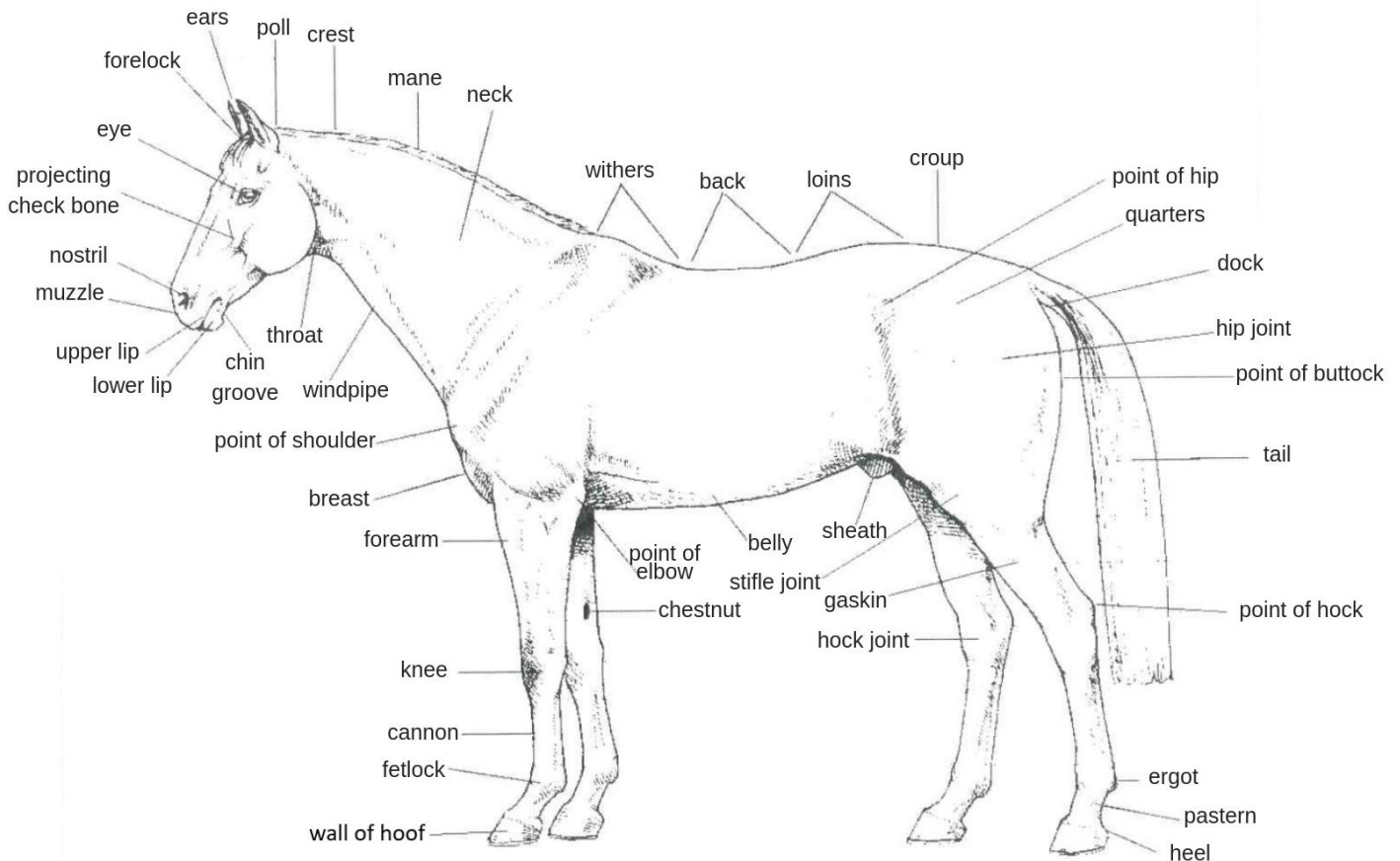


Level 5 Horsemanship

Level 5 Horsemanship Booklet

Section 1 – Identify the Points of the Horse

Vaulter must be able to name all parts of the horse's exterior as per below.



Section 2 – Horse Identification

Vaulter must be able to show or describe the following points to a satisfactory standard as determined by the examiner.

- How do you identify colours?
- How do you identify gender?
- What are the heights included in the Australian categories of:
 - Pony/Galloway/Hack (show horse)
 - Pony/Horse (other disciplines)
- What are the names of various body, face and leg markings (including where to find brands and freeze brands)?
- What are the brand conventions for your horse or for a common breed such as thoroughbreds?

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Colour Identification

For the purposes of identification, it is important for a horse's colour and markings to be described correctly. His precise colour can sometimes be difficult to determine, but reference to the colour of his 'points' – muzzle, eyelids, tips of the ears, legs and the mane and tail – should clarify the problem. The legs below the knee can be black or a darker version of the body, but they may also have white markings. A horse with no markings is said to **whole-coloured**. When describing horses, any patches of white hair caused by pressure or injury should be noted. These are most likely to occur in the saddle and bridle area or on the legs. Scars should also be noted.

- A **black** horse is black in colour with black points and a black muzzle.
- A **brown** horse is dark brown in colour with similar limbs, mane and tail.
- A **dark bay** horse is mid-brown in colour with black limbs, mane and tail.
- A **bright bay** horse is mahogany in colour with black limbs, mane and tail.
- A **light bay** horse is a paler shade of brown, or pale mahogany, with black limbs, mane and tail.
- A **bay-brown** is a horse where the predominating colour is brown, with bay muzzle and black points.
- A **dark chestnut** is a rich red colour with matching points. He sometimes has small patches of black hair on the body. He may be whole coloured as in a Suffolk Punch, but is most likely to have white markings on his legs.
- A **chestnut** is a paler version of the above and may have a flaxen mane and tail.
- A **liver chestnut** is a rich red brown with similar mane, tail and legs.
- A **grey** horse is one with both black and white hair growing in the coat, with matching points and mane and tail. The skin is black.
- An **iron grey** has predominantly black hairs and can appear nearly black. He may become paler with age.
- A **light grey** has predominantly white hairs.
- A **flea-bitten grey** has dark or brown hair growing in speckles over the body.
- A **dapple grey** has circles of black hair over the body.

