

FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS



# Volunteer PowerPoint Trainings

## Carriage Hill MetroParks Riding Center

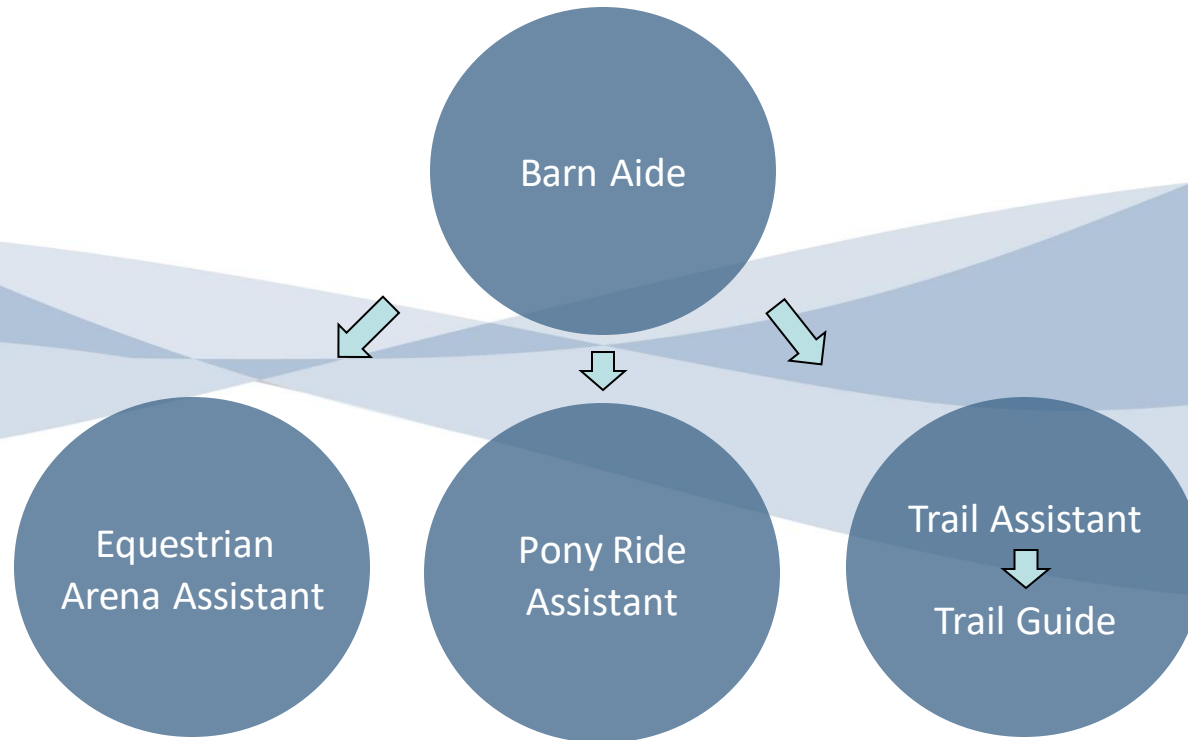


Congratulations on becoming a MetroParks Volunteer. The Volunteer PowerPoint Trainings are designed to give you a better understanding of our expectations and the responsibilities of our volunteers.

To complete these trainings, please read each slide carefully, so you understand your responsibilities.



# Volunteer Opportunity Types and Progression Overview



**20 hours as Barn Aide must be completed by all volunteers before moving on to any other opportunity.**



# Volunteer PowerPoint Training:

## Equestrian Arena Assistant



**RIDING CENTER**  
CARRIAGE HILL METROPARK



OBJECTIVES

Section 1: Volunteer Expectations

Section 2: Specific Responsibilities

Section 3: English Tack





# SECTION 1

## Volunteer Expectations

- Treat your volunteer experience as you would a job.

This means:

- Report to your shift on time. Be in the barn and ready to work at the start of your shift, not rushing in the door.
- Act professionally at all times.
- Be present for your entire shift.
- If you have questions regarding your responsibilities, be sure to ask a staff member.
- Wear proper clothing: closed toed shoes, weather and work appropriate clothes.
- Always make human and horse safety your top priority.



# SECTION 2

## Specific Responsibilities: Opportunity Description



## Equestrian Arena Assistant



### Required Training:

- Complete 20 hours as Barn Aide Volunteer.
- Review Equestrian Arena Assistant Training Slides.
- Complete Annual Hands-on Training.
- Complete Practical Exam.

### Special Requirements:

- Must be at least 14 years of age to assist with camps or lessons.

