



VOLUNTEER MANUAL & GUIDELINES



WELCOME!

We are thrilled that you've decided to volunteer with Topfield Equestrian Center

Thank you for volunteering with Topfield Equestrian Center. This manual outlines the policies and practices that guide our volunteers and employees. Policies and procedures may be modified as needed. You will be notified of any changes by email. Please keep your handbook updated and carefully review all emails from the Volunteer Coordinator, as they may contain important information. If you have any questions about this manual, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

TOPFIELD VOLUNTEER PHILOSOPHY

We couldn't do it without you! Our Volunteers are truly our greatest resource. The time, energy, talents, and skills you bring are essential to providing quality services and fulfilling our mission. You provide credibility, insight, perspective, and diversity, enriching our organization and connecting us to the community. Simply put, our pledge to the community is made possible by our volunteers.

TOPFIELD MISSION:

Partnering with horses to empower humans

TOPFIELD VISION:

Topfield Equestrian Center is dedicated to improving lives through equine activities. By fostering strong human-animal connections, we provide positive experiences that support well-being for both people and horses. We maintain the highest standards of professionalism in our mounted and unmounted programs, which are offered in the peaceful setting of the Hudson Valley.

TOPFIELD VALUES:

Teamwork, Encouragement, Compassion

WE PLEDGE:

SAFETY



RESPECT



COMPASSION



EXCELLENCE.

BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

"Volunteers are paid in six figures — S-M-I-L-E-S." - Gayla Lemaire

By volunteering at Topfield you're showing your community that we CAN. Here are some surprising benefits of volunteering according to Forbes:

1. Volunteering time makes you feel like you have more time.

Wharton Business School professor Cassie Mogilner wrote in the Harvard Business Review that her research found that those who volunteer their time feel like they have more of it.

2. Volunteering your skills helps you develop new skills.

Skills-based volunteering is an excellent opportunity to develop talents to help you get ahead in the world. In fact, an article in Stanford Social Innovation Review called skills-based volunteering "the next executive training ground."

3. Volunteering your body helps you have a healthier body.

Research demonstrates that volunteering leads to better health and that those who volunteer have longer life expectancy, greater functional ability, and lower rates of depression than those who do not volunteer.

4. Volunteering your experience helps build your experience.

This is consistently seen with highly skilled professionals. Volunteering in a new industry however, will give you knowledge to help you switch fields. Volunteering also helps you prove your commitment and land your next job.

5. Volunteering your love makes you feel more happiness.

Happiness is a hard thing to measure. But researchers at the London School of Economics examined the relationship between volunteering and measures of happiness and found the more people volunteer, the happier they were. Volunteering builds empathy, strengthens social bonds and makes you smile—all factors that increase the feeling of happiness.

Beyond all that, there are some simple facts about volunteering that we can all agree on. Things like finding meaning and purpose; because sharing your time or what you know, at any age, can be richly rewarding. Rewarding in other ways too. Like making new friends in the community, learning something new, and the knowledge that you're making a difference.



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear New and Returning Volunteers,

I am so happy and excited that you've decided to be part of the Topfield Team! We've all found our way to this community for different reasons and bring with us different life experiences, but we all have at least one thing in common: we want to support Topfield's mission to partner with horses to empower humans.

I have been riding and communing with horses for longer and more consistently than anything else in my life (starting at age 5!). I have also been actively volunteering in my communities since high school. I deeply appreciate the value and meaning that both animals and the act of volunteerism can bring to our lives. I feel so lucky that we get to do BOTH - by helping people with disabilities in our community connect with horses - here at TEC.



As a volunteer you are a critical part of the Topfield operation and we always want you to feel valued, appreciated, and clearly communicated with. Becoming trained as a Topfield Volunteer is just the first step on this journey into adaptive riding and we're here to help you with the rest!

If there is anything at all I can do to improve your experience at Topfield or to support your development as a volunteer, please feel free to contact me - call, email, or just drop into the office. You are always welcome.

Most Sincerely,

Sarah Uzelac, Ph.D.

TOPFIELD VOLUNTEERS

MINORS AS VOLUNTEERS

Those who wish to participate in an ongoing volunteer opportunity must be at least 14-16 years old (depending on role) and have written permission from a parent or guardian before they may begin service. The volunteer tasks assigned to a minor shall be performed in a non-hazardous environment and shall comply with all appropriate requirements of New York State and Federal child labor laws and best practices.

GROUP VOLUNTEERS

Some of Topfield Equestrian Center volunteer needs make an excellent fit as one-time volunteer service from groups, including high school and college service groups, church groups, and employees on corporate service days. Youth may participate in one-time group volunteering activities with the permission and supervision of their leaders. Group leaders assume responsibility for obtaining any necessary parent/ guardian permission.