NOTE: All grey horses become lighter with age, but are never described as white. On examination, the skin will be seen to be dark coloured. They may be born brown or black.

- A **blue dun** has a very dark, blue/grey coat which doesn't lighten with age. The mane and tail are black. There may be a dorsal stripe. The skin is black.
- A **yellow dun** horse varies from mouse colour to dark gold with black points. He may show a 'list', a dark line along the back bone and have dark stripes around his legs. The skin is black.
- A **palomino** varies from light cream to bright gold with similar coloured points, and lighter or silver coloured mane and tail.
- A **cream** horse has a light cream coat verging to white in the muzzle area and legs. The muzzle is white. The skin lacks pigment. The eyes may also have a pinkish or bluish appearance. The mane and tail will be a similar colour to the short coat.

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- A **roan** has a mixture of white and other colours growing in his coat. There is a tendency to get whiter with age.
- A **strawberry roan** is white and red with similar points.
- A **blue roan** is white and black with black points. The coat has a blue tinge.
- A **red roan** or a bay roan is white and bay or bay-brown with black limbs, mane and tail.
- A **chestnut roan** or **sorrel** is white and light chestnut with matching points. Mane and tail similar or chestnut in colour.
- A **piebald** is a mixture of large irregular patches of black and white. The mane and tail may also be black and white.
- A **skewbald** is a mixture of large irregular patches of white and any other colour or colours.
- A **spotted** horse often has pink or mottled skin. He may have: (a) **leopard spot** markings, when dark spots are distributed over a lighter background; (b) **blanket markings**, when there are dark spots on the rump of a lighter coloured horse; (c) **snowflake markings**, when white spots appear on a darker background.
- An **Appaloosa** has a pink skin and a silky white or grey coat with darker coloured spots on the coat. These markings can include leopard, blanket or snowflake markings.
- **Odd-coloured** horses are those whose body coat consists of large irregular patches or more than two colours, which may merge at the edges.

Gender Identification

- Stallion/Entire – Uncastrated male horse of any age.
- Gelding – Castrated male of any age.
- Colt – Uncastrated male under four years of age.
- Mare – Female horse of four years or more, if a maiden; any age if she has had a foal.
- Filly – Female under four years of age.
- Foal – Described either as a 'colt' or 'filly' foal and under one year old.
- Rig – Male horse who has retained one or both testes in the abdomen due to incorrect castration or failure of the testes to descend. The condition can be rectified, but would probably involve a major operation. Rigs are not suitable mounts. If known at the time of a sale the condition must be declared.

Horse Height Categories

Traditionally horses are measured in hands (4ins/10.16cm). The measurement is taken from the highest point of the withers in a perpendicular line to the ground.

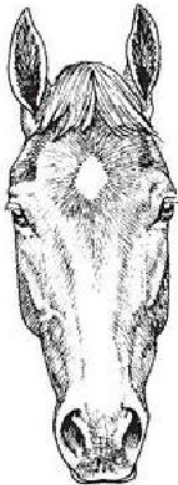
- Pony does not exceed 14hh/Galloway over 14hh and does not exceed 15hh/Hack over 15hh
- Pony up to 14.2hh/Horse over 14.2hh

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Markings

The Head

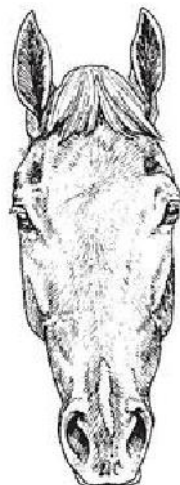
- A **star** is a white mark on the forehead. It can be further described as large, small, irregular, etc.
- A **stripe** is a narrow white marking down the face. It may be a continuation of a star, and can be further described as narrow, irregular, etc.
- A **blaze** is a broad white marking extending from between the eyes and down the face over the nasal bones.
- A **white face** is an exaggerated blaze. It covers the whole of the forehead and front of the face to the mouth.
- A **snip** is a white mark between the nostrils. If extending to a right or left nostril it should be so described.
- A **white upper lip** and **underlip** describes skin at the edges of the lips.
- A **white muzzle** describes where white skin is found on both lips and up to the nostrils.
- A **wall eye** is one which shows a lack of colouring matter. It has greyish-white or blue appearance. The sight is not affected.



Star.



Star and stripe.



Snip.

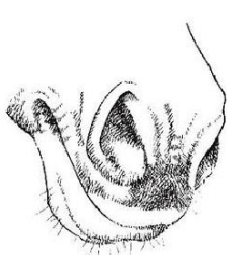
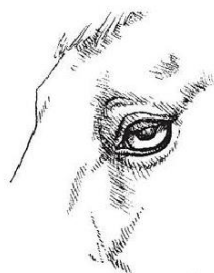


Blaze, extending to both nostrils.

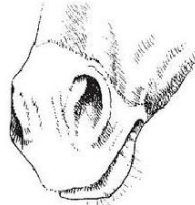


White face.

A white wall eye.



White upper and lower lips.



White muzzle.

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The Body

- **List, dorsal stripe** and **ray** describe the dark lines along the back of dun horses. They are also found on donkeys.
- **Zebra marks** describe any stripes on the body. They occur more frequently on donkeys.
- **Salmon marks** are fine lines of white hair found on the loins and quarters.
- The **prophet's thumb mark** is a pronounced dimple sometimes found on the neck of Thoroughbred or Arab horses. It can also appear in the shoulder or hindquarters. It is said to be a sign of good luck.
- **Flesh marks** are patches of skin devoid of colouring and care should be taken to use this term instead of white wherever appropriate.