**Basic Responsibilities:** All of the following responsibilities are explained in this PowerPoint Training.

- Assist camp/lesson instructor in preparing for the day.
- Assist camp/lesson students with all ground activities.
- Assist riders with all mounted activities.
- Be comfortable fitting helmets, checking tack, adjusting stirrups, helping students on their horses.
- Watching for safe spacing in the arena and helping riders create space and reinforce the instructions from the lead instructor.
- Perform all Barn Aide responsibilities as required during your shift.
- Please conduct yourself with the utmost maturity and respect.
- Assisting with camp/lesson brings added responsibility. Please be sure to ask if you have any questions at any time.

\* Remember, you are a representation of Five Rivers MetroParks. It is your responsibility to always act in a professional and courteous manner with the public. Our utmost concern is the safety of our horses and riders. We want to demonstrate a safe, fun, and exciting environment for everyone to enjoy.

# Specific Responsibilities

## The role of the Instructor:



- **The Riding Instructor is in charge of the arena.**
- All activities will be directed by the instructor.
- The instructor will plan, carry out, and evaluate the lesson.
- The instructor will give specific directions to any assistant in the arena.
- The instructor will ensure the assistant is following through with assigned tasks.
- The instructor will utilize assistants to complete tasks such as adjusting stirrups and tightening saddles, so he/she does not lose group focus.
- The degree of instruction given to the assistant will depend on their skill/knowledge level.
- The instructor is responsible for ensuring each assistant is acting within his/her capabilities.



# Specific Responsibilities

## The role of the Equestrian Arena Assistant

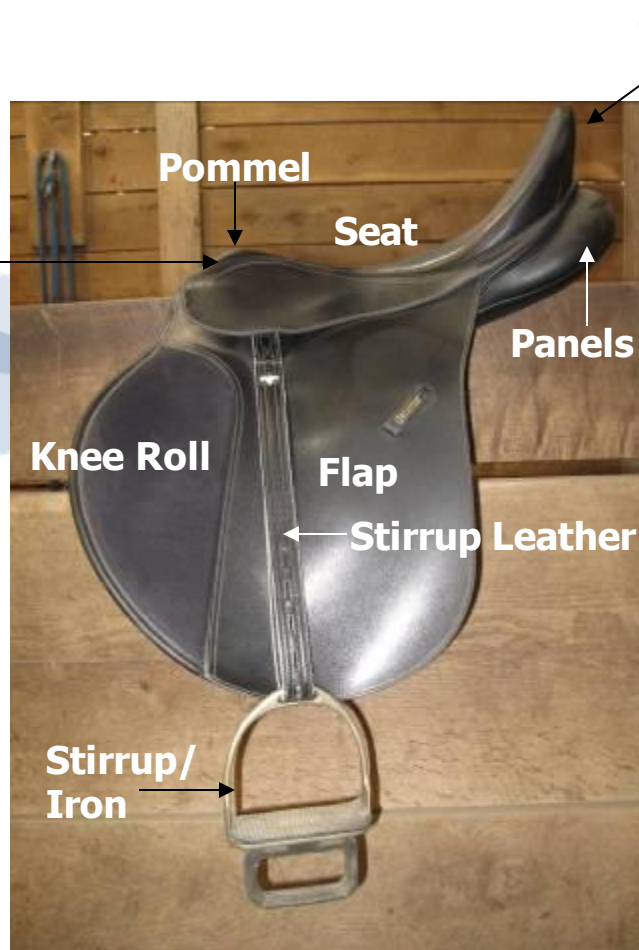
- **Arena assistants need to take their role seriously; you are part of the “safety package”.**
- Check in with the Instructor before the lesson/camp to find out where you are needed.
- The assistant may need to adjust stirrups or tighten saddles.
- The assistant may need to retrieve arena equipment/handle tack changes/work with a particular student.
- Help the instructor **relay** the instructions without **“over teaching”** them.
- Keep an “EDUCATED EYE”. You are an extra set of eyes and ears for the instructor.
- If you have any questions or concerns, address them with the instructor at an appropriate time.
- The instructor will give you a position in the arena and instructions on how you are to assist.
- NO talking or texting on cell phones.
- NO “chatting” with other staff/volunteers.
- NO sitting. If you need to react quickly... you will not be able to.



