

# Kentucky 4-H Horse Program

# Horse Academy

## Level 1



University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
*Cooperative Extension Service*

**For more information on the  
Kentucky 4-H Horse Program go to :**  
<https://afs.ca.uky.edu/4h-youth/horse>

**The resources referred to in this workbook can be found in your  
County Horse Kit or online. The primary resources are listed in the  
back of this workbook.**

**For additional resources check out the Kentucky 4-H Horse  
Program Horse Discovery Web site at:**  
<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/horsediscovery/>



**HorseDiscovery**  
KY 4-H Horse Program

Home Breeds Forages Bits Equipment Parasites Horseshoes Horse Selection Materials Certificate

### Welcome to Horse Discovery



The Horse Discovery site has the resources you need to complete this short course about horses. There are eight sections in the course: Breeds, Forages, Bits, Equipment, Parasites, Horseshoes, Horse Selection, Materials.

Select a section to begin, and end your session with a short quiz. Before you start you need to create a Extension Campus account first. [Click here](#) to create your own account. So you can login anytime to continue to take your courses and quizzes. Are you ready to get started?

**Test Your Knowledge**  
There are seven sections in this course. Each section ends with a quiz.  
[Read more](#)

**Resources**

- [Kentucky 4H Horse Program](#)
- [HorseQuest](#)
- [Instructional Videos](#)
- [eXtension Horses Resource Area](#)
- [UKAg Animal & Food Sciences](#)
- [Ag Equine Programs](#)

## Level 1

The purpose of the Kentucky 4-H Horse Program Horse Academy is to provide a road map for you to learn key lessons about horse science, horse behavior, and the horse industry.

These are all important components to becoming a well rounded horseman or horsewoman. As you go through this book, complete the assignments and tasks with your certified 4-H Horse Leader and track your progress with your county 4-H Agent. Once you have completed all lessons, activities, and have demonstrated proficiency in the skills, you will be qualified to take the Level Completion Exam. This exam is to be administered by your County Agent. A 70% must be attained for completion of a level. When you complete a level, your agent will notify the State 4-H Horse Program Office for documentation.





### Lessons

1. Introduction to the Horse
2. Horse Behavior
3. Horse Safety
4. Horse Health
5. Locomotion
6. Basic Nutrition

### Activities

1. Parts of the Horse
2. Measuring the Horse
3. Coat Colors
4. Markings
5. Breeds
6. Careers with Horses
7. What to wear

### Skills

1. Knots
2. Grooming
3. Leading
4. Approach and halter
5. Going through a gate
6. Pick up a hoof

# Lesson 1 Introduction to the Horse

History and how horses are useful to humans

## KEY POINTS:

Evolution

Use through history

Scientific names

Discuss what you know



**Resource Material:** The Horse pp.3-39

**Topic of discussion:** Horses have influenced the progress of mankind throughout the centuries in many different ways unlike any other species. Their ability to move, their strength, and their mentality have made them valuable to humans for transportation, war, farming, pulling, and exploring. Answer the following questions to complete Lesson 1.

**What are the different ways in which you have seen horses being used?**

**What do you think was the origin of modern horse competitions like rodeo, jumping, or western pleasure? Can you think of other modern competitions that have roots in how people depended on horses long ago?**

**How do you think a horse being a prey animal affects the way we interact with them?**

# Lesson 2 Horse Behavior

Why horses act the way they do

## KEY POINTS:

Prey vs predator response

Horse communication

Herd dynamics

Discuss what you know



**Resource Material:** Alberta Horse Manual pp. 23- 31

**Topic of discussion:** All of horse behavior is based on the fact that horses are prey animals. The way they eat, communicate, interact with humans, and explore new areas is all dictated by their position in the food web. When we are around horses we must remember that their fear is actually a survival skill. When they react to a loud noise or a new situation, their instincts kick in so that they can keep themselves free from harm.