The Legs

- White markings on the legs are defined by reference to the anatomy. The traditional terms '**sock**' or '**stocking**' are now used only for casual description. Nowadays the terms 'right' and 'left' are used instead of 'off' and 'near'. For example, typical descriptions are: right pastern; left heel; right leg to above knee.
- The term '**ermine**' is used where black spots occur on white markings, usually around the coronet.

Brands

Brand marks can be either freeze brands or fire brands. Freeze brands are produced by applying extreme cold to the skin, which kills the colour-producing cells in the skin and hair. After the brand has scabbed off the new hair that grows will be white, which makes the brand easy to read. Fire brands is a similar process to freeze branding but a very hot brand is used rather than a super cold one. The area that has been branded also scabs up but instead of the hair growing back the skin is scarred and very little (if any) hair will grow over the brand. This type of brand can be much harder to read than a freeze brand.

Brand site	Near side shoulder	Off side shoulder
All States and ACT	Breeder's brand	Sequence (foal drop) number over year number
NT and QLD optional	Breeder's brand and sequence (foal drop) number over year number	

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Section 3 – Horse Handling

Vaulter must be able to show or describe the following points to a satisfactory standard as determined by the examiner.

- How should you approach a horse in a paddock/yard/stable?
- How do you move safely around a horse?
- How do you catch and release a horse?
- How do you safely lead a horse, including through gates?
- How do you adjust a headcollar, a bridle and a saddle for safe leading?
- How do you safely tie up a horse (using quick release knot and string)?
- Awareness of the safe handling procedures for assisting vet or farrier.

Approaching A Horse

Use of your voice to make sure the horse is aware that you are there and will not get surprised. Walk up to the horse's shoulder, do not come up from behind, as this may scare them. Pat them on the neck to let them know you are there and then put the halter on.

Moving Safely Around A Horse

Correct handling of a horse is vital. Never presume that because a horse has always behaved in a certain way he will continue to do so. Horses are very sensitive to changes in our behaviour. The use of the voice is always a good first method of establishing control and reassurance. Horses understand simple words of command such as 'Stand', 'Move over', 'No' and 'Good boy' and can develop quite a large vocabulary with time if the words are used consistently. When dealing with the legs and feet, never kneel or sit, always crouch. If they are frightened or worried, some horses will use their legs as defence and they may:

- Strike out with the front feet – so when holding a horse always stand to the side and never in front.
- Deliver a cow kick with a hind foot.
- Kick out to the back with one or both feet.

To minimise the danger of being kicked, never stand behind the horse. When attending to legs or feet, always stand close to the horse. Doing so minimises the impact of any kicks.

Catch And Release Of A Horse

When catching a horse it is important that you do not chase him as this will only encourage him to run away. If he has a tendency to walk away when you try to approach then having some sort of food treat is a good way to encourage him towards you and teach him to be caught. Approach his shoulder, talking to him to let him know you're there. Pat his neck and quietly slip the halter over his head.

When releasing a horse it is a good idea to turn him around to face the way he has come. This stops him from learning to take off into the paddock and potentially knock you over. Get him to stand quietly and gently slip the halter off. Give him a pat and let him know that he is now free to go.

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Safely Leading A Horse

A horse is normally led from the near side. He should, however, be taught to lead equally from both sides.

Hold the end of the rope in the left hand, but never wrap the rope around the hand. Put the right hand on the rope, about 30cm, from the horse's head. With a fresh horse, put the hand over the top of the rope to help restrain him. With a lazy horse, put the hand under the rope to help push him forward. Never attempt to go ahead of the horse and try to pull him along, as his reaction will be to pull back. The person leading should always be by the horse's shoulder, never in front; the handler should look ahead, not at the horse.

When leading a horse through gates or doorways it is important to ensure that: the horse is securely held and steadied as he reaches the doorway and goes through, the horse walks on a straight track through the doorway and does not approach it at an angle, the handler checks that the door will not swing shut and hit the horse as he goes through, the horse is not allowed to go into the stable on his own with the reins thrown over his neck (this will tend to make him hurry).

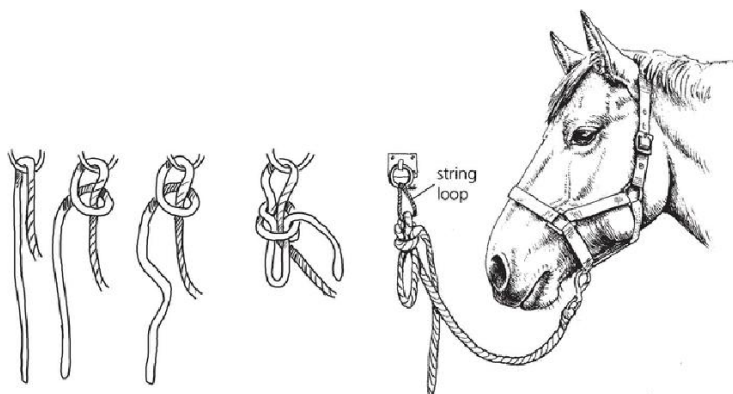
Adjusting Equipment

If leading in a bridle then reins should be brought over the head and held in the right hand with the end of the reins in the left, similar to a lead rope, with the reins separated by the first finger. If holding a whip then it should be held in the left hand pointing to the rear. If the horse is lazy, the left hand should be moved back behind the body and the horse tapped on the lower rib cage, just to the rear of where a rider's leg would rest.

If leading in a saddle ensure the stirrups are run up and secured. The girth should be done up but not too tightly.

