

Riding Safety Tips

Developed by the Certified Horsemanship Association and AQHA

Preparing for the Ride:

- Clean horse's feet with hoof pick
- Check that shoes are tight
- Thoroughly groom your horse, especially areas where tack will touch him
- Be sure saddle pad is clean and pulled forward and up into gullet of saddle to create air space over withers and back
- Be sure saddle fits the horse without pressing on the spine or shoulders and that cinch is smooth, clean and tight
- Check bridle for proper adjustment with no pinching or loose straps and that leather is in good condition
- Have a properly fitting halter on under the bridle
- Have a lead rope around the horse's neck or coiled and fastened to the saddle
- Apply fly spray or wipe on your horse
- Give horses opportunity to drink before starting on trail and allow them to drink on the trail if water is available
- Dress in layers
- Bring or wear a hat and sunscreen to prevent heat exhaustion or sunstroke
- Wearing a safety helmet is an individual and/or parental decision

What to Take:

- Current Coggins/health/brand inspection
- Form of identification
- Pocket knife
- Hoof pick
- Insect repellent
- Fly Spray
- Jacket
- Rain gear
- Water
- Snacks
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Lip balm
- Sunscreen
- First aid kit for horses and riders
- String or leather for tack repair
- Gloves
- Compass
- Cell Phone in case of emergency

Rules on the Trail:

- Ride a horse that is suitable for your riding skill level
- Remember, even the most gentle horse can or will spook if startled, so be aware of your surroundings at all times
- Tie red ribbon in the tail of a horse that kicks
- Do not bring dogs
- Maintain space between you and the next horse
- Stay with the group or tell someone if you intend to leave
- Stay on designated trail
- Never trespass or ride on someone's land without permission
- Never leave trash behind
- Never smoke while riding
- On farm land, leave livestock alone
- Leave all gates as you found them (open or shut)
- Don't let horses injure the environment (Stay on the trail; if you stop and tie horses, spread them out and scatter manure before leaving)
- Observe fire regulations
- Don't let horses foul the water near a camping spot
- Keep horses away from areas and places where manure will bring flies and be a nuisance
- Be polite and friendly to hikers, bikers, farmers and other people you meet on the trail
- Do not run past others
- If passing another horse on the trail, first ask the rider ahead if you can pass and allow plenty of room when passing
- When making a rest stop, loosen the horse's cinch and lift up back of saddle and pad so air can get to his back and cool it
- If tying your horse, be sure to tie with the halter and lead rope, not the reins; tie the horse at a level even with his back or higher and use a quick release knot

