

Grooming Tips

Want to get that horse to really shine on show day? To lighten a white horse, apply either a whitening shampoo or a rubbing alcohol and allow it to dry. Then, apply a layer of baby powder and brush it in (this really makes a white coat glisten). If the horse is darker (chestnut or red) you can feed him paprika to heighten highlights and reduce whitening. Then, polish that beauty with a dryer sheet, baby wipe, or "Swiffer" cloth to make him sparkle. A lot of people like to use baby oil to make a horse appear shinier but it has a tendency to heat on the horse. Instead, try a specialized shine product (like one from Cowboy Magic) or even Vaseline.

If your horse has white sock, try rubbing talcum powder onto it. That has always got my horses socks looking very white

WD-40 also works well as a hoof dressing for the clay-type show rings. Spray on, wipe, ride, and for the next round, you just wipe off and lightly reapply. Doesn't pick up the clay/dirt/etc that the hoof dressings do. -Lea Ann

Grooming:

- * use a baby wipe as a stable rubber after grooming to bring out a natural shine and keep away dust.
- * braid long leg feathers to keep them clean, useful before shows
- * apply sudocreme cream to healed but hairless wounds to encourage quick hair growth
- * make bunches with your horses mane to keep it on one side but so it still looks natural and can still be used to swat flies.
- * rub baby oil through mane and tail before shows or during grooming to detangle and provide a sparkling shine
- * use super-groom or other waterless bathing solutions to clean stable marks and poo stains quickly and easily

Use "grab-it" wipes on your horse to get the dust off right before you enter the show ring. Jenn

Mane & Tail Detangler
Calgon Bath Oil Beads (dry)
Water

Mix the Calgon with water (one part Calgon to three parts water). Store in a spray bottle. It will help recondition your horse's mane and tail. It also works well on knots. Apply liberally and work the knot out with a comb or stiff brush.

Equal parts vinegar and water will take out manure stains. It is VERY important for white & gray horses.

Baby powder is good for white legs before entering the show ring.

The first time you use hoof black, put Vaseline on the threads of the bottle and lid. Then it won't stick shut. Add more if needed. This way, you can easily use the last drop! I keep empty bottles and pour a small amount out of the new new bottle. Put the new bottle away, and use the old bottle with the smaller amount. If it gets knocked over, you still have a reserve to use. This hint is very valuable if you have kids using it. -Mary

For knots and tangles that just won't come out, mix a small amount of water and White Rain Herbs And Blossoms Passion Flower conditioner. It works great! J. Ward

Homemade Show Sheen Recipe
1/4 (one quarter) cup hair conditioner
1/4 (one quarter) cup baby oil
2 tablespoons vinegar (to keep flies away, this is optional)
1/4 (one quarter) cup water

I use Blue Dawn original formula, not ultra, to bathe my horse for shows. It works great, makes him shine, and is really cheap! -Ann

I've used WD40 to take out SERIOUS tangles (long time knots, burrs, etc.) but recently I discovered that Downy fabric softener works wonders, too, and it smells good! Just work slowly with your fingers and pull the hair apart and away from the burrs and knots. It's nice on your hands too! -Karen

To reduce breakage of your horse's braided tail, start braiding it at the top, using a French braid; then use a long cover such as support stockings (hose)

During the week keep a hair conditioner on your horse's tail to keep it from becoming dry and brittle

Make sure you clean your grooming kit at the same time you wash your horse that way you won't transfer dirt straight back onto your nice clean horse.

Doubled up pieces of baler twine are better than sweat-scrapers because you can use them in lots of awkward places, like down the legs.

If your horse has a tail which is very thin and wispy, plait the end of it, after it has been washed, and leave the plait in for a few hours. When you take it out, the tail should be slightly wavy, and appear a lot thicker.

Brushing a tail can easily break the hairs, so try to tease the tangles out with your fingers if you can.

If your horse's mane sticks up, or is on the wrong side, try dampening it down with some hair gel.

Use a chamois to rub down your horse after a bath.

Spray your horses mane and tail on upper and bottom part with hair spray. Then take your fingers and fluff it up to make it look fluffy, windblown {which is very cute} or make it look like it has body.

To keep horses socks clean, use cornstarch or bluing agent

When giving your horse a soap bath, rinsing with white vinegar will help to remove the soap. This also acts as a hair conditioner and fly repellent.

Bathing

Pre bath coat enhancer: use 1/2 Vinegar and 1/2 olive oil, sponge it on from head to toe and leave it for 3 days. Then bathe and admire the results!

Water can damage the hooves so apply petroleum jelly prior to bathing. Don't apply if you plan on doing some sanding.

Dilute shampoo in water--even if it says use full strength.

The new color enhancing shampoos work really well to bring out coat color.

If you plan on braiding the mane put it in big loose stable braids to keep it away from shampoo and conditioners. Do get the mane soaking wet and

apply a hair gel after you are finished bathing-- this will make your braiding job a whole lot easier and fly aways will not be such a problem.

Don't forget to clean well under the tail and between the legs.

Use "Wisk" Laundry detergent with bleach to clean stained white legs.

Give your horse's tail a hot oil treatment.

When you rinse your horse ad some Apple Cider Vinegar to the water. It will get rid of shampoo traces and it will also aid in repelling flies.

While your horse is still wet apply a "sheen" product -quite a bit--to his tail and body--avoiding the saddle area, girth area and the mane. Do his face with a washcloth. Another way is to put baby oil in the final rinse water.

While your horses hooves are still damp take steel wool and a light grit sandpaper and get the built up dirt off of them.

Don't bang a tail when it is wet. It will end up several inches shorter than you wanted.

Clipping

Clip your horse while he is still wet.

Make sure your blades are sharp, well oiled and disinfected.

Body clip at least 2 weeks in advance to get the best finished results.

Clip white legs 1 week prior.

Blades to use are a #10 or #15 on the body and a #30 or #40 on the muzzle, ears and bridle path.

Make sure your bridle path is the appropriate length for your breed and your discipline.

Always clip against the lay of the hair.

Do small areas at a time.

Let the clippers cool down when the metal blade plate gets too hot--this can burn a horses sensitive areas. Keep a spray blade coolant on hand.

To do the bridle path always clip toward the ears to avoid cutting off more mane than you wanted to.

When doing your horses ears place a piece of cotton inside to prevent little hairs from falling into their ear canal.

Remember horses have more sensitive hearing than we do so the cotton also helps deaden the sound of the clippers.

If your horse and you are getting agitated take a grazing walk together and chill out for 15 minutes.