Safely Tying Up

When being tied up the horse should be wearing a halter with the rope attached to the back. It should be tied to a string loop on a tie ring with a quick release knot (see below). The purpose of the string loop is that it will break if the horse pulls back violently, it is important therefore to use string that will break under stress.



Tying a quick-release knot.
This knot will not tighten if
the horse pulls back.

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Safe Handling Procedures

When holding your horse for the vet, farrier or someone else make sure you stand next to the horse's head and on the same side as the other person. Try to keep your horse standing as quietly as possible and reassure him through quiet words and pats if he is getting nervous.

Section 4 – Horse Behaviour

Vaulter must be able to show or describe the following points to a satisfactory standard as determined by the examiner.

- How do you recognise herd behaviour & pecking order within equine herds?
- What are the common aspects of body language and facial expressions in horses?
- What are the signs that indicate when a horse must be handled with extra caution?
- What measures would you take when introducing new horses to a group of horses?

Herd Behaviour

Horses are herd animals. In the wild they live in family groups and roam over a wide area grazing for up to eighteen hours a day. They are flight animals, running away from perceived danger but when cornered will bite, kick, strike out and buck or rear in an attempt to rid themselves of danger.

When kept in a group, they quickly establish a 'pecking order'. When a new animal is introduced into the group this order may change. It may also change if an animal is removed. This may result in the group biting and squealing and attempting to kick each other. Unless stallions are involved, if the animals are unshod behind, they seldom inflict much damage on each other.

The herd instinct is exhibited in the following ways:

- Young horses often show unwillingness to leave others or reluctance to work alone.
- Horses left on their own when others are taken away will often gallop about, and may even jump over a fence or gate.
- A group of horses or ponies in a field will usually have a herd leader and a very distinctive pecking order. This is very obvious when hay is fed loose on the ground.

As the herd instinct is very strong it can be used to help control and manage horses in such instances as:

- When horses are stabled they are always happier and more settled if other horses are within sight and hearing.
- When travelling, a young or nervous horse often settles if allowed a quiet older pony as a travelling companion.
- Horses at grass are happier when in company. Ponies who are difficult to catch will often give in if encouraged to follow others to the gate

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- A horse who gets loose when away from his stable or field feels insecure and worried and tends to return to familiar surroundings. He usually goes back to either the stable or outside the field gate.

Body Language

Horses use various body parts to communicate how they are feeling and what they are likely to do. Subtle changes in your horse's posture, expression and movements can provide important clues to what he is thinking.

Ear position – Ears held flat tightly against the head is an aggressive position and may indicate discomfort or anger. Humans beware as hostile behaviour may soon follow. If the ears are loosely held back against the head or turned out to the side, the horse may be sleepy, bored or listening to something behind him.

Ears that are flicking back and forth are a sign that the horse is in a heightened state of anxiety or alertness. He may be trying to locate the source of a frightening sound or smell, or he may be overwhelmed with too many stimuli.

A horse's ear position is a vital communication signal. The ears are often pointed in the direction of a horse's gaze, signalling another horse or predator. They can also be utilised to direct other animals towards a food source.

Eye communication – Tension around the eye can be an easy sign to miss but if seen early then it can allow you to respond and stop the potential for a bigger problem. You may see this as a wrinkled upper eyelid of tightness at the corner of the eye.

When your horse's eyes are flicking from side to side, he's probably scared and looking for a way to escape.

The whites of a horse's eyes need to be interpreted correctly. In some horses the white of the eye is always visible, it's just the way he is built. In others it can mean they are afraid or angry. If the ears are pinned back as well then he is probably angry, if he is trembling or snorting then he is probably scared.

Half-closed eyes often indicate a relaxed horse.

Horses have strong eyesight. Due to the position of the eyes on the head, the horse's binocular vision is narrow. A horse may utilise its' monocular vision to focus one eye on a groomer and the other eye on a horse standing nearby.

Yellowing of the eyes may indicate liver insufficiency. Dulling of the eyes, excessive tearing of the eyes, swelling, or papillary reflex may signal an illness. In comparison, a normal eye will be bright and clear with no signs of discharge.

Facial expressions – Ears held tightly back with a pronounced chin in combination with the tightening of the eyes, mouth, and nostrils most likely signifies pain. The horse's profile will appear flattened.

Bared teeth can be a sign of affection if no other anger indications are apparent.

A horse that smells something they are unsure of will raise their head, curl their upper lip, breath in and blow air back out. This is called flehmen and allows a horse to push scent particles through a structure in the nose called the vomeronasal organ. A stallion may do

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this when it is priming for reproductive behaviour or a mares will display the same behaviour during the first few hours after birthing a foal.

Drooping lip or slack mouth – A horse standing quietly with his lower lip drooping may be relaxing or even asleep. Once he is alert, if the slackness in the mouth persists he may have an injury or a neurological problem.

Chewing – A horse that is chewing when he is not eating is an indicator that he's relaxed and thinking. This is a good sign.

Clacking teeth – A foal will sometimes raise his neck, push his head forward, curl his lips and click his teeth together. It can look comical to us but it is an important behaviour and is how foals tell other horses, "Hey! I'm a baby! Please don't hurt me!" You'll see this most often in foals and weanlings and occasionally among more submissive yearlings. This will usually stop by the time they are 2-3 years old.

Flared nostrils – A horse will stretch his nostrils wide to draw in more air as he exercises, and the flare may continue for a short time afterward. At other times, a horse's nostrils may flare and even quiver when he is startled or nervous.

Tight, pinched or pursed mouth or muzzle – This is a subtle sign and can be easy to miss. Tension around the mouth tells you your horse is worried, stressed or scared.

Gaping mouth with visible teeth – This gesture can signal different things, depending on the context. If the horse also pins his ears and you can see white around his eyes, he's angry and probably seconds away from biting you or another horse. If a horse's mouth gapes whilst being ridden, he may be in pain. Lastly, if your horse stops eating and stands with his neck stretched out and his mouth gaping, he may be experiencing choke, an obstruction in his oesophagus.