# SECTION 3

## Horse 101-English Tack Saddle

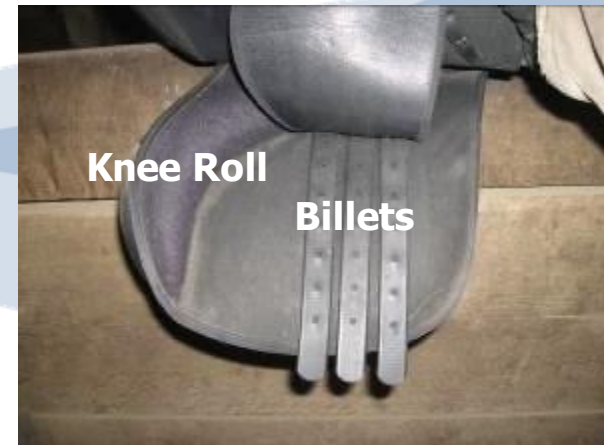
**Gullet**  
(Open space under the pommel)



**Girth**



View from under the flap



# Horse 101-English Tack

## How to Tack English

### ENGLISH SADDLE

Place the saddle pad high on the withers, then slide it backward onto the back to smooth the horse's hair.

Pick up the saddle, making sure the stirrups are run up the leathers and secured. Lay the girth across the saddle. Holding the pommel with the left hand and the cantle with the right, gently place the saddle on the middle of the pad. Pull the pad up into the gullet to allow the air to circulate between the horse's back and the pad. There should be about 2" clearance between withers and the gullet.

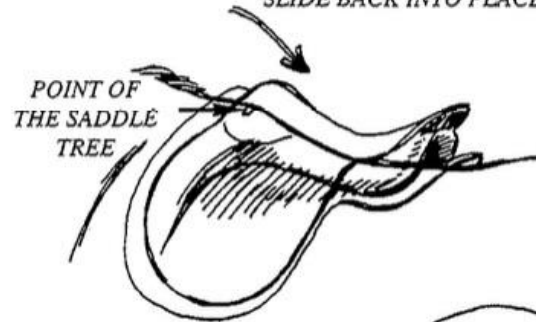
As a general guideline, the front edge of the saddle will often just touch an imaginary line down the center of the shoulder. (This will depend on the type of saddle and the shape of the individual horse). The points of the saddle tree should be 1" or more behind the upper end of the horse's shoulder blade (scapula).

From the right (off side), take the girth off the saddle and check to be sure the pad is smooth. Attach the girth to the right side of the saddle. (The folded edge of a leather girth should be to the front. If there is an elastic end of the girth, it should attach on the near side.)

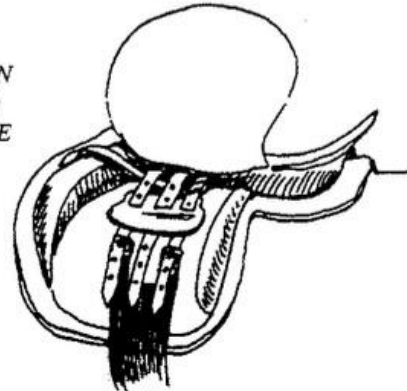
From the left (near side), pull the girth under the horse and buckle the girth.

Before mounting, a final check of the girth should be made by you and your instructor.

*PLACE THE SADDLE AND PAD  
FORWARD ON THE NECK THEN  
SLIDE BACK INTO PLACE*



*THE SEAT (BETWEEN  
THE POMMEL AND  
THE CANTLE) IS THE  
CENTER OF THE  
SADDLE AND  
SHOULD BE THE  
DEEPEST POINT*



*THE SADDLE PAD LOOP ATTACHES  
TO THE BILLET STRAPS  
ABOVE THE BILLET/BUCKLE COVER*

*THE ENGLISH GIRTH USUALLY BUCKLES ON THE FIRST AND  
THIRD BILLET STRAPS, BUT MAY FASTEN ON THE FIRST AND  
SECOND BILLETS FOR BETTER FIT OF THE SADDLE*

# Specific Responsibilities: English Stirrups

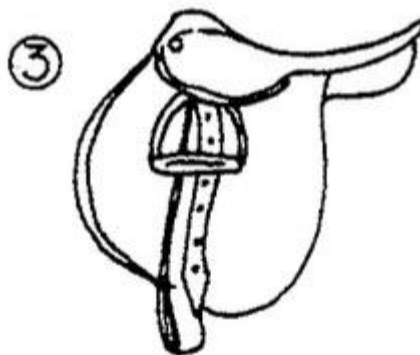
## HOW TO RUN UP ENGLISH STIRRUPS



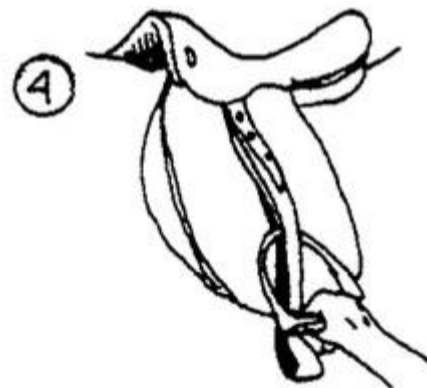
THE STIRRUP IRON  
IS SLID UP UNDER  
THE SKIRT ON THE  
UNDERNEATH PART OF  
THE STIRRUP LEATHER



