

Volunteer Training – Rules of the Barn



While there are many things to be mindful of with and around horses, Ivey Ranch promotes the following rules as the first and foremost of everything you will learn. Again, these do not include EVERYTHING that is required to be safe, but this is a good first step in your journey of partnering with horses. **AND, IN CASE YOU'RE NOT SURE – PLEASE ASK!!**

- 1) **Wear sturdy shoes or boots** that will protect your feet if the horse steps on them. No sandals or thin shoes! Wear pants or jeans - no shorts or capris.
- 2) **Be calm and quiet** (no running or yelling). Sudden moves can cause a horse to shy (jump sideways) or kick out.
- 3) **Treats are only put in the horse's feed bucket – never hand feed.** Horses can very quickly become greedy and mistake fingers for carrots. *Treats at Ivey Ranch are limited to carrots only.*
- 4) **Do not pet horses on the face** – only their necks and shoulders. By touching their faces you are invading their personal space and encouraging them to bite in order to defend that space.
- 5) **Gates should be wide open when going through** so the horse doesn't bump either you or them self. The bump could startle the horse and result in you being trampled or dragged. Always close the gate behind you.
- 6) **Lead a horse with a halter and lead rope.** Do not hook your fingers through the halter straps, rings or the bit. Never loop lead ropes, lounge lines, or reins around your hands or any other body part. If the horse pulls away, you could be dragged.
- 7) **If a horse gets loose – stop, stand still and out of the way,** keep other horses quiet, calm, and, most preferably, contained. If it is your horse that got loose – ask for an instructor's help to either catch the horse or keep the other horses safe and quiet while you catch the horse.
- 8) **At the hitching post loop the horse's lead rope loosely** 2-3 times around the hitching post so that if the horse gets scared and pulls they can quickly be freed. The feeling of being constrained can make a scared horse panic to the point of hurting them self or you. Please do not leave a tied horse unattended.
- 9) **Never stand directly behind a horse.** When grooming the tail, stand to one side and pull the tail gently across to groom. The safest place to stand is beside the horse's shoulder where you can see each other, or about 10 or more feet away.
- 10) **Bend over when cleaning a horse's hooves** or putting on leg wraps, don't squat or kneel, that way if the horse moves you can quickly stand aside.
- 11) **Always use portable saddle racks** for saddle, pads, girths, etc. when tacking a horse. Place the portable saddle rack slightly to the side and behind the hitching post. Tack placed on the hitching post will easily get knocked off and startle the horse.