

PONY CLUB



Yard Safety Mini Achievement Badge Workbook



Guidelines To create awareness of the appropriate way to act in a yard with a number of ponies to ensure safety and welfare of both ponies and other people. This is an ideal pre-camp badge.

Key points Candidates should:

- Know what is safe and sensible to wear to work in a yard
- Be aware of how to work in a stable with a pony safely, including approaching and securing safely
- Understand the importance of remaining calm at all times, and not running or shouting when in the yard
- Know to not go into a stable with a pony unless they have permission from the owners
- Know what equipment found in a stable yard they can use and what is only appropriate for a responsible person to use
- Know to always ask a responsible person to help with anything they are unsure of

Extra reading **The Manual of Horsemanship**

This workbook is an introduction to the subject that it covers. As it is addressed primarily to young children, it is important that the instructor must be prepared to demonstrate the subject practically, and allow the member to practice the skills as frequently as required. It is highly recommended that the parent or the instructor read or explain the contents of the workbook to the child as it cannot be assumed that the child is able to read the information or instructions sufficiently well to achieve understanding.

Name

Branch

What should you wear around the yard?

When handling horses you should always wear:

- Closed shoes
- Gloves
- Riding hat

Why do you think you would wear each of the above?

Is this girl safe to be in a stable yard? Give reasons for your answer.



How to work safely in the yard with your pony

Approach the pony or horse calmly and with caution

- Never run at a horse
- Walk calmly and don't lunge towards him or make any sudden movements
- Do not come at them from behind, as you might spook them
- Approach from the front, and off to the side a bit

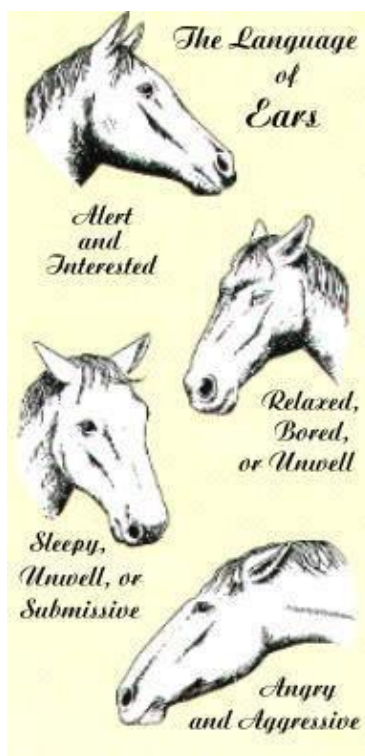
Let the pony know you are coming

Talking softly, clicking your tongue, or speaking the horse's name will let them know you are approaching. Don't make any strange or overly loud noises.

Notice your pony's **body language** – look for the signs their ears and tail are giving you.

You might see their **ears twitch** as they hear your voice, and they may turn to look at you when they hear you. This will let you know they are aware that you are there and you haven't startled them. If they put their ears back flat against their head, they are letting you know that they don't know you, or are not happy to see you.

They may be ill or hurt so approach with caution or call an adult to help you. The tail should be hanging loosely, perhaps swishing at flies, but if the swishing is fast and with gusto, they may be cross about something.

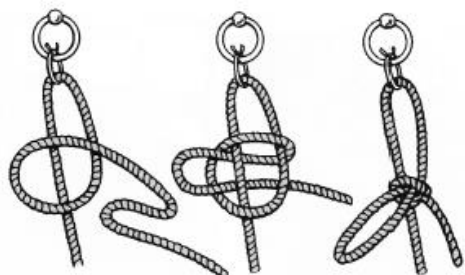


Stand at the horse's shoulder

If your pony has let you know you can approach, you can enter the stable, closing the bottom half of the door behind you. If you want to give an edible tidbit, stand beside them and face in the same direction as the pony (don't stand directly in front of them). Remember to keep your hand flat with your fingers together, and with the treat resting on your palm.

Secure your pony safely

- If you want to secure your pony, **always** tie your pony up using a quick release knot



Tying a quick-release knot.

- Never tie up directly to the post. Always attach to a piece of string
- Never tie your pony up to the hay net
- If you put your pony into a paddock always close the gate before you take off the head collar and lead rein
- Make sure you are facing your pony when you do this!

Remain calm all the time

- This means you must not scream and shout around a pony – not in excitement nor in fear
- Try not to rush around your pony. Instead move calmly and smoothly. If you are nervous around the pony, or nervous about the place you are in, move away from the pony and fetch an adult or a person who knows the pony to help you
- If you can see the pony is injured and/or bleeding, or behaving strangely (maybe rolling violently) then call somebody to help. If you and your friends want to play a chasing game amongst yourselves, then do this away from the ponies

Draw a big red cross **X** next to the pictures which show children not behaving properly in the yard. Draw a green tick **✓** next to the pictures that show good behavior.



Get permission to approach and feed ponies that are not yours

If you see some ponies grazing in a pasture on the side of the road, don't assume you can simply approach the fence and offer them food.

Some horses might be on a very specific diet, and offering them food outside of that diet could be harmful. Or, some ponies may tend to bite or behave in other unfriendly ways, and you don't want to approach any horse without being aware of these tendencies beforehand.