THE STIRRUP LEATHERS  
ARE THEN PULLED  
THROUGH THE IRON



BE SURE THAT THE  
STIRRUP IRON IS RUN  
UP SO THAT IT IS SNUG  
UNDER THE SKIRT AND  
WILL NOT COME DOWN



STIRRUPS IRONS ARE  
PULLED DOWN  
QUIETLY FOR RIDING

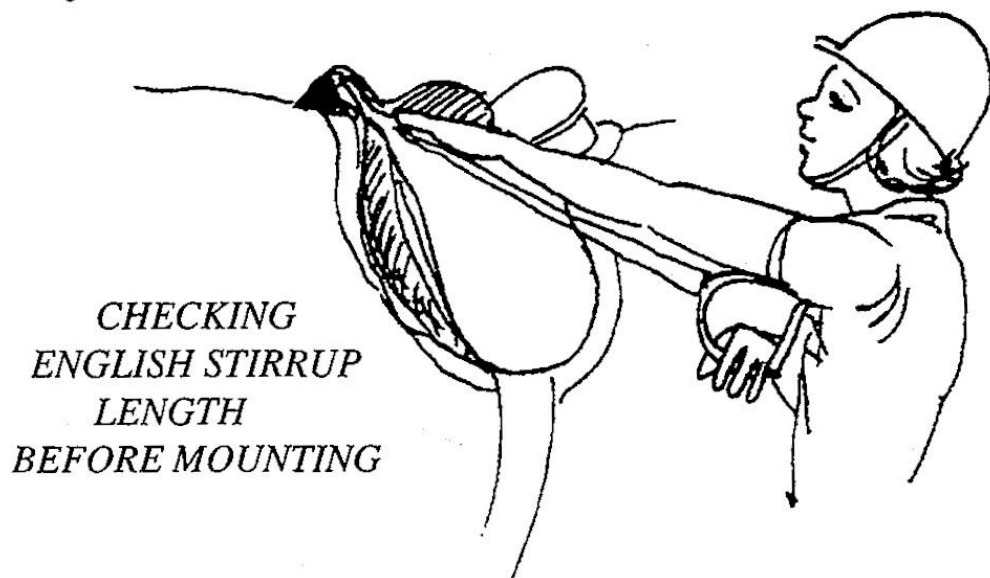




# Specific Responsibilities: English Stirrups

You can check the approximate length of the stirrup leathers before you mount.

- Pull the stirrup iron all the way down to the end of the leather loop.
- Place your fingertips on the stirrup bar. The stirrup iron should reach to your armpit. This will give you approximately the right length of your stirrups when you mount.



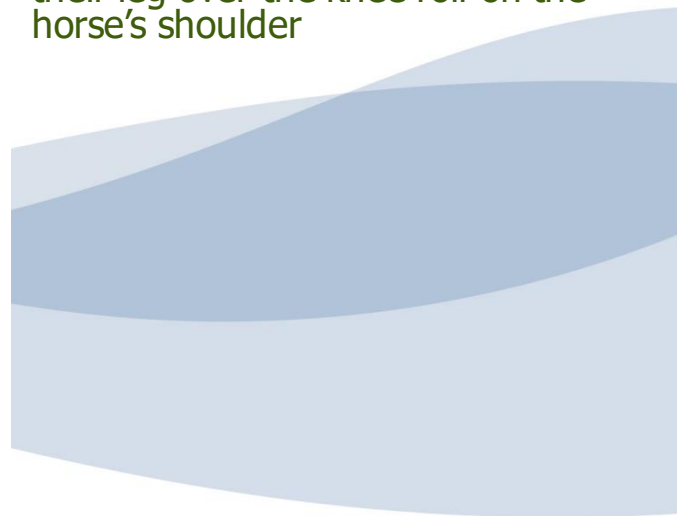


# Specific Responsibilities: English Stirrups

When you are on your horse adjusting your stirrups, keep your feet in the irons and hold your reins. To adjust your stirrups to the proper length, pull on the end of the stirrup leather until the buckle slides out where you can reach it. Hold the outside of the buckle and pull up on the strap.

- To shorten the leathers, pull the buckle higher on the leather, closer to the saddle.
- To make them longer, slide the buckle down farther from the saddle.
- When you have adjusted the stirrups, check the length again and be sure that they are even.
- Pull the buckle back up under the skirt until it touches the stirrup bar so that it will not rub your leg and cause discomfort. The spare end of the stirrup leather can be tucked back under your leg and held by the tab or keeper on the saddle.