VOLUNTEERING VS. INTERNING VS. SERVICE LEARNING

As opposed to most volunteer opportunities, internships are primarily educational experiences with an emphasis on learning academic or career-related skills. Topfield will try to ensure that interns are directly supervised by licensed or otherwise accountable professionals. Interns may receive academic credit for their experiences if they arrange this with their school ahead of time.

Service Learning occurs when a class or group works with a community partner, such as Topfield Equestrian Center, on a plan to implement solutions for a student-identified community need.

COURT ORDERED COMMUNITY SERVICE OBLIGATION

A sentencing option for persons convicted of crimes in which the court orders the defendant to perform a number of hours of unpaid volunteer work for the benefit of the public. A person convicted of a criminal offense may be required to complete a sentence of community service directly or as an express condition of Probation. Topfield reserves the right to screen incoming persons, and reserves the right to reject anyone for any reason.

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION PROCEDURES

INTERVIEWS

Topfield Equestrian Center will sometimes screen potential ongoing volunteer positions via interview. Interviews help volunteers clarify the responsibilities of the opportunity and help supervisors or the Volunteer Coordinator decide if the prospective volunteer is a good fit.

REFERENCES

Topfield Equestrian Center will sometimes require potential ongoing volunteers to provide three non-family references as part of the screening and onboarding process. These references would be checked prior to accepting the individual as a volunteer.

NEW YORK STATE SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY CHECKS

A state of New York Child Protective Services and Sex Offender Record Search is required on volunteers who will be working directly with children.

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT FORM

To document that you have read, understood, and agree to follow the Topfield Equestrian Center volunteer practices and procedures, and feel comfortable with the responsibilities of your specific volunteer position, we require you to sign a Volunteer Agreement and Liability Release Form on the day you begin your first volunteer service, and each additional year you volunteer with us.

ASPECTS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE

INITIAL VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION & TRAINING

All new volunteers are required to complete a volunteer training at Topfield Equestrian Center prior to starting. We will engage in a group discussion about the history of Topfield, the needs of our clients, how we are helping, and why we do what we do.

In addition to going over and becoming familiar with the Volunteer and Basic Horsemanship and Safety Manuals/Guidelines and Topfield Policies, you will undergo practical, hands-on training in the grooming room and arena led by a certified PATH Intl instructor. You will have the opportunity to practice with the equines in varying conditions and scenarios until you feel comfortable with the work.

We also require you to sign a waiver of liability and a photo release.

VOLUNTEER DUTY

You'll be working with instructional or therapeutic staff who will give you additional instruction and information pertinent to each client you assist. Be sure to ask as many questions as you need to feel comfortable. There are no silly questions! There may be situations where an instructor or therapist has to communicate something regarding safety very quickly and efficiently - in those cases try to follow the instruction as quickly as possible and if you have questions about it or how the situation was handled, bring them up to the instructor after the completion of the lesson.

SUPERVISION

As a new volunteer, you will have a clearly identified supervisor, the Volunteer Coordinator, who will directly oversee your role within the organization. The Volunteer Coordinator is a point of contact throughout the application, orientation and volunteer onboarding process. This is the person who will help you schedule your service at Topfield and communicate with you as needed. The coordinator is also available to you for consultation and assistance.

CORRECTIVE ACTION AND SAFETY VIOLATION INTERVENTIONS

In appropriate and necessary situations, corrective action may be taken following an incident or when it is deemed appropriate. Examples of corrective action include the requirement for additional training, re-assignment of a volunteer to a new position, suspension of the volunteer, or dismissal from volunteer service.

CONCERNS AND GRIEVANCES

Decisions involving corrective action of a volunteer will be reviewed for appropriateness by the Volunteer Coordinator, Human Resources agency retained by Topfield Equestrian Center, and the Executive Director. If corrective action is taken, the volunteer shall be informed of the procedures for expressing their concerns or grievance. A volunteer has the opportunity to provide written request to air grievances to any or all of the aforementioned parties.

RECOGNITION

As a valued volunteer, you are an essential part of our program operations. Therefore, we believe it is very important to recognize the time and effort that you put in to your service. Recognition opportunities will occur at the organization level, as well as at the volunteer area level and are sometimes shared with local media.

PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

Certain practices are in place to ensure positive and safe volunteering experiences at Topfield Equestrian Center. It is asked that you report any and all changes in your medical condition that may impact your ability to serve as a volunteer prior to any lesson.