Head orientation – A raised neck and head signifies alertness and anxiety. He is focused on something in the distance and is probably trying to figure out whether to flee, investigate or ignore. If a horse raises their head when being ridden he could be in pain, especially when this is combined with hollowing his back, pinning his ears or swishing his tail.

A lowered head and neck is a sign your horse is relaxed and feeling good. He could be resting or asleep. However, a lowered head could also denote a possible illness. The horse may be tired or weak.

The head orientation in combination with the eye gaze may suggest the primary target of concern. The horse may point its head in a vertical position and hold its nose low when focusing on an object nearby.

Lowering the head slightly and waving the neck from side to side, termed 'snaking', is an aggressive act and is often used by stallions who are fighting or herding an uncooperative mare. If a horse does this to you then beware.

Pawing hooves – Pawing is when a horse lifts a front hoof and pushes the hoof into the ground repeatedly, digging a trench. Pawing may be indicative of stress, fear, or a bored horse. Horses often paw the ground in anticipation of feeding time or out of curiosity.

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Pawing in combination with other signals such as rolling may be a sign of colic or other illness.

Standing splayed – A horse spreads his front legs out to the sides and leans back a little when he is scared. He may be seconds away from a spook or a bolt. Injuries or health issues, such as weakness from malnutrition or neurological impairment, can also cause a horse to stand with his forelegs splayed.

Stomping – Unlike pawing, stomping is raising and lowering a foot forcefully in place. Horses stomp to indicate irritation. Usually, it's something minor, such as a fly they're trying to dislodge. However, stomping may also indicate your horse is frustrated with something you are doing.

Striking – A strike is a forceful, forward kick with a front leg that can be either aggressive or defensive. This is a dangerous action. If you're lucky you'll walk away with only a bruise, but a strike can break bone. If the horse rears and strikes your head, he can kill you easily. Fortunately, horses rarely strike without warning, such as stomping, pawing, wide eyes, an elevated head or pinned ears.

Cocked hind leg – When a horse cocks his leg, he rests the leading edge of the hoof on the ground and drops his hip. When combined with a lowered head or ears hanging to the side, this is the sign of a horse who is relaxed and resting. You may seem him occasionally shift his weight, uncocking that back leg and cocking the other one. If your horse shifts his weight rapidly from one foot to the other, he's probably in pain and cannot get comfortable. A horse may also cock or raise a hind hoof when he is irritated or defensive and considering kicking. In that case, he may also elevate his head and turn his ears back, and he may be looking back over his shoulder to keep an eye on the perceived threat. Steer clear of his back end if he is doing this and move him away from whatever is bothering him.

Tail position – A tail may be utilised to swish pesky flies, however, it may also be a warning sign of irritation.

A tail carried above the level of the back is a sign of excitement.

A nervous or stressed horse may have a flattened tail and he may also tuck in his hindquarters. If this happens during riding then your horse may be in pain.

A rapidly swishing tail is an indication of hunger or possible aggression.

Whole body behaviour – When your horse's muscles are rigid and his movements are stiff, he's either hurting, nervous or stressed.

Shaking and trembling is almost always a sign of fear. Extremely nervous horses may tremble when exposed to something new, but most often it is seen in horses who have been abused in the past and are very frightened of being handled.

If your horse reaches out to touch you with his muzzle, he could be trying to nip or bite you. Or it may be that he's curious and checking you out. Another possibility is that he's nervous and needs reassurance. You need to know your horse to distinguish the difference.

When your horse swings his rump from side to side, it can mean one of two things. Usually, he's warning that he's about to kick. However, a mare in heat will also swing her rump from side to side, trying to get the attention of any stallions that might be around.

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Introducing New Horses

It is important to be careful when introducing a new horse to a new group of horses. Herds are often aggressive when it comes to new members and do not take intruders lightly. The new horse can easily become injured if proper care is not taken when first introducing them.

When you bring a new horse onto a property it is important not to put it together with other horses straight away. Not only is it stressful on the new horse it is also stressful on the horses currently there. It is a good idea to put the new horse in a separate yard where the new horses can still see it but there is no way of them accessing each other. This allows the horses to have an initial meeting with no danger to either party.

Once the horses have gotten over the initial workup of having a new horse on the property, for some horses this may take days, for others it may take weeks or even months, then it is a good idea to move the new horse closer to the herd. This may include putting them in the neighbouring paddock so the herd and the new horse can start to get to know each other with the safety of a fence between them. This fence allows either the herd or the new horse to be able to move away and have some quiet time if they want to. It is very important that your fencing is safe and in excellent condition so that if the horses are going to kick or strike at each other through the fence they are as safe as possible and not going to injure themselves. It can also be a good idea to have the fence electrified to discourage them from getting too close.

When the horses have all relaxed being in neighbouring paddocks then it is time for the big step. Putting the new horse in with the existing horses! There are 2 ways to do this. One way is to separate the leader of the herd and move only them into the paddock with the new horse. This is for several reasons; firstly it allows the new horse to stay in an environment they are used to and will help them keep settled. Secondly by having only the leader of the herd it will allow him to investigate the new horse without the pressure of needing to protect his herd. This will mean he will be less aggressive to the new horse. Once the leader and the new horse are accepting of each other and getting along well you can start slowly moving the rest of the herd in with the new horse and the leader. Hopefully since the leader has now accepted the new horse, the rest of the herd will as well and it will just be a matter of the new horse figuring out where his place in the herd is.

The second way is to introduce a low or middle member of the herd first and then slowly add the rest of the horses with the herd leader last.

However, every herd is different and it is important to always remain cautious when introducing new horses to minimise the risk.

Quite often people will keep geldings in a separate paddock as the mares to reduce herd disputes. Stallions are always kept separate unless being used for breeding.

