

# Glossary

**4-H**—A youth agricultural organization

**Aids**—Cues used by the rider, either natural (hands, seat, voice, and leg) or artificial (whips or spurs)

**Board**—V., to keep a horse at a facility owned by someone else; n., the fee paid for keeping a horse at a boarding facility

**Breeches**—Riding pants

**Bronky**—untamed, as a wild bronco

**Bute**—The common name for phenylbutazone, an anti-inflammatory drug

**Canter**—A three-beat gait (also called the lope) in which the outside hind leg strikes first, followed by the diagonal pair of the inside hind and outside front, and, finally, the inside front. In the left canter lead, the left front leg strikes out slightly farther than the right, and vice versa for the right lead.

**Catch riding**—Riding a horse for someone else

**Clench**—The portion of a horseshoe nail that protrudes from the horse's hoof wall and is flattened down to fasten the shoe to the hoof

**Coffin bone**—The bone at the bottom of the leg column, contained within the hoof capsule

**Coggins test**—A routine blood test that screens for antibodies to the equine infectious anemia virus

**Colic**—All-encompassing term for any sort of digestive upset in the horse

**Conformation**—The way in which a horse is put together and all the various body parts relate to each other, including the straightness (or lack thereof) of legs, angles of joints, and the overall proportions of the horse's body (see chart on page 343)

**Coronet band**—The line formed where the hoof joins the leg, also called the coronary band

**Cribbing**—A stable vice that involves chewing wood or sucking air

**Curb**—A bit that acts via leverage on the horse's poll

**Cushing's syndrome**—A disease, usually seen in older horses, caused by a benign tumor in the pituitary gland that leads to hormonal imbalances; horses with Cushing's often have excessively long coats and are at increased risk for laminitis

**Dam**—A horse's mother

**Digital pulse**—The pulse in the digital arteries, which are found on the inside and outside of the fetlock joint; a pounding digital pulse is one symptom of laminitis

**Discipline**—A particular sport or type of riding, such as dressage, Western pleasure, etc.

**Draft**—The large, heavy breeds of horses traditionally used for pulling large loads (also spelled draught)

**Draw reins**—Special reins that run from a rider's hand, through the ring of the bit, and attach to the girth, giving the rider additional leverage; also called running reins, they are almost always used in conjunction with regular reins that attach directly to the bit, and should be used by experienced riders only.

**Easy keeper**—A horse who is easy to care for and has no trouble maintaining his weight (the opposite is a hard keeper)

**Esophagus**—A muscular tube that connects the horse's mouth to his stomach, through which food passes

**Euthanasia**—The act of humanely ending a horse's life with veterinarian-administered drugs

**Farrier**—An equine professional who trims and shoes a horse's hooves

**Feedlot**—A facility where horses are held before being shipped to slaughter

**Flat**—V., to ride without jumping, as in “to flat in front of a judge”; n., riding a horse when not jumping, as in “on the flat”

**Floating**—Filing down the rough edges on a horse's teeth

**Foal**—A horse or pony under the age of one year

**Founder**—The sinking of the bony column of the horse's leg as a result of laminitis

**Gelding**—A castrated male horse

**Get**—offspring

**Green**—Inexperienced (either horse or rider)

**Groom**—A person who provides daily care for a horse, perhaps including grooming, tacking up for the rider, feeding, etc.

**Grooming**—The daily process of cleaning a horse, usually including brushing, picking out hooves, and/or bathing



**Halter**—Show ring classes where a horse is judged on appearance and conformation; also the piece of equipment encircling the horse’s head by which the horse can be led or tied (above)

**Hand**—A unit of measurement that equals four inches, used to measure a horse’s height at the withers

**Hard keeper**—A horse who tends to lose weight easily

**Head-shy**—A term used to describe a horse who is fearful of having his head touched or handled

**Hoof abscess**—An often-painful infection and swelling in a horse’s hoof

**Horse dealer**—An individual who buys and sells horses

**Hunt coat**—A blazer worn in the hunter show ring

**Impaction colic**—Digestive discomfort caused by an obstruction in the intestine

**Impulsion**—The horse's energy and desire to move forward

**Insulin resistance**—A syndrome in which the horse's tissues do not respond normally to insulin, leading to an abnormally high level of glucose in the blood

