

Montana Ag Safety Program



Horse Handling Safety

- **Work calmy but deliberately. Nervous handlers create nervous horses and unsafe situations.**
- Make sure horse and rider are suitable for each other.
- Remember, horses are fight or flight animals.
- When catching a horse with a halter: approach the horse from its shoulder, slip the lead rope over the neck, and halter appropriately. Ensure the halter is adjusted correctly! Be sure you have your horse's attention before approaching or attempting to halter.
- Keep your horse close while leading.
- NEVER coil a lead rope around your hand!
- Ask your horse to turn away from you, whenever possible.
- Tie only to solid fixtures, at an appropriate height, with a quick-release knot.
- Ensure all equipment is in good repair. Dry, cracked, brittle leather breaks easily.
- Take time to groom thoroughly.
- Use appropriate technique when saddling. Proper lifting is safer for you and your horse.
 - Tighten in the following order - front cinch, back cinch, breast collar ALWAYS (reverse order when unsaddling)
 - Never tighten your cinch with your back turned to the horse's head; stand perpendicular to the horse so you can protect yourself from a biting horse.
 - Check the tightness of your cinch frequently, particularly before mounting.
- Avoid bridling a tied horse.
- Wear appropriate PPE. Long pants, long sleeves, and sturdy boots with a heel are recommended.
- Use spurs only when necessary. Not all horses need spurs and not all riders can use them appropriately.
- Follow all established procedures for riding alone or in groups.
- Use appropriate technique for loading, hauling, and unloading.

These safety rules have been written and provided to you for your safety. Your signature below indicates you have read and understand these rules, and further, that you accept the responsibility of always using good judgment to make workplace safety your number one priority.

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