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Section 5 – Bedding

Vaulter must be able to show or describe the following points to a satisfactory standard as determined by the examiner.

- What are the purposes of stable bedding?
- What are the advantages/disadvantages of the following bedding types:
 - Straw
 - Wood Shaving
 - Shredded Paper
 - Sand
 - Rubber Matting
 - Rice Hulls
- How should horse bedding be maintained?

Purposes

Bedding is the material that is put on the floor of a loosebox or stable to:

- Encourage the horse to lie down and rest.
- Enable him to do so in comfort, without risk of injury.
- Keep him warm and minimise draughts.
- Encourage him to urinate.
- Reduce jar to his legs from standing and moving around on a hard surface.
- Prevent him slipping up when moving about the stable.
- Minimise ammonia fumes.

Bedding is also sometimes used in a float or truck when a horse is travelling, to cover the floor and give a softer and less slippery surface.

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Advantages/Disadvantages

Bedding	Advantages	Disadvantages
Straw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Allows drainage ➤ Variety of types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ May only be available at certain times of the year ➤ Horses may eat it
Wood Shaving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Very absorbent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can block drains ➤ May only be available at certain times of the year ➤ Can be dusty
Shredded Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Very absorbent ➤ Dust free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can block drains ➤ Can blow about if not stored carefully
Sand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Readily available ➤ Durable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Risk of colic from picking up sand whilst feeding ➤ Wet, soiled sand is difficult to get rid of ➤ Not really a good stable bedding but can be useful in large yards mixed with earth or shavings
Rubber Matting (used with some other bedding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Less shavings are required ➤ Saves mucking out time and expense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Expensive to install
Rice Hulls	<p>In areas where readily available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cheap ➤ Deodorant ➤ Readily decompose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Delivered in bulk so room needed ➤ Poor quality can be dusty ➤ Can irritate sensitive skin

Maintenance

Mucking out is the process of removing contaminated bedding from the stable and should be done every day. The method of mucking out needs to be quick, efficient and create as little dust and smell as possible. Some horses are really messy and others quite tidy. Knowing their individual habits helps to make the process easier. The more regularly skipping out (removal of poo) is done during the day, the less bedding will be contaminated and the easier mucking out will be.

It is easiest and better for the horse if he can be removed from the stable while mucking out is done. If he remains, he should be tied up.

All relevant tools should be collected and the wheelbarrow placed so the handles are not in the way of the horse or worker. There are two main methods: complete, usually used for straw and drainage bedding; and partial deep litter, often used with dense absorbent bedding.

Level 5 Horsemanship

Complete Muck Out:

1. Remove all obvious droppings, as if skipping out.
2. Sort wet and dry bedding in one half of the bed.
3. Put wet bedding in wheelbarrow and dry under the horse if he is in the stable.
4. Sweep floor and return dry, used bedding to clean area.
5. If possible move horse across.
6. Repeat steps 2 to 4 on second half of the box.

If fresh bedding is being introduced at the same time, build it into the sides of the bed during the day and put it down when the bed is set fair for the night. Most people like to keep some bedding on the floor during the day. Horses left to stand all day on hard floors are more likely to slip, less likely to urinate and often the stable becomes very smelly. Older horses often like to lie down and rest their legs, as do animals which have been out all night. If the bedding is pushed well back from the door during the day it will not be trodden out when the horse is moved.

Partial Deep Litter

This is often used for absorbent bedding such as paper, shavings, etc. Use a shavings for to sturdy rubber gloves.

1. Remove the droppings and the wettest patches and pack any holes with drier bedding from the walls.
2. Make sure the bed is level and of equal firmness throughout.
3. Build fresh bedding into the walls.
4. Sweep the entrance on a daily basis but properly dig through the whole bed once a week to rebuild it.

Whichever method is used, keep the wheelbarrow handles well out of the way of the horses and passers by. Do not overload the wheelbarrow, and stack it correctly so that the weight falls on the wheel and not the handles. Pack it down so that the bedding is not blown over the yard, thus making more work. If windy, cover with a sack.

Tools should never be left in the stable with a horse. Use the muck fork away from the animals legs, not towards them. Remove water buckets before work begins and clean and refresh them when work is complete. Remove bird droppings and dust from the stables on a regular basis.

When setting fair for the night, bring bedding nearer the door to prevent draughts and maintain walls to a minimum height to help prevent the horse from getting cast.

To test if the bedding is of sufficient depth, turn the fork over so that the tines face downwards and pat the bed. The tines should not hit the floor. Less bedding is needed if rubber matting is underneath.

In many yards it is still the practice to wash out the stables on a weekly basis. The floors should be allowed to dry completely before the bed is put back.

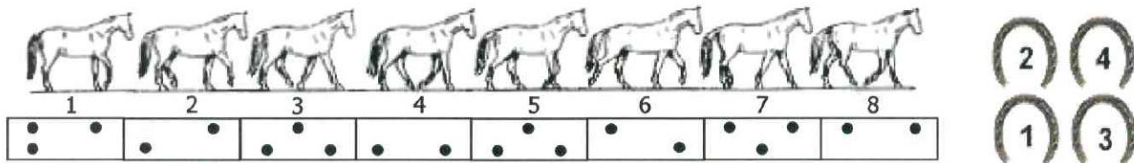
Level 5 Horsemanship

Section 6 – Footfalls

Vaulter must be able to fill in the appropriate diagram of a horse’s footfalls during walk, trot, right lead canter and left lead canter.

