



# Equine Care Guide

*Information on providing needed care for horses, mules, and donkeys*



## ★ Shelter

Horses need adequate shelter, including:

- Protection from rain, snow, and high winds
- Shade in summer
- Natural light
- Bedding (straw, sawdust or wood shavings)

**Indoor box stalls** should be at least 10' x 10' with room for the horse to turn around and lie down. Clean (or “muck”) the stalls regularly by removing manure and adding more bedding as necessary.

**Outdoor, open-air stalls or stables** should have a minimum of three solid sides for protection from rain, snow and wind. If this is not possible, the horse should have a waterproof horse blanket in cold months. Blankets should be checked daily for proper fitting.

## ★ Feed

- Horses need a diet of hay or a mixture of hay and grains (oats, sweet feed, or other grains). Do not feed only grains unless recommended by a veterinarian.
- A well-fed horse will finish all of their hay/grain and not look around for more afterward.
- Horses require daily feeding by placing hay or grain in a hay rack or bucket. Do not throw feed on the ground, where it can attract dust, mold and parasites that harm the horse.
- Keep fresh, clean water and salt blocks accessible to the horse at all times.

### ★ How much to feed?

Measure feed accurately and feed your equine consistently. Recommended feed amounts are 15-20 lbs of roughage a day. The percentages shown below are the portions of an average 55-60 lb 2-strand bale of hay.

**Small (including ponies, miniature horses, miniature donkeys):** feed at least 2x per day: 1/8 am and 1/8 pm = 1/4 of a bale/day

**Medium (including standard horses, donkeys, mules):** feed at least 2x per day: 1/4 am and 1/4 pm = 1/2 of a bale/day

**Large (including Clydesdales and Draft horses):** feed at least 2x per day 1/2 am and 1/2 pm = 1 bale/day

*Note: Stallions and lactating mares need additional feed (consult a veterinarian).*

# ★ Veterinary Care and Grooming

<b>1.</b> <b>Vaccinations</b>	To maintain good health, horses need annual vaccinations (shots) for Rabies, Tetanus, West Nile Virus, Encephalitis. Under state law, Rabies vaccinations must be administered only by a licensed veterinarian. Other vaccinations can be administered by a veterinarian or can be bought at veterinary supply stores.
<b>2.</b> <b>Deworming</b>	Give deworming drugs (paste given into the horse's mouth) at least twice per year (spring and fall), though every three months is better. Deworming drugs can be administered by a licensed veterinarian or can be bought at equine or farm supply stores.
<b>3.</b> <b>Teeth</b>	A horse's teeth should be checked annually by a veterinarian or equine dentist. The teeth may need to be "floated" (filed down) every year.
<b>4.</b> <b>Gelding</b>	Gelding (the castration of male horses) is necessary in all cases unless the foal is specifically raised as a stud by a regulated horse breeder. Uncastrated stallions are often aggressive, cause property damage, and can injure themselves. Contact a licensed veterinarian to perform a gelding procedure. The operation should be performed in spring, fall, or winter to minimize risk of infection.
<b>5.</b> <b>Coggins Test</b>	A Coggins Test for blood disease is inexpensive and should be performed by a licensed veterinarian every year.
<b>6.</b> <b>Hoof Care</b>	Horses require regular cleaning of their hooves with a hoof pick, especially in winter months to prevent buildup of ice and snow. Contact a professional farrier to check and trim hooves every six to eight weeks.



# ★ Disaster Planning

## Pre-Planning Can Save Lives

- Identify and plan with friends or neighbors who can respond in emergencies (release horses from stalls, call veterinarians, temporarily house horses, etc.)
- Make a list of instructions to emergency workers in a waterproof envelope and post in multiple locations such as barn walls, exterior house walls, etc.
- Create a list of necessary items to bring with the horse in an emergency (water, feed, buckets, halters, lead ropes, medication, etc.)
- Anticipate and be prepared for food or water shortages from power outages, road outages, etc.

## Some Necessary Paperwork

Keep copies of the following paperwork in a waterproof envelope:

- Bill of sale
- Most recent vaccinations record
- Most recent Coggins test
- Other veterinary records
- Hauling permit
- Photographic proof of ownership

## For More Information

If you have any questions about horse care or need help providing for your horse, contact us.

We may be able to help. Call us at 505-803-3770 or email [epf@apnm.org](mailto:epf@apnm.org)



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