**Jodhpurs**—Riding pants worn with short jodhpur boots

**Joint flexions**—The process of individually flexing and stressing the joints of a horse's leg (usually during a lameness or pre-purchase exam) to exacerbate and detect any lameness or pain in the joint

**Joint injection**—The process of injecting medication directly into a joint to combat arthritis

**Lameness**—Any physical ailment that prevents the horse from bearing full weight on a limb or using the limb normally

**Laminitis**—A disease of the laminae (supporting structure) in the hoof, also called **founder**

**Lead**—Term for one of two variations of the canter gait; when going to the left, the horse should be on the left lead, and vice versa for the right. See also **canter**.

**Ligament**—A band of tough, fibrous tissue that connect bones to other bones

**Longe**—To exercise a horse in a circular pattern from the ground by means of a longe line (a long nylon or cotton line)

**Mare**—A female horse

**Mucking**—The act of cleaning a stall to remove soiled bedding and manure

**Mustang**—A free-roaming feral horse, usually referring to horses on the Western plains of the United States

**Overface**—to ask a horse and/or rider to jump a fence too high or too complex for his level of training, causing him to fail and subsequently lose confidence in his ability to negotiate fences of any height

**Pace**—A two-beat gait in which the horse's legs move in lateral pairs (as opposed to the trot, where they move in diagonal pairs)

**Paddock**—A fenced enclosure used for turnout, which may or may not have grass

**Pasture**—A large area used for grazing, usually enclosed by a fence

**Peristalsis**—Waves of contractions in the muscles ringing the digestive tract that move food along

**Poll**—the top of the horse's head, behind the ears

**Pommel**—The part of an English saddle that arches over the horse's withers

**Pony**—An equine who stands less than fourteen hands two inches (or 14.2) at the withers when fully grown

**Pony Club**—An individual chapter of the United States Pony Clubs, a national youth equestrian organization

**Posting**—The process of rising in the saddle every other beat of the trot

**Pre-purchase exam**—An examination conducted by a veterinarian before a horse is purchased

**Prospect**—A horse, usually green or inexperienced, who is considered to have potential in a particular discipline

**Rack**—A high-stepping, four-beat gait performed by gaited horses

**Rain rot**—An infection of the horse's skin caused by excessive moisture; also called rain scald

**Registry**—An organization that records and tracks horses of a particular breed

**Ringbone**—A lameness characterized by arthritis or excessive bone growth (often in a ring around the area) in the lower pastern, often caused by poor conformation

**Roughage**—A term usually used to describe hay and grass or other feeds that are very high in fiber

**Run-in**—A shed or other building that a horse can enter and leave at will

**Running walk**—A variation of the flat walk, performed by gaited horses

**Schoolmaster**—A well-schooled horse who is very experienced and is often used to teach advanced skills to less experienced riders

**Side reins**—Special reins that run from the bit to a saddle, or surcingle, used when longing a horse to encourage flexion

**Sire**—A horse's father

**Slow-gait**—A four-beat gait performed by gaited horses

**Snaffle**—A bit that acts directly on the bars of the horse's mouth

**Soundness**—The quality of being free from lameness or injury

**Spavin**—Term for a lameness in the hock, either a bog spavin (a soft swelling) or a bone spavin (arthritis)

**Splint**—A hard swelling on the horse's lower leg, usually on the inside, but sometimes found on the outside; when new, splints feel warm and can cause lameness, but later they become cold and cease to cause the horse discomfort

**Spook**—The process of startling abruptly at a frightening sight or sound

**Stall walking**—A stable vice in which a horse repeatedly paces or circles in his stall

**Stallion**—An uncastrated (or "entire") male horse, sometimes also called a stud

**Studbook**—The listing of horses accepted in a particular breed registry

**Supplements**—Nutritional feed additives that improve joint health, protect a horse against parasites, address vitamin/mineral deficiencies, etc.

