

Online HorseCollege



Student Workbook

3.H.01 Stable Practices

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Stable Practices 3.H.01 Workbook

Students are to complete Horse Care 2.H.01 – 2.H.04 online assessments prior to attempting Horse Care 3.H.01 and to follow all recommended safety considerations.

Practical assessments for Horse Care 3.H are as follows

- 01) Stable Practices
- 02) Horse Husbandry
- 03) Illness and Injuries
- 04) Basic First Aid

These assessments incorporate the following unit from the SISS30710 Sport Industry Training Package which include the listed elements

RTE2121A Provide daily care for horses

- Prepare to work with horses
- Clean stables and surrounding areas
- Perform daily work program
- Select, catch and tie up horses
- Groom and rug horses
- Clean and maintain stable gear
- Monitor health and welfare of horses

RTE2104A Carry out regular horse observation

- Prepare to work with horses
- Carry out horse checks
- Deal with horse emergencies
- Provide veterinary procedure support

Further information about this assessment is available at www.training.gov.au

Stable Practices Introduction

In this workbook we will cover the functions required to safely provide horses with comfortable and clean housing, cleaning working gear and general stable maintenance you will be required to undertake in daily activities within the horse industry.

Whilst performing and undertaking tasks within the stable it is important you have the appropriate protective personal equipment. Boots such as gum boots or paddock boots will keep your feet dry and protect them from injury. Long pants will minimise sun exposure and are convenient if you will be riding but shorts are just as acceptable for mucking out stables, especially in hot weather. It is a good idea to check with your establishment dress code. A shirt with sleeves and hat are essential for sun protection and this is governed by workplace health and safety laws.

During your work routines it is important to report any maintenance problems, involving gear or facilities, or abnormalities in horse behaviour or health to your stable manager or supervisor.

Stable Routines

The work routine will vary between equine industries and enterprises. For example, the racing industry works in 2 shifts, horses will be worked very early in the morning to avoid the heat of the day then work ceases and begins again in the afternoon to muck out and feed.

Here are some tasks you may be required to perform in your day to day routine.



Cleaning tack

Involves removing dirt and grime from riding equipment and conditioning or oiling the leather to maintain flexibility and prolong its life



Feeding/Feeding up

Usually performed at least twice a day. You will be required to prepare feeds by mixing and measuring quantities and distributing to it to horses



Mucking out

Cleaning and removing manure and soiled bedding from stables/stalls/boxes



Other stable tasks

Could range from sweeping or hosing the aisle, performing maintenance duties such as paint touch ups, grooming, saddling, unsaddling, hosing or washing horses, holding horses for the vet or farrier, even unloading a feed truck

Maintaining Saddlery

There are many different products available to assist in the cleaning and conditioning of leather equipment

Glycerine Saddle soap



Is made up of high glycerine content to soften, nourish and clean leather. The usual compounds in this soap are glycerine, waxes, cleaning agents and fragrances. It is available as a solid and a liquid

Saddle soap



Made from natural waxes, this type is ideal for cleaning and produces soft and supple leather and is free from alkaline which can have a negative effect on some leather

Leather conditioners or oils can come in creams and liquids and many are available with different oils, waxes and other penetrating agents which will help to soften, preserve and waterproof leather.

Leather conditioner



This brand contains natural oils such as beeswax, lanolin and emu oil

Neatsfoot oil



Is an oil which is produced and purified from the shin bones of cattle. It is useful for conditioning, preserving and softening leather but may cause darkening on newer leather

Maintaining Saddlery (cont.)