**Describe an experience where you have noticed a flight behavior in horses?** (If you don't have an experience, speak with someone who does and tell their story)

**How can we help to teach horses to not be afraid of normal noises and objects that won't hurt them?**

# Lesson 3 Horse Safety

Horses are big, we are small

## KEY POINTS:

- Where to stand
- How to approach
- How to walk around a horse
- How to cue a horse to move
- Discuss what you know



**Resource Material:** Alberta Horse Manual pp. 23-31, Saddle Up Safely Booklets

**Topic of discussion:** Horses are large, strong, and fast animals. Even the kindest of horses can cause injury if the person is in the wrong place or not paying attention. Before anyone can learn new skills and become a better horsemen, they must first understand some basic safety principles. Understanding horse behavior, how horses see and move, and what they are trying to communicate or accomplish can be key to keeping yourself safe around horses. It is also true that many accidents that happen around horses could have been prevented if the human had acted differently.

**What are some important safety tips that someone new to horses would need to remember?**

**Have you or someone you've known ever been injured around horses? Tell the story and how the injury could have been prevented or what could have been done differently to reduce the risk of injury?** (If you don't have a personal story, interview someone else and report)

# Lesson 4 Horse Health

Understanding what's normal and what's not

**KEY POINTS:**

- Vital signs
- Pain or distress
- The environment
- Biosecurity
- Discuss what you know



**Resource Material:** Alberta Horse Manual pp. 111-150

**Topic of discussion:** The first lesson in taking care of horses is recognizing what is normal and what is not. Being able to measure vital signs and remembering what is the normal range can be important in providing general care to your horse and being able to communicate to your veterinarian.

**List the normal rates and characteristics for the following:**

- Heart Rate at rest: \_\_\_\_\_beats per minute
- Respiratory rate: \_\_\_\_\_breathes per minute
- Rectal temperature: \_\_\_\_\_ degrees Fahrenheit
- Mucus membranes: Color\_\_\_\_\_ Capillary Refill Time\_\_\_\_\_

**What are some signs that a horse is in pain? What are some signs that the horse may be experiencing colic?**



# Lesson 5 Locomotion

Movement is what horses do

## KEY POINTS:

- Basic Gaits
- Foot Fall Pattern
- Gaited Horses
- Discuss what you know



**Resource Material:** Alberta Horse Manual pp. 91-105, The Horse pp. 27-33

**Topic of discussion:** The value of the horse to humans is their ability to move. Their swiftness, strength and athletic ability make them useful for riding and pulling. Being able to recognize and describe gaits of the horse is important when understanding different disciplines and how horses may become injured.

**Name the gait:**

- 4 beat slow \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 beat \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 beat \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 beat fast \_\_\_\_\_

**What lead should the horse be on when turning a circle? Why is it important for the horse to be on the correct lead?**

# Lesson 6 Nutrition

A horse is what he eats

## KEY POINTS:

Nutritional Needs

Types of Forage

Concentrates

Discuss what you know



**Resource Material:** Alberta Horse Manual pp. 151-165

**Topic of discussion:** If you are taking care of a horse the first thing to think of after a place to put them, is food and water. It is important to understand what the horse needs so that you can make sure he is getting the right food and the right amount of food.

