



Horse Safety Australia

## Safety tips for beginners...

Remember

*closed shoes or boots and sun protection*

### 'Rugging' a horse:

#### General:

- Ensure the rug is clean (remove any spiders or rubbish on the inside)
- Make sure the rug is a good fit and in reasonable condition (will it really protect your horse in bad weather? If it doesn't fit, it will rub and do damage!)
- Does your horse actually need a rug? (Is it involved in showing/it is old or sick/does it have no shelter/is it experiencing extreme conditions)
- Is it used to being rugged? (Its first experience may be traumatic and needs an experienced horseperson to manage it)

#### HOW TO rug a horse:

- **Tie the horse up, or have someone competent hold it (standing beside it, using a halter and rope)**
- Place the rug gently on the horse and spread it out in place on its back
- Doing up the buckles....  
You have two choices:
  - (1) Secure the hind leg straps first (looping the straps through each other) then the chest straps and finally the belly straps (if your rug has these) or
  - (2) Secure the chest strap first then the hind leg straps (looping them through each other) then finally the belly straps (if your rug has these)

*Take great care around the back of the horse, if it gets frightened it could kick out at the rug and kick you unintentionally.*

#### Taking a rug off:

- Tie up the horse (or have it held by a competent person)
- Undo the straps in reverse order from above ...make sure you undo the belly strap first and that ALL connections are undone before the rug is removed!

For more information visit [www.horsesafetyaustralia.com.au](http://www.horsesafetyaustralia.com.au)



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### **Catching & LEADING a horse...**

Check your footing (preferably solid: not boggy or slippery)

Beginners should NOT learn by trying to catch a difficult or dangerous horse

DO NOT take food in to catch your horse if it is in with others

Make sure your halter is the correct size

Place the rope around your horse's neck (so it will feel that it is caught) before you do up the halter

Only ever lead your horse when it is properly caught with a halter & rope, properly fitted with all buckles properly secured

**Lead your horse on its LHS, walking near its shoulder, with your right hand below the clip and the rest of the rope folded in (NOT WRAPPED AROUND) your hand**

If you are in a paddock with others, watch ALL THE HORSES ALL THE TIME (they may bully your horse and you could get trampled or kicked)

Keep clear of other horses if possible, NEVER lead your horse up behind another horse.

### **Walking through gates:**

**If possible swing the gate AWAY from you (i.e. in the same direction that the horse will be walking)**

Take care walking through gates: ensure the horse has room to WALK THROUGH THE MIDDLE (leaving room for its hips)

DO NOT ALLOW YOUR HORSE TO RUSH through and knock you away (if you cannot walk through safely together, you should go through first then allow the horse to follow).

If the gate only swings towards you ensure it is opened wide before you go through it.

Avoid gates with latches which are difficult to open and close; or have protrusions which either you or your horse could hit walking through them.

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## Horse safety

Horses are “flight” animals...Your horse may try to run if it gets a fright!

Horses are ‘prey’ animals and will try to run away if they are scared by something.

They can knock you over if you are in their way.

Be aware that your horse may respond this way even if it seems quiet.

Horses can be upset by :

- blowing plastic,
- passing vehicles,
- other horses running around,
- a strange sound,
- a falling bough off a tree,
- another horse bullying it.

Always wear covered shoes near horses, and remain alert in windy or unusual situations.

**Make sure that if you are holding your horse that the lead rope or reins are NEVER wrapped around your hands.**

If a horse pulls away in fright, unless you are experienced, it is safest to let go and catch it again when it has calmed down.



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## **Equipment FOR THE RIDER**

**Australian Standard 3838 riding helmet properly fitted and done up firmly**

Boots: riding boots or shoes (that are the correct in relation to the size of the stirrups: i.e. can slip out easily in the event of a fall, but will not slip through the stirrup)

Sleeved shirt : to prevent sunburn and scratching on branches or in the event of a fall

Long pants: firmly fitted, no flares or loose clothing

Bum bags or saddle bags can be used to carry essential medications (e.g. puffers)

No loose (hanging) jewellery or flapping coats

Tie up long hair that could get caught in equipment.

No cameras or bags carried over your shoulders or around your neck.

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