Leather dressing



These are useful to improve flexibility and suppleness of leather and also to protect it from the elements. Contain waxes and oils

Method of cleaning leather:-

You will need

- saddle soap (glycerine or other)
 - sponge/soft cloth
 - a bucket with warm water
 - leather conditioner, dressing or oil
 - old toothbrush
-
1. Strip the saddle or bridle of its individual pieces. Try to remember where the buckles fitted (see the video presentation for detailed dis-assembly)
 2. Any metalwork can be put into the bucket of water to soak
 3. Using a damp cloth, wipe over the entire saddle/bridle. Remove as much dirt and grime as you can with the damp cloth
 4. Rinse your cloth or sponge and rub it on your saddle soap (the cloth/sponge only needs to be damp) then work over the saddle/bridle in circular motions, including buckle guards and stirrup leathers
 5. A toothbrush can be used to clean stitching or scrollwork on the leather
 6. Allow to dry, if necessary wipe off any excess saddle soap and clean the treads and irons on the saddle
 7. Once it has dried you can apply oil, conditioner or dressing
 8. If you're going to oil your saddle, oil the underside of the flaps, oiling the seat will stain your clothes. Dressings and conditioners can be applied all over.
 9. Then leave the leather in the sun to soak up the product and if necessary (if the leather is very dry) apply another coat.
 10. Once finished re-assemble and store in a dry place

Synthetic saddles won't require oiling, conditioning or dressing. A damp cloth or brush can be used to remove dirt, dust and grime.

You should check with the label of the cleaning or conditioning product as to whether it can be used on items with suede.

Maintaining Saddlery (cont.)

Girths and Saddlecloths:-

Girths, saddlecloths and girth covers or sleeves will need to be regularly cleaned and washed to prevent rubbing and chaffing on the horse.

Leather girths will need to be cleaned in the same way as saddles and bridles. Once they become hard and dry they crack and cause discomfort to the horse.

String girths should be washed in soap and water, then dry thoroughly before use.



Webbing or pvc girths can be brushed or washed as required.



Maintenance checks:-

Regular maintenance checks should be done on gear to make sure it is in good, safe working order. Any repairs should be seen to promptly and the gear not used until repaired. On saddles, panel stuffing, stitching, buckles and lining should be check for breaks, wear and damage. Remember to report any damages to the appropriate personnel.

Check the stitching on all parts of the bridle.

Saddlecloths tend to wear thin and fray, make sure they're not causing horse discomfort.

Stable Duties

Mucking out:-

You may require some variations of tools for mucking out depending upon the type of bedding used. However the general idea is the same, to remove manure and soiled or wet bedding.

Fork



Used when working with straw, never point or use the fork towards the horse. A fork can be used to break up fresh straw bales and to remove manure and wet straw

Manure fork



This tool is used when mucking out sawdust or shavings as it will allow the bedding to be sifted out through the prongs but hold the manure. Never point or use the fork in the direction of the horse

Shovel



Useful for moving large quantities of bedding

Wheelbarrow



Used for moving fresh or soiled bedding and manure

Bucket



In many shapes and forms are used for collecting soiled bedding in the stall to put it into the wheelbarrow. This allows more room to work by leaving the wheelbarrow outside

Broom



For sweeping stray bits of bedding and keeping the stable aisle clean and tidy to maintain a professional environment. A walkway which is free from debris and gear will minimise risk of injury to horse or human

Stable Duties (cont.)

Method of mucking out:-

Regardless of what type of bedding is used, the process will be very similar. Depending upon the procedures in place at your establishment you may only muck out stables in the morning or it may be routine to muck out twice a day.






1. It is safer for both you and the horse, to clean the stable whilst the horse is out of the stall but if this isn't possible tie the horse up to one side
2. Using your fork, remove manure and wet or soiled bedding. You may find it easier when working with straw, to pile up clean bedding on one side of the stall. If you are going to do so, pile it away from the horse
3. If your cleaning out sawdust or shavings, scoop the manure up with the fork and shake to release excess sawdust so that all that will be left on the fork is the waste
4. You will also need to remove any stray bits of hay
5. With sawdust/shavings, use the shovel to remove wet patches
6. Once the stall is clean you need to replace the bedding which has been removed with fresh material
7. Rake the bedding so that it slopes up the walls. This will help to prevent the horse getting cast (rolling and getting stuck against the wall)
8. Take the dirty bedding and manure to the manure pile/muck heap
9. Sweep up outside the stall

In some establishments it is part of procedures to sprinkle lime or detergent on the floor of the stalls, it is a good idea to check with your manager/supervisor to find out how often they require this.