➤ When adjusting stirrups for a mounted student ask them to hook their leg over the knee roll on the horse's shoulder

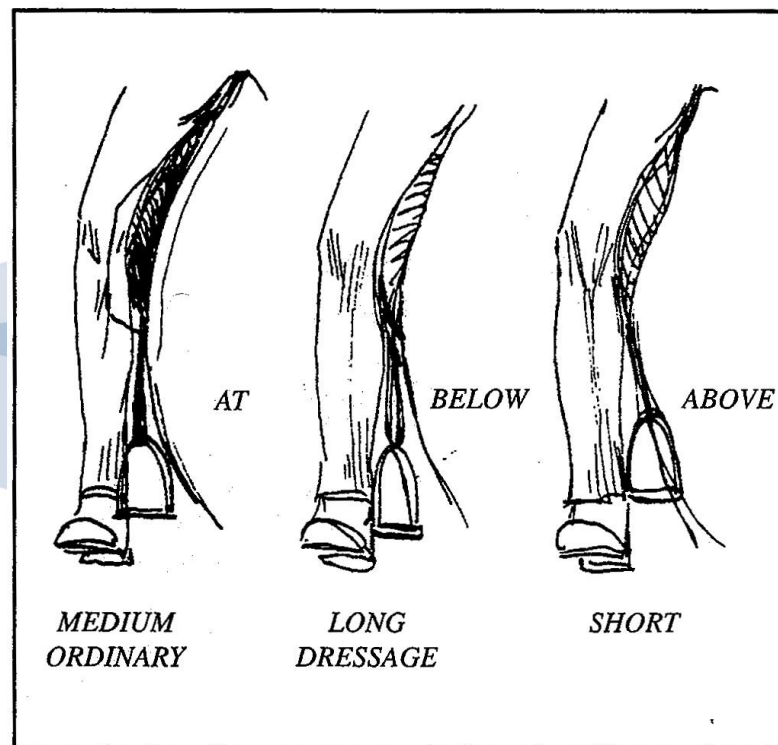


# Specific Responsibilities: English Stirrups

**To check the stirrups when you are mounted.**

- Sit in the middle of the saddle with your feet hanging straight down. The bottom of the irons should tap your feet at just about the ankle bone.
- For riding the sitting trot and canter, the stirrups should be just below the ankle bone.
- For jumping or a more forward seat, the stirrups should be just above the ankle.
- Right at the ankle bone is a good all around length.

Never slip your feet into the stirrup straps instead of the stirrups if the stirrups won't go short enough for your legs. You could get a foot caught in the strap, which is very dangerous.



# Western Stirrups

Western stirrup length is difficult to check from the ground. You may have to mount to check the length.

- Stand straight up with both feet in the stirrups. Keep your heels lower than your toes and your knees bent. When standing up, there should be a space about 2 1/2" to 3" (a hand's width) between your seat and the seat of the saddle.
- If you can't fit any fingers between you and the saddle, or if you can't stand up with your heels down, your stirrups may be too long.
- If you can fit a whole fist between your seat and the saddle, your stirrups are too short.

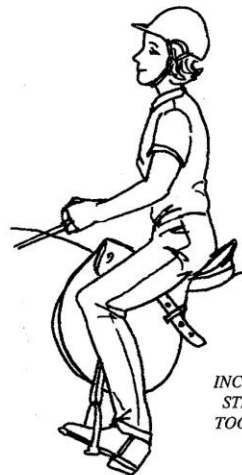
Western stirrups are best adjusted from the ground. You may have to dismount to fix the stirrup length if it is too long or short or ask someone to help you. The stirrup leathers may have buckles or a slide fastener.

- To shorten the stirrups, slide the fastener or buckle up closer to the saddle. To make them longer, slide it down. Be sure to get both stirrups even.

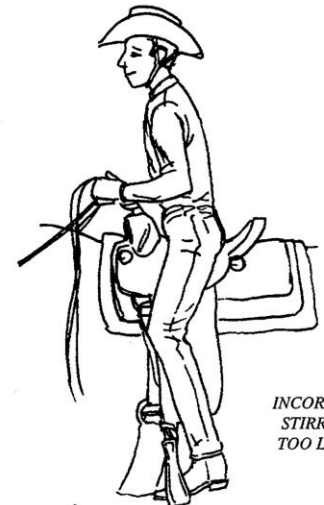
Never slip your feet into the stirrup straps instead of the stirrups if the stirrups won't go short enough for your legs. You could get a foot caught in the strap, which is very dangerous.