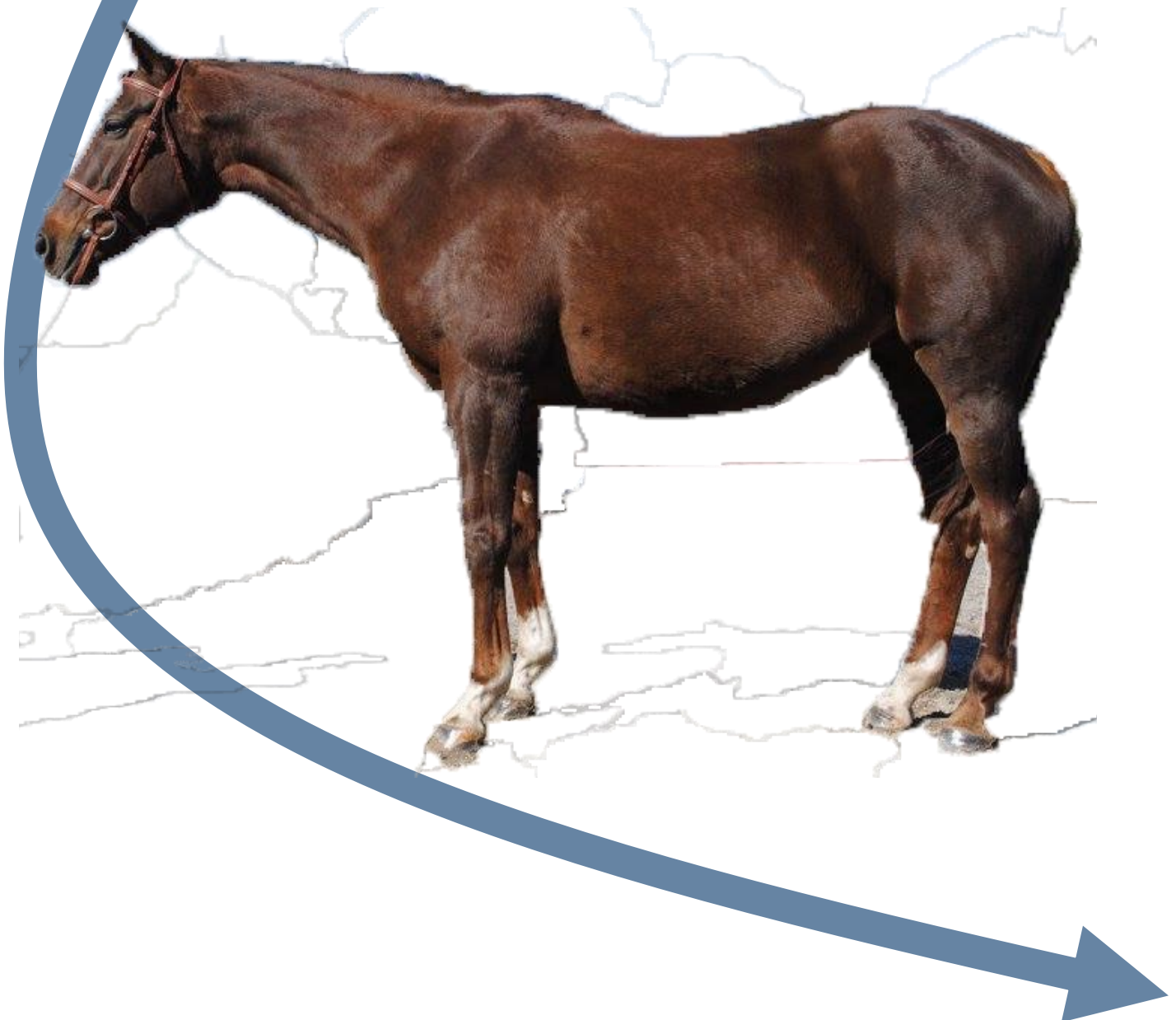
**Horses, for centuries, survived on grass alone. Why then do we feed hay and concentrates?**

**Do all horses need concentrates?**

**Are there problems with feeding a horse too much?**

## Activity 1 Parts of the Horse

Label at least 20 parts of the horse



## Activity 2 Measuring Horses

A horse is measured in "hands". One "hand" equals 4 inches. Horses are measured from the ground to the highest point on their withers.

How tall is your horse? (if you don't own one, ask a friend how tall theirs is)

Hands \_\_\_\_\_

Inches \_\_\_\_\_

How tall are you?

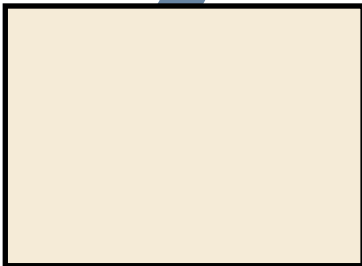

Hands \_\_\_\_\_

Inches \_\_\_\_\_

The average Clydesdale, like we see in commercials, is 18 hands high. Calculate how tall that is in inches and measure to see where their withers would be.

