

VETM*3430 - GLOSSARY OF HORSE TERMS

-A-

AGE - The age of a horse is computed from the first of January, regardless of their actual date of birth within a given year.

ANKLE - A human anatomical term applied to horses when referring to the fetlock joint.

-B-

BALD FACE - A white face, including the eyes and the nostrils, or a portion thereof.

BAREFOOT - Unshod.

BARREN - A mare that is not in foal.

BASE NARROW - Standing with front or rear feet close together, yet standing with legs vertical.

BAY - A tan or red-brown coat colour. The points (mane, legs and tail) are black.

BLAZE - A broad white marking covering almost all of the forehead, but not including the eyes or nostrils.

BODYBRUSH - A wide, flat grooming brush with a strap across the back and short soft fibers.

BOLTING - 1. The habit that ravenous horses have of eating too fast. 2. An animal breaking out of control or trying to run away.

BRAND - A mark used as a means of identification.

BREAK - To teach a young horse to obey commands, and accept direction and control.

BREEZING - A race workout in which a horse is running at a controlled speed, although not full speed.

BROOD MARE - A mare kept for breeding or reproductive purposes.

-C-

CANTER - A slow, restrained, three-beat gait in which the two diagonal legs are paired, thereby producing a single beat which falls between the successive beats of the other unpaired legs.

CAST - Refers to a horse's falling or lying down close to a wall or fence so that it cannot get up without assistance.

CHESTNUT - A deep reddish brown varying from a red dominance or light chestnut, to a heavier brown tone, liver or deep chestnut. Points (mane, tail, muzzle) are also reddish brown.

CHESTNUT - Flattened, oval masses of horn on the medial surface of the forearm and the hock of horses. Those on the forelimb are just proximal to the carpus; those on the hindlimb are at the distal end of the tarsus.

COFFIN BONE - The bone of the foot of the horse- the distal phalanx, or phalanx 3 (P3).

COLIC - Signs of discomfort, including looking or kicking at the abdomen, rolling, laying down.

COLT - A young stallion under three years of age; in Thoroughbreds, the age is extended to include four-year-olds.

COW-KICKER - A horse kick directed out beside the horse, the way a cow kicks naturally.

CREST - The top part of the neck.

CRYPTORCHID - A stallion with one or both testicles retained in the abdomen.

CURRYCOMB - A flat toothed device used like a brush for grooming horses.

-D-

DANDY-BRUSH - A grooming brush of stiff whisk fiber.

DAPPLE - Small spots, patches, or dots of contrasting colour or shade to the background colour, such as dapple-gray.

DENTAL STAR - A marking on the incisor teeth of horses, used in judging their age. It first appears on the lower central and intermediate incisors when the horse is about eight years of age.

DOCK - The solid portion of the tail.

DOCKED - A tail in which part of the portion of the dock has been removed.

-E-

ERGOT - The small mass of horn in a small bunch of hair on the palmar or plantar aspects of the fetlock of the horse.

-F-

FARRIER - A horseshoer.

FAR-SIDE - The right side of a horse.

FEATHER (FEATHERING) - The long hairs that grow at the back of the pastern or fetlock.

FETLOCK JOINT - The connection between the cannon and the pastern bones (the metacarpo- and metatarso-phalangeal joints).

FILLY - A young female horse under three years of age; in Thoroughbreds, it includes four-year-olds.

FLOATING - Filing off the sharp edges of a horse's teeth.

FOAL - A young, unweaned horse of either sex.

FOALING - Giving birth to a foal.

FORE - Front, as in left or right forelimb.

FORELOCK - The lock of hair falling forward over the face.

FROG - A triangular-shaped, elastic like formation between the bars in the sole of the horse's hoof.

-G-

GAIT - A particular way of going, either natural or acquired, which is characterized by a distinctive rhythmic movement of the feet and legs.

GALLOP - The run, or gallop, is a fast, four-beat gait where the feet strike the ground separately- first one hind foot, then the other hind foot, then the front foot on the same side as the first hind foot, then the other front foot.

GELD - To castrate a male horse.

GELDING - A male horse that has been castrated.