CHECKING  
STERN STIRRUP LENGTH  
AFTER MOUNTING



INCORRECT  
STIRRUPS  
TOO SHORT



INCORRECT  
STIRRUPS  
TOO LONG



# 4-Point Safety Check

**Prior to mounting, students are asked to perform a safety check consisting of:**

- 1. Helmet** – the helmet should fit on the head without wobbling; the chin strap should be tight enough that it cannot be pulled over the student's chin; there should be a two-finger width between helmet and the rider's eyebrows.
- 2. Girth** – In the crossties, girths should be just tight enough to fit four fingers underneath at center between the horse's front legs (this will give them some breathing room, but if they shake or when they are led to the arena the saddle will not shift. BEFORE assisting a rider onto the saddle, the girth should be checked one more time and be tightened so just two fingertips can slide in at the center of the girth. Instructors or assistants will check the girth one final time after the rider has walked a lap or two.
- 3. Stirrups** (English) – Students will run down the English stirrups in preparation for mounting.
- 4. Reins** – The reins are drawn over the horse's head and on to their necks from the leading position to the riding position.



# Specific Responsibilities

## In case of Emergency:

- All riders should stop their horses.
- The instructor or a designated assistant will tend to the rider.
- If a horse is loose or running, do not chase him. Horses are prey animals and will view you as a threat.
- If attempting to slow a horse, position yourself at the horse's shoulder (front end). Remember, only do this if instructed to.
- Once the horse is caught, a designated assistant may be asked to stay with the horse while the instructor tends to the rider.





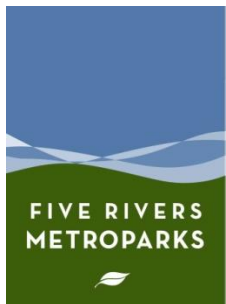
# Incident Protocol for Arena Riding

## ➤ Fall from Horse

1. One instructor or assistant must respond to the fallen rider. Remaining instructors or assistants must maintain control of group (which may include having all other riders dismount) and secure loose horse.
2. Check on the fallen rider. If rider landed on feet or knees and appears to be ok (with no visible injuries or complaint of injuries) then rider may re-mount, if they wish. (An incident report still needs to be completed and a parent needs to be informed, if a minor is involved.)
3. If rider landed on back, side, neck, head, then the rider may not be allowed to re-mount and steps need to be taken to get medical attention. The Ranger's Dispatch needs to be contacted (937) 535-2580 for any injury involving a visitor/participant.
  - If the rider is an adult (18 and over), staff can consult with the rider to determine how medical attention will be provided. This can include contacting their emergency contact or calling EMS on the rider's behalf. Must wait until either the EMS or Rangers have arrived before the rider is allowed to leave the facility.
  - If rider is a child, consult with the parent/guardian. Contact information is available in the office. Must wait until either the EMS or Rangers have arrived before the rider is allowed to leave the facility. If parents are on-site, must still wait for Ranger to arrive before they are allowed to leave.
1. If you suspect injury, do not let the rider continue and make arrangements for medical attention by calling the Ranger's Dispatch (937) 535-2580, for non-emergency injuries.
2. If the rider complains of an injury and requests an ambulance, treat as a Medical Emergency.
3. Incident Report Form must be filled out by the Instructor before leaving work the day of the event and submitted to the on-site supervisor, who must submit the report to HR within 24 hours of the event. If the incident involves a volunteer, the report is also submitted to the Volunteer Coordinator.

## ➤ Medical Emergency (i.e. – heart attack, serious injury, loss of consciousness, etc.)

1. One instructor or assistant must respond to the fallen rider. Remaining instructors or assistants must maintain control of group and secure loose horse.
2. Call 9-1-1. Be prepared to give your location and nature of injury.
  - Carriage Hill MetroPark Riding Center  
8111 E. Shull Rd. Huber Heights 45424
1. Contact the Ranger's Dispatch (937) 535-2580, to notify of medical emergency.
2. Provide medical assistance that you are comfortable giving.
3. Incident Report Form must be filled out by the Instructor and submitted to the on-site supervisor, within in 24 hours of the event.



# Specific Responsibilities

## Camp Schedule: AM Camp

- Camp programs run M-F from June-August.
- AM camp runs 9:00am – 12:00pm.
- AM Camp Volunteer shift starts at 8:45am and ends at 12:15pm.
- Please be prompt as set up time is important.
- A typical day will include riders getting the horses, grooming, tacking, leading to the arena, riding, untacking, and some type of unmounted activity.
- The camp level and what day of week it is will determine what activities will need to be set up/completed. Check with the Instructor.

## At the end of the day... AM Camp

- Make sure all horses are untacked and put away.
- Make sure all tack and equipment is put away.
- Make sure unmounted activity items are put away.
- Sweep crosstie aisleway.
- Always advise a staff member before leaving!