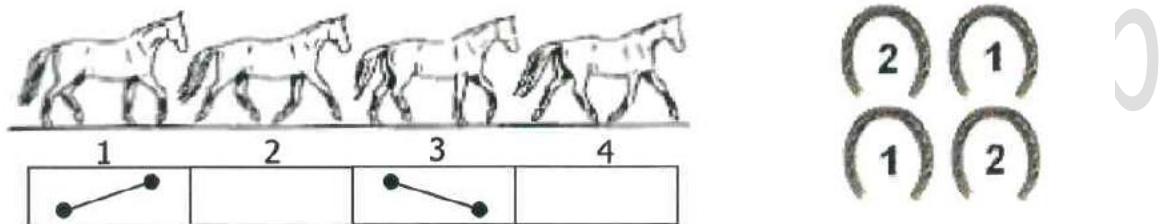
Walk

The walk has 4 beats to a stride, ‘four-time’. The steps should be even and regular so that the rider can count, ‘one-two-three-four, one-two-three-four’. The walk should look calm, active, regular and purposeful.



Trot

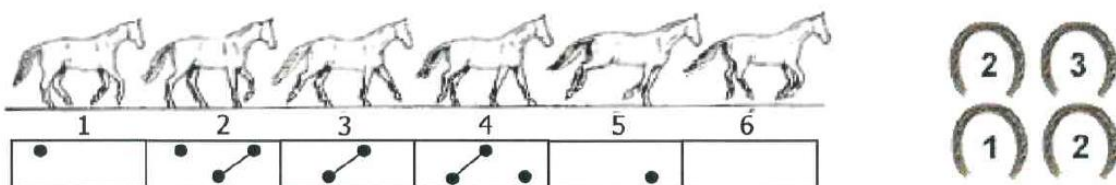
The trot is a diagonal ‘two-time’ pace with a period of suspension. There are two beats to a stride, which should be regular and even. The rider can count ‘one-two, one-two, one-two’. The trot should look and feel calm and rhythmic, but active.



Canter

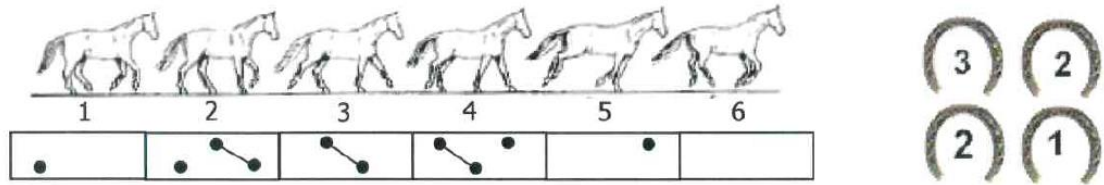
The canter is a three-time pace with three beats to the stride and a moment of suspension after the leading foreleg. The rider can count, ‘one-two three, one-two three, one-two three’, with a moment of suspension between strides. In canter the horse should look and feel light on his feet, balanced and rhythmic. The working canter is the pace between collected and medium canter.

