immunization procedure is completed, the protective antibodies in the blood stand guard against the invasion of specific diseases. Over time, however, these antibodies gradually decline. Therefore, a booster shot is needed at regular intervals. Protection against some diseases such as tetanus and rabies can be accomplished by boostering once a year. Others require more frequent intervals to provide adequate protection.

Why The Need To Vaccinate? It is up to you to protect your horse against contagious diseases and parasites. Immunizations easily and effectively protect your horse from the ravages of disease. Vaccinations place a protective barrier between your horse and a whole list of problems: tetanus, EPM, West Nile, encephalomyelitis (sleeping sickness), influenza, rhinopneumonitis, rabies, strangles and others. A good immunization program is essential to responsible horse ownership, but just as in humans, vaccination does not guarantee 100% protection. In some situations, immunization may decrease the severity of disease but not prevent it completely. This is due to many complicated scientific reasons, such as differences in the type or severity of some diseases (such as influenza). Vaccinations are also a vital part of proper equine management. If used in a program that includes regular deworming, an ample supply of clean water, a good nutrition program, and a safe environment, you and your equine will be all set to enjoy many happy, healthy, productive years together.

What Vaccinations Do You Need? Equine Vet Service can help you design and maintain a health management program to reduce exposure to infectious disease agents in your horse's environment and lessen the incidence of illness.The specific immunizations needed by a particular horse or horses depend upon several factors:environment, age, use, exposure risk, geographic location, and general management. We can help you determine the vaccination program best suited to your horse's individual needs.The following diseases are those most often vaccinated against. Your horse(s) may or may not need all of them.

Tetanus: Sometimes called "lockjaw," tetanus is caused by toxin-producing bacteria present in the intestinal tract of many animals and found in abundance in the soil where horses live. Its spores can exist for years. Symptoms include muscle stiffness and rigidity, flared nostrils, hypersensitivity, the legs stiffly held in a locked position as the disease progresses, muscles in the jaw and face stiffen, preventing the animal from eating or drinking. More than 80 percent of affected horses die. Luckily, this disease is not contagious. Contamination is through wounds, especially in the case of lacerations and deep punctures. The spores enter the body through wounds, lacerations, or the umbilicus of newborn foals. Horses are particularly susceptible to the paralyzing toxin produced by the bacterium Clostridium tenani in a

paralyzing toxin produced by the bacterium Clostridium tenani in a wound. In addition, areas where horses are located have high levels of the bacterial spores. All horses should be immunized annually against tetanus. Additional boosters for mares and foals may be recommended by your veterinarian. Available vaccines are inexpensive, safe, and provide good protection. Of all the vaccinations that horses receive, tetanus toxoid is by far the most important. The vaccination is highly efficacious in preventing the disease. There is also a tetanus antitoxin that only offers protection for up to three weeks, and it has the potential to cause liver disease.

Equine Encephalomyelitis: More commonly known as "sleeping sickness," this disease is caused by the Western Equine Encephalomyelitis (WEE) virus or the Eastern version (EEE). WEE has been noted throughout North America, while EEE appears in the east and southeast. VEE, the Venezuelan variety, has not been seen in the United States for many years. However, a recent outbreak of VEE occurred in Mexico. Sleeping sickness is most often transmitted by mosquitos, after the insects have acquired the virus from birds and rodents. Humans also are susceptible when bitten by an infected mosquito, but direct horse-to-horse or horse-to-human transmission is very rare. Symptoms vary widely, but all result from the degeneration of the brain. Early signs include fever, depression, and appetite loss. Later, a horse might stagger when it walks, and paralysis develops in later stages. About 50 percent of horses infected with WEE die, and the death rate is 70 to 90 percent of animals infected with EEE or VEE. All horses need an EEE and WEE vaccine at least annually. Pregnant mares and foals may require additional vaccinations. The best time to vaccinate is spring, before the mosquitos become active. The vaccination schedule is the same as tetanus toxoid, and is typically given at the same time. In the South and West, some veterinarians choose to add a booster shot in the fall to ensure extra protection all year-round.