DRUG FREE POLICY

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance is not allowed at Topfield Equestrian Center. Further, anyone knowingly engaging in any of the aforementioned things will be reported to law enforcement. Additionally, volunteers must not be impaired by any substance while serving. Such action may result in your immediate dismissal from the volunteer position.

NON-SMOKING POLICY

Smoking or vaping by our employees, volunteers, clients, vendors, or anyone on the property is prohibited. This includes interior offices or spaces of any building occupied by Topfield Equestrian Center.

DRESS CODE

As a volunteer, you are responsible for presenting a positive image to clients and to the community as a representative of Topfield Equestrian Center. You should dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of your duties. Please wear sensible clothing that is comfortable and appropriate for the weather. Sturdy shoes or boots provide appropriate protection. Open-toed shoes are prohibited in the facility. Name tags will be provided and must be worn in order to identify volunteers as part of the Topfield team.

CELL PHONE USE

We ask that volunteers not use a cell phone for calls or texting when in session (except in emergencies) and that they always be kept on silent or vibrate.

Additionally, volunteers must ask permission to take photographs or videos prior to

TYPES OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE

SIDE WALKERS

Side Walkers are directly responsible for the riders and can be a great help to the instructor. They help the client focus attention on the instructor, assist with spatial orientation, and help riders understand and implement the instructor's directions.

Side Walkers must try and allow the client to process and execute instructions and commands from the instructor. Too many directions from different people can be very confusing to riders who may already have perceptual and attention problems.

Side Walkers should try to avoid unnecessary conversation with either the rider or other volunteers and should not discuss the rider in front of him or her except when necessary.

Qualifications:	Responsibilities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Able to walk/jog intermittently for up to an hour at a time (indoors and/or outdoors) on uneven surfaces.• Must be responsible and professional.• Able to hold arm raised and out to the side for extended periods of time.• Able to hear, speak, and understand instructions in the primary language of the client.• Minimum age of 16 years old.• Horse experience preferred but not required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help prepare riders for class, if necessary (fitting helmets, etc.) .• Assist with rider support during mounting and dismounting as necessary.• Walk next to the rider throughout the class and provide physical support as necessary.• Help the rider follow directions given by the instructor.• Not responsible for the horse.• Will need to be reliable and available even during the winter months.

HORSE LEADERS

The Horse Leader is in charge of the horse, constantly and vigilantly monitoring its mood, energy level, and behavior. Horse Leaders are responsible for the horses before, during, and after lessons. Horse Leaders will be trained on how to groom and tack horses, how to safely and effectively lead horses during lessons, and how to turn out a horse after a lesson if necessary. Most riders in our programs are not fully in control of the horse. It is the Leader who must help in guiding, stopping, and starting the horse, without making the rider feel that he/she is being led. We need our riders to be allowed to do as much as he or she is capable of doing, with the Lead Walker stepping in only when necessary.

Horse Leaders must be able to communicate with Side Walkers; and Horse Leaders must be careful not to push sider walkers into walls or fences. Horse Leaders must also be able to multi-task, focusing both on the horse and rider as well the instructor

Qualifications:	Responsibilities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prior horse experience required.• Must be responsible and professional.• Able to comfortably halter, lead, cross-tie, and tack a horse.• Able to groom a horse with light assistance or independently.• Able to lift up to 20 pounds (saddle) above his/her head.• Able to hear, speak, and understand instructions in the primary language of the client.• Minimum age of 16 years old.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perform an initial check for health and soundness of the horse prior to class.• Assist Barn Manager/ Assistant to ensure the horse is groomed, tacked, lunged (if necessary), in arena or ring prior to class.• Lead the horse during class, within a group including Side Walkers, keeping primary focus on assigned horse while maintaining communication with the lesson/program team• Listen to and execute the directives of the instructor.• Un-tack and groom the horse after class (as necessary)• Will need to be reliable and available even during the winter months.

TECHNIQUE

S SIDEWALKER HOLDS

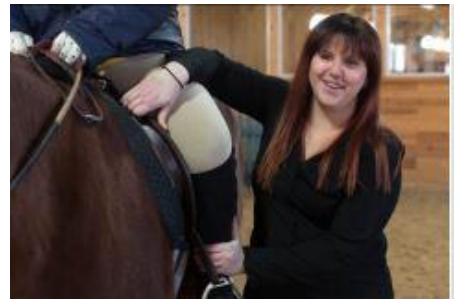
Arm over thigh

Hold onto the front of the flap of the saddle, placing your forearm over the middle of the rider's thigh. Exert pressure on the thigh. Try to provide support at the same level as the other sidewalker. Care should be taken not to involve the rider's knee or hip joints in the hold. This hold is only utilized with two sidewalkers to maintain equal balance for the student.