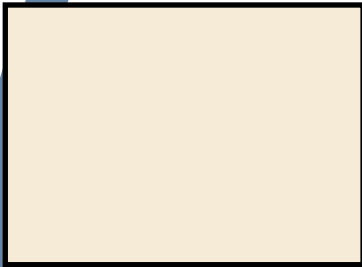
## Activity 3 Coat Colors

Horses come in all different colors. It is important to know the names of these colors and to recognize them so that you can easily identify one horse from another. List and describe 5 basic coat colors, and draw or find pictures of each.



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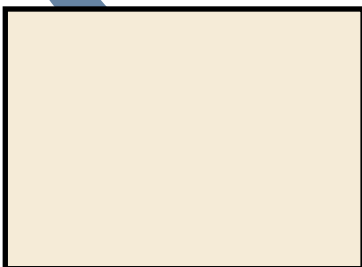
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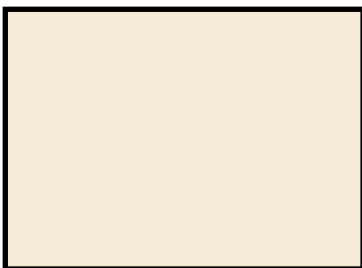
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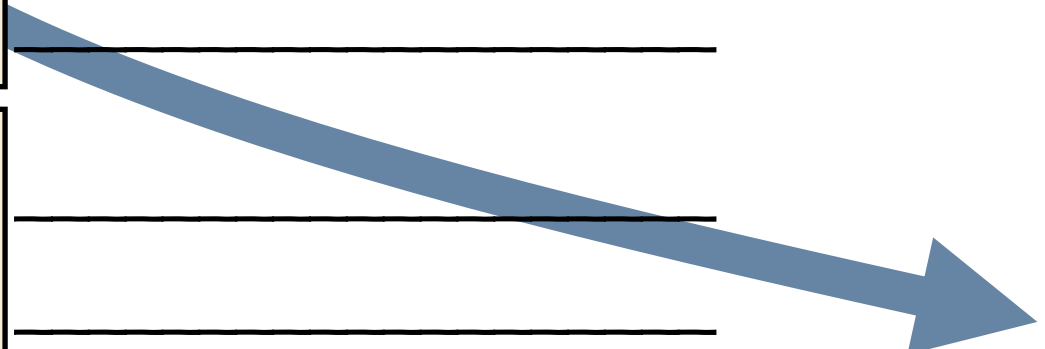
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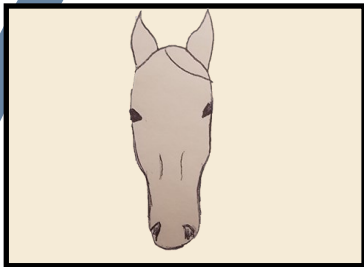
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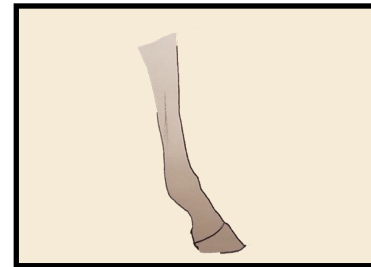


## Activity 4 Face and Leg Markings

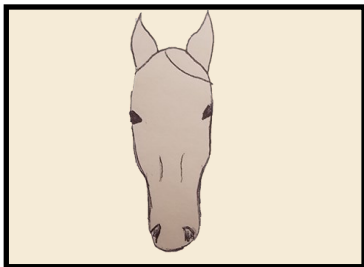
After we identify what color the horse is, we need more information to tell them a part from other horses that might be the same color. One easy way is from their white markings on their face and legs. Draw the following markings.