Don't approach ponies in your stable yard either, unless the owner has said you can. The owner might not want anybody else feeding their pony, and they will know if their pony bites, kicks or knocks people over so won't want you to get hurt by their horse. Ask first!

Horses may not intend to bite you, but if you offer them their favourite food, you might just get bitten by mistake if you don't offer it carefully!





What equipment found in a stable yard can I use?

- Grooming equipment
- Wheelbarrow
- Feed and water buckets
- Broom & rake
- Hose pipes

You may use the **grooming equipment** to clean your pony and make them comfortable. Grooming will also help you to get to know each other better, as they love being pampered. Ask an adult to show you how to handle the feet and legs, and clean out the hooves. Get help with this until you and your instructor are confident and happy that you can do it safely on your own.

The **wheelbarrow** is used to transport heavy stuff around the yard. This might include stable droppings or manure, new bedding for the stable, loads of grass for feeding to your horse in the stable, etc. Remember to clean the wheelbarrow after you have transported something dirty, so as not to make the grass or new bedding dirty. A wheelbarrow may be too heavy for you to push, so once it is full, ask an adult to move it for you. Don't leave it standing around where somebody may trip over it, after you have finished with it.

Your pony eats concentrates out of the **feed bucket**, and drinks water out of the bucket(s) in the stable. The feed bucket must be thoroughly cleaned after they have eaten, and before the next meal is dished up into the feed bowl. The food that a pony gets is carefully measured out, because if they get too much, or too little, they could become ill.

Find out what food your pony eats, and write it here:

Remember, don't feed any horse or pony a meal unless you know exactly what they must get. If they seem hungry, rather give hay or grass until the owner comes to feed. The feed room must always be kept closed so your pony can't get in and eat the food!

The **water bucket** must always be full of fresh, clean water. A full bucket is very heavy to carry, so ask an adult to carry it for you, or carry it together with a friend. You can then help them carry their pony's bucket. Ask your instructor to show you how to carry a bucket safely, so that you will not hurt yourself.

The **broom** and **rake** is used to keep the stable and yard clean and tidy. If you use the rake, you must be especially careful to put it away safely afterwards. Just throwing it on the ground or leaning it against a tree can be very dangerous to your pony. Should the rake fall with the prongs facing upwards, you or your pony could step on the prongs and hurt yourselves very badly.



Look carefully at this picture. Can you see how dangerous this would be if you or your pony stepped on it?

Draw a big red cross through the picture to remind yourself not to leave the rake on the ground or where it could fall over.

The **hosepipe** can be used to fill your ponies' water buckets, and can also be used to water legs after they have worked hard. Make sure your pony is used to having water sprayed on their legs, before you turn the water on. You might have

to start with a gentle spray over the hooves only, and then gradually work upwards over the legs. Remember to switch the water off when you are finished. Don't have a water fight with your friend while your pony is still around you!

Put the hosepipe back the way you found it.

If it was coiled up, arrange it in a neat coil again.



Always ask for help if you are unsure

A stable yard is where you and your pony and your friends can spend a wonderful day. But it is also a place where things can go wrong and be dangerous to you and your pony. Be safe, and if there is anything you are not sure about, ask an adult or your instructor for help. Each time you ask for help, you will learn something new, so be a keen learner!

Write your instructor's name, and telephone number, here. Then if you have any questions, you can contact them.

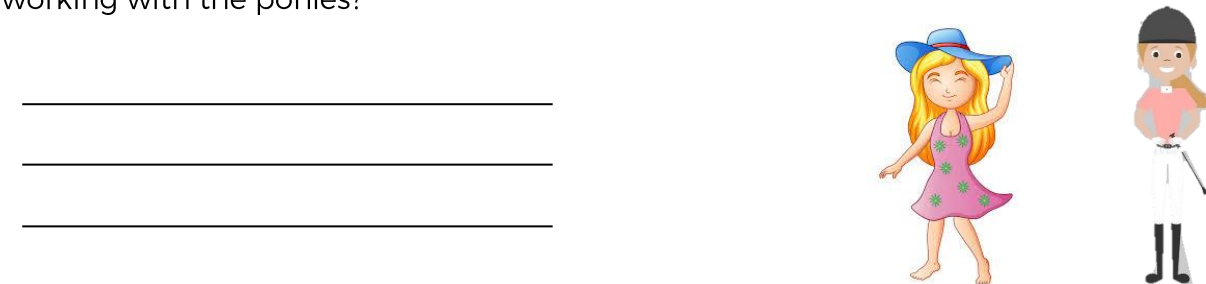
Yard Safety Checklist - which is right?

Walk around your yard, and visit some other yards in your area if you can. Give them a tick if you can see the right behavior or a cross if they are wrong.

- Do the people move around quietly and calmly? If not, what were they doing wrong?



- Are they properly dressed, with closed shoes, and riding hat and gloves when they are working with the ponies?



Do the ponies all look calm and settled and happy?



Is all the stable yard equipment put away safely when not in use?



Is there a list in the feed room of exactly what each pony gets to eat?