Arm over thigh with ankle hold

While maintaining the arm over thigh hold with your inside arm, place your outside hand around the rider's lower calf, just above the ankle. Wrap your fingers around the front of the rider's calf. Place your thumb around the back of the rider's lower calf.



Ankle hold

Cup your inside hand underneath or around the back of the rider's heel. You may use this hold without specific direction from the instructor if you need to stabilize the rider's lower leg, prevent the leg from swinging forward or backward, or to deter the rider from kicking the sides of the horse.



SIDE WALKER MOUNTING PROCEDURE

If you're the "off" (right) sidewalker, wait until the horse is in the correct position at the block, then step up onto the cube, facing the instructor/rider. Guide the rider's leg over the saddle to avoid hitting the horse's back. Be sure the mounted rider is in the correct position, and employ the hold directed by the instructor as you step off the cube and walk away from the mounting area.



If you are the "near" (left) sidewalker, position yourself along the wall by the leader as the rider mounts. As the horse leaves the mounting area, employ the hold directed by the instructor.



SPOTTING AS A SIDE WALKER IN LESSONS

Walk alongside the rider, staying next to and parallel to the rider's knee assisting only when necessary. It is important to stay in position and not get ahead of, behind or too far away from the rider to maintain his or her safety. Never touch, poke or slap the horse's sides.

CORRECT



INCORRECT



INCORRECT



INCORRECT



AS A SIDE WALKER, YOU SHOULD:

*Be aware of the basic riding position (shoulder, hip and heel in line) to help your student in place.

*Be aware of your rider's overall position, and if correction is needed, either ask the rider to adjust, communicate with the other sidewalker and/or the leader, or advise the instructor.

CORRECT



CORRECT



CORRECT



INCORRECT



Reminders:

The rider should hold the reins as if holding an ice cream cone, with the reins inside the fist, coming out over the top of the first finger. The thumb should be on top of the first finger to help secure the reins .

Limit conversation during the class. Direct the rider's attention to the instructor.

Only one sidewalker should be communicating with the rider and offering help and encouragement. If you need to change sides with the other sidewalker for any reason, ask the leader to stop. Sidewalkers change sides one at a time, always walking in front of the horse and never leaving the rider alone or unassisted.

Sidewalkers need to remain attentive to their student at all times. If a problem arises, tell the leader and the instructor so they can take appropriate action.

At the halt: Remain at the rider's side.

At the walk: Stay next to the rider's side and in the correct position, never leaving the rider's side unless told to do so by the instructor. Provide the hold designated by the instructor, or if spotting, stay in close proximity to the rider in case of emergency.

At the trot: Be sure the rider is balanced. By using the 1-2-3-trot verbal cue, you will prepare the rider for the trot departure. Support the rider with the hold designated by the instructor and stay in position, especially when spotting. Communicate with the leader if problems arise.

Other Important Things To Remember:

- Visiting among ourselves causes neglect of the participant. Inattentiveness can result in an accident to you or your student.
- Our participants often have a lowered sense of safety awareness. Please be cognizant of where your student is at all times, both on and off the horse. They should never be allowed to be behind a horse or at the back of a stall. Pay attention to the horse's body language, remind your student to use a quiet voice, and be sure lead ropes are held correctly and not wrapped around your student's hands.
- Help your student only when it is needed. Overprotection keeps the student from progressing and developing independence. DO celebrate your student's achievements!
- Listen to the instructor during the lesson and reinforce what is being taught. Try to understand your student's challenges. While a participant's diagnosis will not be discussed due to confidentiality protocols, you are welcome to ask your instructor for tips on how to better assist your student.
- Be patient; each student processes information and learns at his or her own pace.
- Communicate with your instructor following the lesson or during the next week if you feel there is something the instructor needs to know.
- Have fun with your student, always remembering to keep attention centered on the lesson. Your commitment and dedication allows a student to participate. Be encouraging, providing praise and positive reinforcement for accomplishments.

Leading Techniques

Hold the extra length of lead rope folded in your left hand in a figure-eight or a teardrop configuration. **Never** wrap it around your hand.



CORRECT

Walk on the left between the horse's head and shoulder so you can observe the horse's left eye, ear and nostril.



CORRECT:

Hold your right hand about 10 inches from the clip on the end of the lead rope, allowing the horse to have freedom to move his head and neck.

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INCORRECT



HOW TO HOLD A LEAD ROPE THERAPEUTIC RIDING LESSONS

CORRECT

Stay focused on the lesson and on your team. Glance back occasionally at the client and the sidewalkers to be sure they are safe, but avoid engaging in conversation.