# Specific Responsibilities

## Camp Schedule: PM Camp

- Camp programs run M-F from June-August
- PM camp runs 1:00pm – 4:00pm.
- PM Camp shift begins at 12:45pm and ends at 4:15pm.
- Please be prompt as set up time is important.
- A typical day will include riders getting the horses out, grooming, tacking, leading to the arena, riding, untacking, and potentially some type of activity.
- The camp level and day will determine what activities will need to be set up/completed. Check with the Instructor.

## At the end of the day... PM Camp

- Check with barn staff to determine night location of horses. Make sure all horses are untacked and put away.
- Make sure all tack and equipment is put away.
- Make sure unmounted activity items are put away.
- Sweep crosstie aisleway.
- Always advise a staff member before leaving!



# Specific Responsibilities

## Lessons



- Lessons run in the Spring and Fall.
- Each session of lessons lasts 9 to 10 weeks.
- Each lesson (one per week) lasts one hour.
- There are 4-5 students per lesson.
- Your shift will include set up and clean up time.
- Please arrive on time as set up time is important.
- Check with the instructor to find out which horses and tack are being used.
- Assist students with grooming, tacking, and bridling horses.
- Assist in the arena with mounting, double checking girths are tight, and adjusting stirrups.
- Help the instructor **relay** the instructions without **"over teaching"** them.
- Keep an "EDUCATED EYE". You are an extra set of eyes and ears for the instructor.
- If you have questions or concerns, address them with the instructor at an appropriate time.
- The instructor will give you a position in the arena and instructions on how you are to assist.
- Assist with dismounting, getting riders back to the crossties, untacking, post ride grooming, putting away tack and horses.
- Sweeping the crosstie aisleway and picking up the arena.

# Specific Responsibilities

## Signing Up

✦ Youth volunteers may only work 8 hours per day. If you are a youth volunteer, you will need to make sure you take a break between camps.

✦ Volunteers may sign up for:

✦ Full days or half days and in any combination of days during summer camp.

✦ All or any number of lessons during lesson sessions.

✦ **When volunteering for your first lesson or camp session, please let staff know.**

✦ Our goal is to have:

✦ A minimum of 2 volunteers per summer camp time.

✦ A minimum of 1 volunteer per lesson slot.

✦ Consistency is important for riders. If you are signing up for a shift, please make every effort to be here.



### GET CONNECTED

The place where volunteers make a difference.





# Specific Responsibilities

## Helpful Notes:

- When placing horses in the cross-ties, place the horses every other cross-tie to allow campers to walk through empty ties (providing there is space).
- When placing horses in the rear four cross-ties, fill left-to-right or right-to-left, ensuring that no horses are led behind another horse already standing in the cross-ties.
- Volunteers are not required to wear a helmet on the ground.
- Do not hang the helmet or bridle on the saddle horn. This may scare some horses.



# Specific Responsibilities

## Safety with Horses:

The horse's ears and actions are the key to his emotions. He can tell you what he is paying attention to and how he feels by the way he uses his ears and the way he acts. Following are some tips to his emotions.



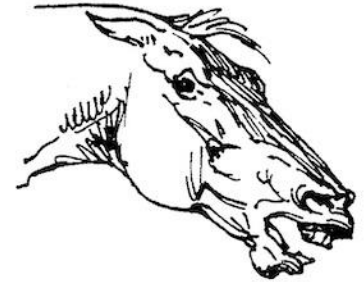
**Ears forward but relaxed**  
Interested in what's in front of him



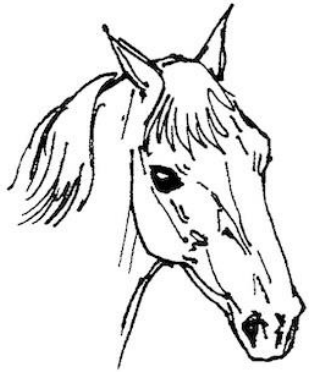
**Ears turned back but relaxed**  
Listening to his rider or what's behind him



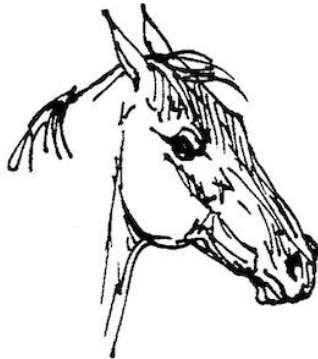
**Ears pointed stiffly forward**  
Alarmed or nervous about what's ahead; looking for danger



**Ears flattened against neck**  
Violently angry, in a fighting mood; may fight, bite or kick



**Ears pointed left and right**  
Relaxed, paying attention to the scenery on both sides



**Ears stiffly back**  
Annoyed or worried about what's behind him; might kick if annoyed



**Droopy ears**  
Calm and subordinate, horse may be dozing

# Specific Responsibilities

## Safety with Horses:

### OTHER SIGNS YOU SHOULD NOTICE

- **Tucking the tail down tightly.**

Danger to the rear.

