

How to Be Safe Around Horses

1 - Be aware of your position in relation to the horse and help him to stay aware of where you are too. Horses can react fast, so stay alert!

2 - Be on the alert at all times. Pay attention to the horse's ears - if the ears are pointed straight up he is alert and curious. If you notice his eyes big and round (you can see the whites all the way round the pupil) the horse is scared, and he may lift his head very high as if to see better.

3 - Approach any horse, no matter how familiar to you, from the side so that he can see you. Do not approach horses from the direct front or from behind - horses have sight limitations and can't see you in these spots! Always approach a horse toward his shoulder.

4 - Never stand directly behind a horse. This is your horse's blind spot and more importantly, it's his powerful kicking space.

5 - Speak and behave calmly in the presence of horses. Horses are great for teaching you to be peaceful and patient because that's exactly the kind of person who connects best with a horse.

- Never yell, shout or run while around horses, they may spook at sudden movement/noise
- Encourage others around you to calm down and to move slowly.
- Use a calm, reassuring voice to familiarize the horse with your presence.

6 - Wear appropriate clothing for handling and riding horses:

- **Long pants:** protect your legs from the outside elements and possible pests when it gets warm.
- **Boots:** Footwear should be leather boots. Do not wear steel toed boots; if the horse steps on your foot, the steel could injure your toes.
- **Gloves:** For warmth or in case you need to handle picky hay or other equipment for activities.