GRAY - To be classed as gray a horse should have gray points and have an even colour over the body.

FLEA-BITTEN GRAY- A gray with small spots of dark hair through the coat.

-H-

HAND - A 4 inch (10.16 cm) unit of measurement of height in the horse. The height of the horse is measured in hands, taken as the distance from the withers to the ground.

HOCK - The ankle joint of quadrupeds; the tarsus.

HOOF PICK - A pointed instrument in various shapes used to pick dirt and stones out of grooves in the sole of a horse's foot.

HOOF - The horny covering of the digit of ungulates which in the horse comprises the wall, sole and frog. The wall is divided into toe, quarters and heel.

-J-

JENNY - Female of the ass family.

JOGGING - A slow warm-up exercise of several miles with horse going the wrong way on the track.

-K-

KNEE - In large animals this refers to the carpus.

-L-

LOPE - The western adaptation of a very slow canter. It is a smooth, slow gait in which the head is carried low.

LUNGE (LONGE) - The act of exercising a horse on the end of a long rope, usually in a circle.

-M-

MAIDEN - A mare that has never been bred.

MANE COMB/STRIP COMB - A comb for grooming the horse's mane.

MARE - A mature female four years or older; in Thoroughbreds, five years or older.

-N-

NEAR-SIDE - A horse's left-hand side.

NEEDLE SHY - A horse that is timid when a needle is being administered.

-O-

OFF-SIDE - A horse's right-hand side. See also Far-side

-P-

PACE - A fast, two-beat gait in which the front and hind feet on the same side start and stop simultaneously.

PASTERN - That part of the leg between the fetlock joint and the coronary band of the hoof.

POLL - The top of the head; the occiput or back of the skull.

PONY - An equine under 14.2 hands at the withers.

-Q-

QUARTER - Lateral or medial sides of the hoof of the horse.

-R-

-S-

SCRAPER - A metal or wooden, slightly concave, tool shaped like a hook at the upper end and used with one hand for scraping sweat and liquid from the body.

SNIP - A white mark between the nostrils or on the lip.

SOUND - Horse free from injury or lameness.

SPOOKY - Nervous.

STALLION - A male horse four years old or over; in Thoroughbreds, five years old or over.

STAR - Any white mark on the forehead located at or above a line running from eye to eye.

STIFLE - The homolog of the human knee in the quadruped, made up of the femorotibial and femoropatellar joints.

STOCKING - White colour that extends from the coronet to the knee. When the white includes the knee, it is known as a full stocking.

STOCKING-UP - Accumulation of edema fluid in the lower limbs of horses which are not getting sufficient exercise.

STRIDE - The distance covered by one foot when in motion.

STRIPE - A narrow white marking that extends from about the line of the eyes to the nostrils.

STUD - A male horse (stallion) kept for breeding.

-T-

TACK - Equipment used in riding and driving horses, such as saddles, bridles, etc.

TEMPERAMENT - Refers to the horse's suitability for the job it is to perform.

THROAT LATCH - The narrow strap of the bridle, which goes under the horse's throat and is used to secure the bridle to the head. The region of the neck where this leather strap lies.

TROT - A natural, rapid, two-beat, diagonal gait in which the front foot and the opposite hind foot take off at the same split second and strike the ground simultaneously.

TWITCH - A device used in the restraint of horses. **HUMANE TWITCH**- Consists of a hinged metal device which is placed over the upper lip and clipped to the halter.

-U-

UNGULATES - Animals with hooves; cattle, sheep, goat, pig, horse and many other wild and domesticated animals.

-V-

VICE - Habitual abnormal behaviour of a destructive kind. Common in horses, pigs and chickens but can occur in any species.

-W-

WALK - A natural, slow, flatfooted, four-beat gait, the latter meaning that each foot takes off from and strikes the ground at a separate interval.

WEANLING - A weaned foal.

WITHERS - The region over the backline where the neck joins the thorax and where the dorsal margins of the scapulae lie just below the skin.

-Y-

YEARLING - A horse between one and two years of age.

-References-

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ME Ensminger. 1999. Horses and Horsemanship. Illinois: Interstate Publishers, Inc.