Horse may bolt, buck or kick.

Watch out if ears are flattened, too!

- **Switching the tail.**

Annoyance and irritation at biting flies, stinging insects or bothersome actions of a rider or another horse.

- **Droopy ears and resting one hind leg on toe.**

Calm and resting, horse may be dozing.

Don't wake him up by startling him!

- **Wrinkling up the face and swinging the head.**

Threatening gesture of an angry or bossy horse.

Watch out for biting or kicking.

# Specific Responsibilities

## On the Trail

**Some groups of camp, adult camp and lessons will go on trail.**

☛ Give instructions to students while on trail such as...

☛ When going up hill, lean slightly forward in the saddle to help even out the weight for your horse.

☛ When going down hill stay centered in the saddle to help even out the weight for your horse. Remind riders to keep their heels down for balance.

☛ When going down hill, some horses tend to try and go a little faster, so be prepared to pull back on the reins and slow them down.

☛ Make sure you stay in a single file line. Some horses don't get along, so you have been placed in this order for that reason.

☛ Keep at least one-horse length between your horse and the one in front of you.

☛ You may see deer on the trail. If you do, make sure the rest of us know too. If the horse are aware they are there, they usually don't mind.

☛ Most of the time you can give verbal directions to students. However, if they are unable to alleviate the problem, then you need to dismount and assist them.



# Specific Responsibilities

## Assisting a Rider After the Trail



- When returning to the barn.....
  - Remind everyone to stay at walk as they head back to the barn. Example: "The horses can become barn sour if we let them go faster than a walk back to the barn, so please keep them at a walk."
- Prepare the riders for the dismounting procedure.
  - "When we get back to the barn, remember to stay in a single file line. If your horse would like to stop and get a drink, that is fine, but do not pass each other. Please do not get off until you have someone with you."



# Specific Responsibilities

## Incident Protocol for Trail Rides

### Incident Protocol for Trail Rides:

- Fall from Horse
  1. At least one guide must dismount to assist the rider. The other guides present will assist in keeping the other riders and horses safe and in control.
  2. Check on the fallen rider. If the fall does not appear to be serious, contact the office and line up a gator to be brought out to bring the rider back to the office, where medical attention can be provided. (Office will contact EMS if required).
  3. Entire trail will wait until the gator has come to pick up the fallen rider; or until the EMS personnel have come out.
  4. If the rider complains of a minor injury, but does not want an ambulance contacted, contact the office for assistance. No rider will be allowed to re-mount after a fall on trail; nor will they be able to be transported in the gator if they are injured.
  5. If the rider complains of an injury and requests an ambulance, treat as a Medical Emergency (see below).
  6. Incident Report Form must be filled out by Guide and submitted to onsite supervisor.
  7. No rider who has fallen on trail may be allowed to re-mount the horse. They must receive medical attention or refuse medical attention once the Incident Report Form has been completed. Adults may waive seeking medical attention; parents/guardians must for minors.
  
- Medical Emergency (i.e. – heart attack, serious injury, loss of consciousness, etc.)
  1. Call 9-1-1. Be prepared to give your location and nature of injury.
    - Carriage Hill MetroPark Riding Center  
8111 E. Shull Rd. Huber Heights  
Yellow Horse Trail with closest letter location
  2. Provide medical assistance that you are comfortable giving.
  3. Call Carriage Hill Riding Center Office (937) 689-6939 to inform staff of problem.
  4. Staff will confirm a ranger has been contacted.
  5. Available guides will dismount all other riders. If able, horses and riders will be escorted back to the barn on foot.
  6. Incident Report Form must be filled out by Guide and submitted to onsite supervisor.



# Summary

Remember, you are a representative of Five Rivers MetroParks. It is your responsibility to act in a professional and courteous manner with the public at all times. Our utmost concern is the safety of our horses and riders. We want to demonstrate a safe, fun, and exciting environment for everyone to enjoy!



# Thank you!

- Thank you for completing the Equestrian Arena Assistant PowerPoint Training.
- The next step is to complete the Hands-on Training.
- Finally, you will complete the Practical Exam.
- Successful completion of all of the above, will allow you to volunteer as a Camp/Lesson Volunteer at the Carriage Hill MetroParks Riding Center if you are at least 14 years old.