Equine Influenza: This respiratory disease can often affect large numbers of horses, but is usually not fatal. Influenza is one of the most common respiratory diseases in the equine. The risk of influenza is higher for young horses than older horses. The virus is highly contagious and can be transmitted by the air from equine to equine over distances as far as 30 yards, for example, by snorting or coughing. Signs to watch for are similar to those in a human with a cold, i.e., dry cough, nasal discharge, fever, depression, and loss of appetite. With proper care, most equines recover in about 10 days. Some, however, may show symptoms for weeks, especially if put back to work too soon. Influenza is not only expensive to treat, but results in a lot of "down time" and indirect financial loss, not to mention discomfort to your equine. Unfortunately, influenza viruses constantly change in an effort to bypass the horse's immune defense. Therefore, duration of protection is short-lived and revaccination is recommended. Since the virus can mutate frequently, vaccinations should contain the most recent strains. Not all equines need influenza vaccination. However, animals that travel or are exposed to other equines should be regularly |immunized against influenza.

Rotavirus:Rotavirus causes diarrhea in foals anywhere between 12 hours of age to five months of age. The vaccine has some efficacy, therefore mares should be vaccinated at eight, nine, and 10 months of gestation. Foals can be vaccinated at a young age.

Equine Rhinopneumonitis:Caused by a herpesvirus (similar to the human common cold), this disease, like influenza, is rarely fatal, but can cause the horse to be very sick for a prolonged period of time. And like influenza, vaccination cannot guarantee that the horse will not contract the disease. However, horses that have been vaccinated most often demonstrate much milder symptoms that those that have not been vaccinated. Two distinct viruses, equine herpesvirus type 1 (EHV-1) and equine herpesvirus type 4 (EHV-4), cause two different diseases, both of which are known as rhinopneumonitis. Both cause respiratory tract problems, and EHV-1 may also cause abortion, foal death, and paralysis. Infected horses may be feverish and lethargic, and may lose appetite and experience nasal discharge and a cough. Young equines suffer most from respiratory tract infections and may develop pneumonia secondary toEHV-1. Rhinopneumonitis is spread by aerosol and by direct contact with secretions, utensils, or drinking water. Virus may be present but unapparent in carrier animals.All pregnant mares must be immunized. Foals, weanlings, yearlings, and young equines under stress also should be vaccinated. Immune protection is short. Therefore, pregnant mares are vaccinated at least during the 5th, 7th, and 9th months of gestation, Vaccination of foals is usually done at greater than six months of age with 2-3 boosters 3-4 weeks apart. Adults should be vaccinated 1-4 times per year depending upon risk factors.

Strangles: This upper respiratory disease, caused by Streptococcus equi, is highly contagious when present on a farm.Horses could carry the organism in the guttural pouch for at least two years. The disease is characterized by large abscesses under the throat which can sometimes take weeks or months to resolve. There may be some side effects associated with vaccination; therefore, it is important to discuss the risks versus benefits of vaccination with your veterinarian. The Strangles vaccine is not a routine part of the vaccination program unless there is a problem with strangles in the area. This is due to a high risk of local reaction and other side effects with the injectable vaccine. The vaccine does not provide long-term immunity, and it should not be given with other shots. Foals may be vaccinated at 2-3 months with a booster 2-3 weeks later.

Rabies:Rabies is a frightening disease which is more common in some areas than others. Equines are infected infrequently, but death always occurs. Rabies has a high level of public significance as human exposure can be devastating.Rabies can be transmitted from equines to humans, although there are no reported cases in humans from equine exposure. The rabies vaccine is a “must-do.” The primary carriers of rabies in Kentucky are skunks and raccoons. But even horses housed in the city are not

necessarily protected as rabies can be carried by dogs, cats, squirrels or any warm blooded mammal. Foals may be vaccinated at 4 months of age with a booster 3-4 weeks later.The rabies shot is given in two initial doses four weeks apart followed by yearly boosters. Vaccination of pregnant mares is not recommended as safety studies have not been performed.