**Tack**—All-encompassing term for riding equipment, including saddles and bridles

**Tendon**—A cord of inelastic tissue that connects muscle to bone; flexor tendons flex a joint, while extensor tendons return a limb to its normal unflexed state.

**Tendon sheath**—The sleeve that covers a tendon

**Thrush**—A bacterial infection of the hoof, often caused by not picking out a horse's hooves frequently enough

**Trainer**—A professional who trains horses and instructs riders

**Tree**—The wooden frame on which a saddle is built

**Trot**—A two-beat gait in which the horse's legs move in diagonal pairs; also called the jog

**Turnout** —1. A horse and rider's overall appearance (grooming, tack, etc.), especially at a show or competition. 2. A paddock in which a horse exercises

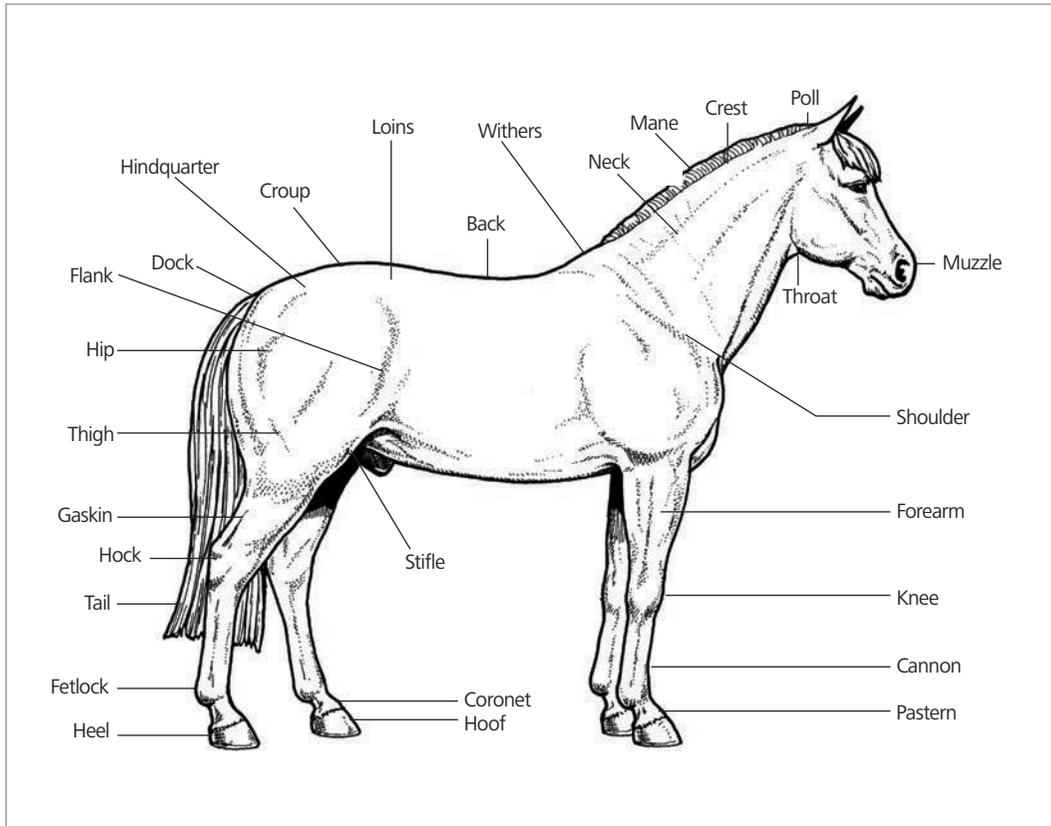
**Turn out**—To give a horse free access to a pasture or paddock to exercise and graze.

**Unthrifty**—thin, lacking bloom

**Windpuff**—Soft, fluid-filled sacs around the fetlock joint, often seen in young horses who are just beginning work; these are considered blemishes, rather than lamenesses

**Yearling**—A one-year-old horse

## Parts of the Horse



GLOSSARY