Right Canter Lead



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Left Canter Lead



Level 5 Horsemanship

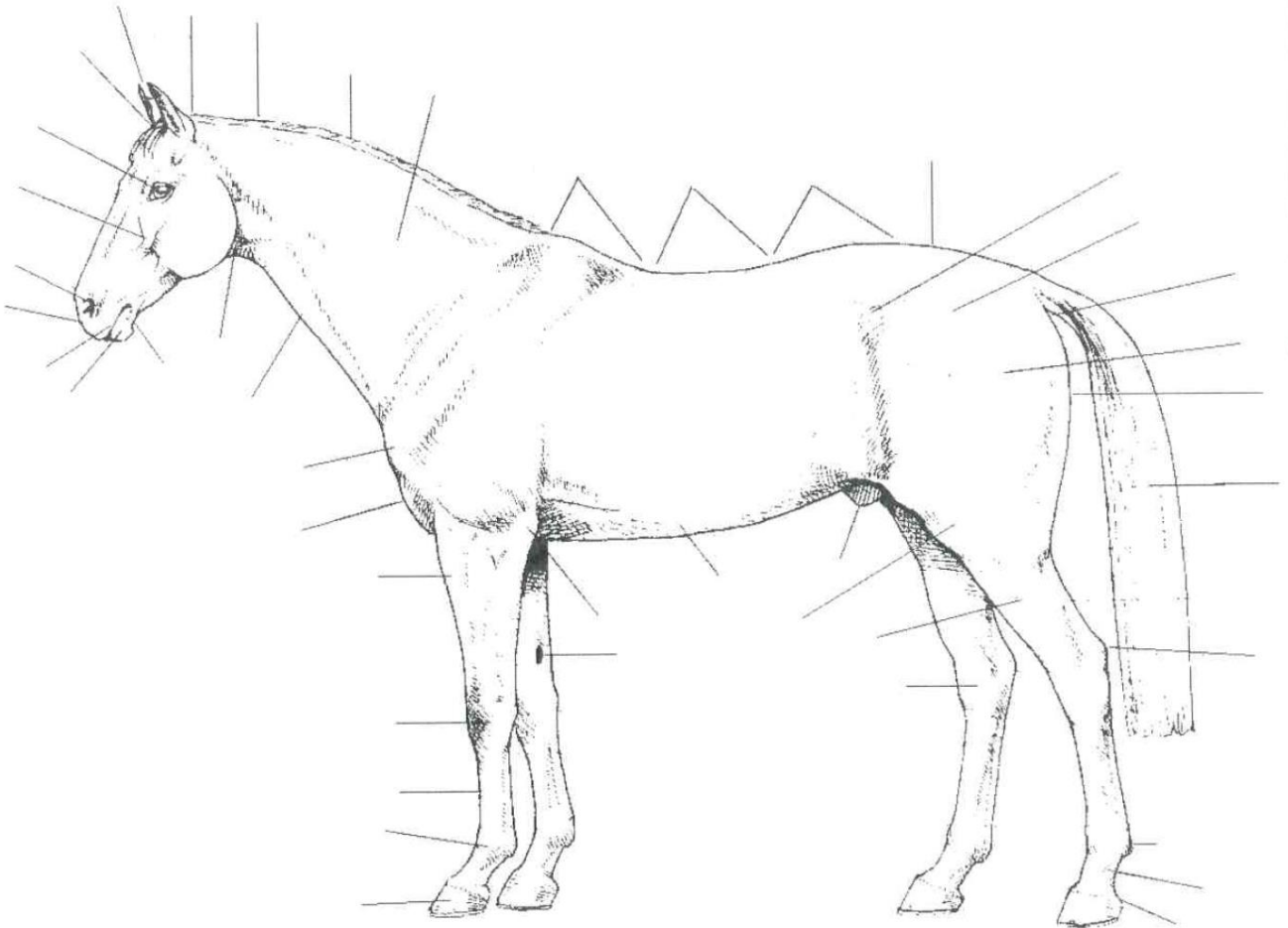
Level 5 Horsemanship

Level 5 Horsemanship Assessment Forms Name:

Section 1 – Identify the Points of the Horse

P/F []

Must correctly identify 35/43 to pass



Section 2 – Horse Identification

P/F

- How do you identify colours? []
- How do you identify gender? []
- What are the height including the Australian categories of:
 - Pony/Galloway/Hack (show horse) []
 - Pony/Horse (other disciplines) []
- What are the names of various body, face and leg markings (including where to find brands and freeze brands)? []
- What are the brand conventions for your horse or for a common breed such as thoroughbreds? []

Level 5 Horsemanship

Section 3 – Horse Handling

P/F

- How should you approach a horse in a paddock/yard/stable? []
- How do you move safely around a horse? []
- How do you catch and release a horse? []
- How do you safely lead a horse, including through gates? []
- How do you adjust a headcollar, a bridle and a saddle for safe leading? []
- How do you safely tie up a horse (using quick release knot and string)? []
- Awareness of the safe handling procedures for assisting vet or farrier. []

Section 4 – Horse Behaviour

P/F

- How do you recognise herd behaviour & pecking order within equine herds? []
- What are the common aspects of body language and facial expressions in horses? []
- What are the signs that indicate when a horse must be handles with extra caution? []
- What measures would you take when introducing new horses to a group of horses? []
- What are the different behaviours of stallions and mares and strategies to reduce risk? []

Section 5 – Bedding

P/F

- What are the purposes of stable bedding? []
- What are the advantages/disadvantages of the following bedding types:
 - Straw []
 - Wood Shaving []
 - Shredded Paper []
 - Sand []
 - Rubber Matting []
 - Rice Hulls []
- How should horse bedding be maintained? []

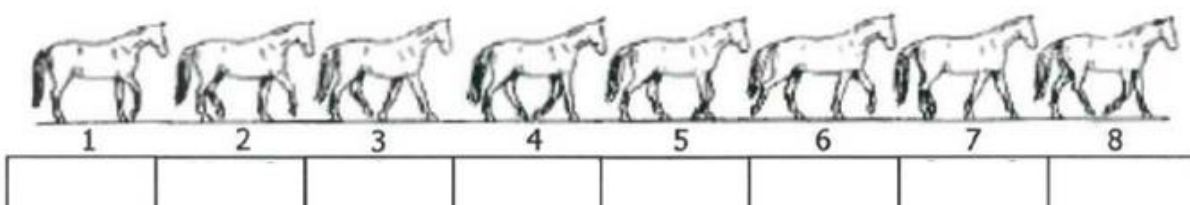
Section 6 – Footfalls

P/F

Fill in the blanks

Walk

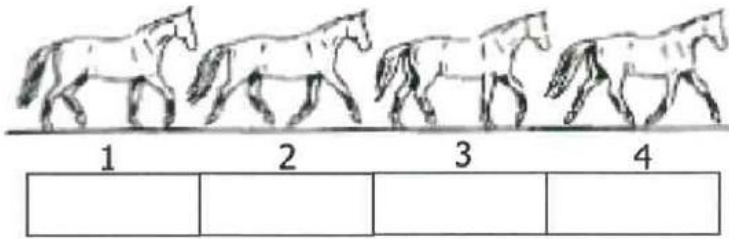
[]



Level 5 Horsemanship

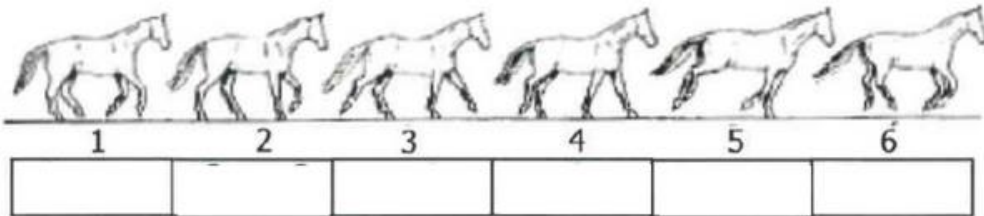
Trot

[]



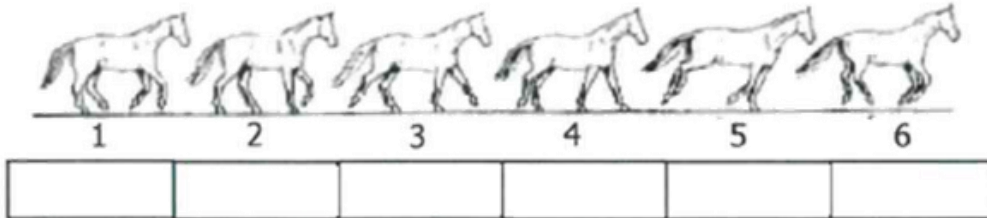
Canter Right Lead

[]



Canter Left Lead

[]



Must pass 25/31 to complete the booklet

___/31

pass/fail

Signed Off

Name:

Date:/...../.....