Botulism: This disease is found mainly in the mid-Atlantic states, and vaccination might not be indicated in your area. Botulism can be fatal and is very expensive to treat. It causes a flaccid paralysis, and is often the result of horses eating around the carcasses of animals that have died. It has also been cited as being found in newly disturbed earth and in alfalfa hay. Botulism is known as "shaker foal syndrome" in young horses. Botulism in adult horses, "forage poisoning," also can be fatal. Foals are most commonly affected, but horses of all ages are at risk. Consult with your veterinarian for his or her recommendations in your area. Vaccines are not available for all types of botulism, but pregnant mares can be vaccinated in endemic areas.

Equine Viral Arteritis (EVA): EVA is a contagious, sexually transmitted disease that can cause abortion, edema (fluid swelling), and various other symptoms.It is a complicated disease which can result in some breeding restrictions and export problems. Vaccination is very effective and is required annually by law for Thoroughbred stallions in Kentucky, including teasers. Mares sent to a positive stallion should be vaccinated.Because the vaccine is a modified live vaccine, it is possible for a vaccinated animal to pass the disease on by respiratory droplet infection to other horses in close proximity for a period of three to four weeks. Consequently, all horses in the same barn should be vaccinated at the same time and quarantined for three to four weeks. A blood test should be done before the first vaccination to differentiate a positive result from exposure vs. vaccination. Vaccination once per year should be sufficient.Follow your veterinarian's recommendations. Currently, only certain breeding stock is being routinely vaccinated under specific state regulations. These regulations should be strictly adhered to or the horse may face serious obstacles to a breeding career.

Potomac Horse Fever: This disease, which causes severe diarrhea and death, is not currently in this region.However, horses planning to travel to the east coast, or other areas where the disease is prevalent, should be vaccinated. Foals may be vaccinated at 4-6 months of age with 2 doses 3-4 weeks apart. Boosters may be given twice a year for those horses in an endemic area. One third of affected horses die. Contact your veterinarian for further advice.

West Nile Virus: The West Nile Virus affects a number of different species, including man, horses, and birds.It is most commonly spread by the bite of a mosquitoes, no direct horse to horse or horse to man transmissions are known at this time. Although it is rarely fatal in humans, mortality rates in horses can reach up to 40 percent. Even though the winter will kill the present population of mosquitoes, the disease can remain endemic in an area. Early vaccination, before there is a wide outbreak, is recommended. The vaccination is given initially with a booster 3-6 weeks later, and then annually thereafter.In places with a mild winter boosters

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Equine Protozoal Myeloencephalitis (EPM)EPM is a debilitating neurologic disease of horses. It can affect the brain, brainstem, spinal cord or any combination of these three areas of the central nervous system. The disease may present itself with a variety of different clinical signs, dependent on the location of the damage caused by the organism within the CNS. Although the incidence of EPM is not high in the population of horses, those horses affected are often severely affected.The causative agent of EPM has been identified as Sarcocystis neurona. Clinical signs are vague, but can include weakness, lameness, incoordination, difficulty moving (especially in hindquarters), or in rising fromlying down. Signs can also include seizures, weight loss, blindness, loss of balance, head shaking and inappropriate sweating.Possum feces are the source of the infection for horses. Possums acquire the infection by eating infected birds. Horses are then affected by eating pasture, hay, grain, or water contaminated with possum feces.The vaccine has been demonstrated to produce high levels of antibodies against the Protozoa Sarcocystis neurona. In vitro tests have shown that the antibodies produced have been effective against the organism. Foals 4 months or over may be vaccinated and follow with a booster 4 weeks later. Annual revaccination is recommended.

Foal Vaccinations Foals are born immunocompetent, which means they have the ability for a normal immune response. Therefore, if a mare is not vaccinated, then a foal can be vaccinated at any time. However, if a mare is vaccinated, then she can pass along her antibodies in the colostrum (first milk). Adequate colostrum intake is essential. Sometimes if vaccines are administered to foals too early they interfere with colostral antibodies. Today, vaccine recommendations for young horses have been pushed back, with each vaccine having a different timing for the initial dosing series.