Star



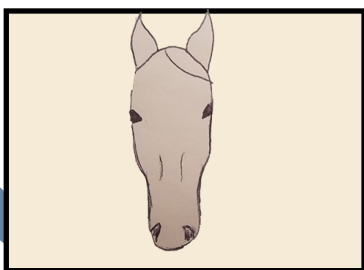
Coronet



Stripe



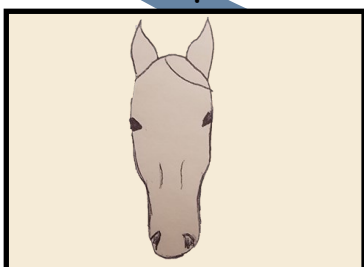
Pastern



Snip



Sock



Blaze



Stocking

# Activity 5 Breeds

There are numerous breeds of horses that were created to do a variety of different tasks. Every horse has a purpose and a use. Identify 5 different breeds in the space bellow. Describe where the breed originated, characteristics of the breed, and what it is used for.

Breed \_\_\_\_\_ Origin \_\_\_\_\_

What does it look like \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is it used for \_\_\_\_\_

Breed \_\_\_\_\_ Origin \_\_\_\_\_

What does it look like \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is it used for \_\_\_\_\_

Breed \_\_\_\_\_ Origin \_\_\_\_\_

What does it look like \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is it used for \_\_\_\_\_

Breed \_\_\_\_\_ Origin \_\_\_\_\_

What does it look like \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is it used for \_\_\_\_\_

Breed \_\_\_\_\_ Origin \_\_\_\_\_

What does it look like \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is it used for \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity 6 Equine Careers

When people talk about working with horses, our first thoughts go to training or being a veterinarian. But there are many more possibilities than that. Research different careers with horses and find out what it takes to be a professional.

Career \_\_\_\_\_ Qualifications \_\_\_\_\_

What do they do each day \_\_\_\_\_

What are the hours \_\_\_\_\_

Career \_\_\_\_\_ Qualifications \_\_\_\_\_

What do they do each day \_\_\_\_\_

What are the hours \_\_\_\_\_

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What do they do each day \_\_\_\_\_

What are the hours \_\_\_\_\_



## **Activity 7 Proper Attire**

It is important to wear the proper clothes and equipment when around horses for safety and to help you do your best. Discuss with your club proper attire to wear when around horses.

**What should you wear to the barn when you are just feeding, grooming, and cleaning stalls?**

**What should you wear to your riding lesson, or when you are out on the trails?**

**What should you wear when you are going to a horse show?**



## Skills Sheet

This list of skills must be performed for your Certified 4-H Leader. You must complete the skill in a safe and proficient manner to the satisfaction of your leader. Once accomplished, have the leader sign and date the appropriate skill.

◇ **Tie a square knot**

**4-H Leader Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

◇ **Tie a quick release knot**

**4-H Leader Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

◇ **Approach and halter a horse**

**4-H Leader Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

◇ **Lead a horse through a gate**

(must open and close gate)

**4-H Leader Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

◇ **Pick up a hoof**

**4-H Leader Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

◇ **Groom a horse**

**4-H Leader Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

# Kentucky 4-H Horse Program

## Horse Academy Level 1

This certifies that \_\_\_\_\_, has completed all requirements for the Horse Academy Level 1. This includes but is not limited to; lessons, activities, skills, and received a score of \_\_\_\_\_ on the Level 1 Completion Exam.

These accomplishments are verified by:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

4-H Certified Volunteer Leader

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

County 4-H Agent



# References

## **Alberta Horse Manual**

Alberta Horse Manual. 4-H Branch Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, 2015.

## **The Horse**

Evans J.W., Hoffman, R.M., Petersen, J.L., Van Vleck, L.D. *The Horse. 3rd Edition.* Waveland Press Inc, 2021.

## **Equine Science**

Griffiths, Jean T. *Equine Science: Basic knowledge for horse people of all ages.* Equine Network/Source Interlink media, 2008.

## **Saddle Up Safely**

Saddleupsafely.org

## **Cooperative Extension Service (CES) Fact Sheets University of Kentucky**

<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs.asp>

## **Horse Discovery Webpage**

<https://afs.ca.uky.edu/horse-discovery>

## **eXtension.org**









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