Stable Duties (cont.)

Bedding:-

Type	Advantage	Disadvantage
Straw 	Warm bedding Inexpensive	Some horse may eat it. Doesn't absorb liquid well
Sawdust/Shavings 	Absorbent	Can get dusty Can be expensive in some countries Shavings sometimes contain small hard pieces
Rice hulls 	Cheap Easily decompose	Can get dusty Can irritate sensitive skin
Sand 	Durable Readily available	Cold Damp Soiled bedding difficult to get rid of The risk of colic from ingestion
Rubber matting 	Less shavings required Saves time on cleaning and expenses	Installation is expensive

Stable Duties (cont.)

Feeding:-

Depending upon the horse and how it is kept (i.e. stable or paddock) and the quality of pasture will determine the type and quantities of feed it is fed. A horse which is kept in a stable will have higher requirements for roughage than one which has access to grazing all day.

Any feed which is left over from previous meals should be disposed of accordingly. It should be removed and thrown away. Left over feed will start to go stale and mouldy.

Listed below are some common feeding equipment.

Feed bin and Hay feeder



A bin which usually attaches to the wall which you can put mixed feeds and hay

Hay-net



Holds hay up off the ground. Care needs to be taken to ensure the net wont hang low where the horse can get its legs stuck once it becomes empty

Feed scoop



For preparing feeds

Scales



For weighting feedstuffs. Feeds should be weight for accuracy rather than relying on volume measurements

Planning Your Workload

Your time and money (or that of your employer) is too valuable to be whittled away doing non productive activities. Through planning your daily activities or workload you will be able to determine where your efforts are needed most (i.e., what is the highest priorities) and what resources are available to you.

In large establishments where many people are employed (or volunteering etc) it may be necessary to liaise with other workers to ensure that activity or workload plans will not interfere with one another, which is important not only to ensure smooth operation but in some instances for safety too.

For example consider the scenario below:-

Sophie is warming up her horse in the arena in preparation to do some jumping. There are three other riders also working their horses in the same arena. Another two employees are preparing horses with gear and equipment to be ridden. It is a busy day with people attending to their own horses in the paddocks and the farrier has arrived.

Sophie's plans to ride jumping work will affect those workers already using the arena and the workers who are preparing to ride. Ideally she would have discussed her intentions of jumping with her workmates before beginning her ride as this would illuminate any potential problems. However for various reasons this is not always practical but before beginning jumping she should alert the other riders that she will be jumping so as they can be aware of her as they continue to ride (frequently used arena rules describe that horses and riders riding over fences have right of way).



Extension Lesson

Using an ordinary set of kitchen scales, measure 3 feedstuffs and determine the heaviest to the lightest and record below.

Feedstuff	Weight

Practise tying up a hay-net using the following method:-

1. The net should be positioned at about horse head height. Not above, as the hay will fall into the horses' eyes and not below, because once the net is empty the horse may get caught in it.
2. Fasten the string of the net around the fixture you are tying it to
3. Then slip the string through the bottom ring of the hay-net
4. Then back up to the top of the net
5. And finish with an appropriate knot

Now when the net becomes empty it won't sag to a height where legs can become caught.

Recommended Reading

Publication:-

The Course Companion (BHS Stage I&II)
Footsteps
The Complete Idiots Guide to Horses
Sixth Edition Pony Club Manual 2

Author:-

Maxine Cave
Sally Hinton and Joan Eccleshare
Sarah Montague & PJ Dempsey
Elaine Knox-Thompson & Suzanne Dickens

References

Publication:-

Footsteps

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Images:-

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