Wait for your student to cue the horse before proceeding. Before trotting, wait for your student to cue the horse before using the 1-2-3-trot verbal cues. Once trotting, look up and forward, and be aware of your horse's focus.



CORRECT



CORRECT

When leading, look up and forward, staying aware of the horse and his focus.

Keep a minimum of 2-3 horse lengths' distance between your horse and other horses in the ring, as not all horses get along with each other.



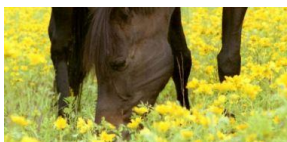
INCORRECT



INCORRECT

Do not let the horse's head get too low to the ground, as this may unseat the rider.

Remember: When trail riding, no grazing!



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INCORRECT



INCORRECT



Adjust your step to the horse's stride, being careful not to get too far ahead, behind or away from the horse. Remember, you should always be able to see your horse's left eye, ear and nostril.

Avoid the temptation to interact and assist the client while leading a horse. **The client is the sidewalker's responsibility.** Allow enough room from the sidewalkers on both sides of the horse, especially the sidewalker along the wall.

For safety reasons, refrain from playing with the horse's nose and mouth.

ASSISTING DURING MOUNTING

Mounting is the most crucial part of riding, and great care must be taken to ensure the rider's safety. Stay alert and listen to the instructor talking to the rider during the mounting process.

Begin by leading the horse to the wall (toward letter F). Follow the wall and go deep into the corner before turning toward the mounting ramp/block.

As you are leading the horse into the mounting ramp/block, turn and face the horse at the beginning of the block, walking backward one step at a time so you are able to appropriately position the horse close to and parallel with the ramp/block. Do not push the horse or back it up to achieve the correct position. Start again if necessary. The leader may need to circle and realign the horse. When in position, face off and respect the horse's space. Keep the horse standing quietly.



Once the rider has mounted, wait for the instructor to have the rider ask the horse to “walk on.” Then lead the horse slowly away in a straight line and proceed according to the instructor’s directions.



Horse Safety In the Stall and Cross Ties

- When leading a horse into and out of a stall, make sure the door is completely open. Walk straight in and make a wide turn until the horse is facing front. Always have an escape route in case of an emergency. Close the stall door most of the way and only let the horse loose while standing next to the door. Only allow students to lead horses into/out of stalls with permission from the instructor.

Remember: If a person is in a stall with a horse, the door must always be unlocked.

- Horses should never be left loose in their stalls with tack on; they must be cross-tied. Cross ties attach to the side rings of the halter, not on the bit. Once a horse is fully untacked, let him loose in the stall and be sure to latch the stall door closed when you exit.

Remember: If a horse is in a stall alone, the door must always be closed and locked.

- When cross-tying a horse, make sure the ties have slack in them. Horses on cross ties will usually shift around. Putting a horse on cross ties may make him feel as though he is trapped. It is important to make sure they don't walk far enough to feel tension in the ties, which could trigger a "flight" response. Monitoring this is especially important when a horse is on cross ties in the aisle.

Horse Safety in Paddock Areas:

- When bringing a horse in from a paddock, know which halter belongs to your horse. Halters hang on hooks outside of the paddocks. Always lock the gate behind you after walking into and out of the paddock. Let the horse know you are approaching by calling his name. Be sure to walk up to him from the side so he can see you.

- When turning out a horse, walk the horse into the paddock while holding onto the gate. Turn the horse around to face the gate, then close and lock the gate. Double-check that the horse is facing the locked gate. It is now safe to remove the horse's halter and hang it on the hooks outside of the paddock.

SAFETY

Topfield Equestrian Center is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment for staff, volunteers, clients, their families, as well as for visitors to our facility. Safety is our first priority. The volunteer coordinator will provide volunteers with information on facility safety plans and safety protocols related to the assigned volunteer position. Additional safety measures include:

- Gum is not to be chewed when participating in program activities
- We do not allow pets (except service animals) on the property at any time .
- Please be mindful of your tone and volume. No screaming or loud talking .
- Please walk, don't run anywhere on the property (except in emergency situations) .

In the event of an emergency that requires emergency services, please follow the following directive:

- 1. DIAL 9-1-1**
- 2. Indicate the location of the emergency**
 - a. Topfield Equestrian Center, 115 Stonecrop Lane, Cold Spring, NY**
 - b. Physical location of emergency.**
- 3. Pay attention and respond to all questions or requests by 9-1-1 personnel.**
- 4. Including:**
 - a. What happened.**
 - b. Number of victims.**
 - c. Indicate what action/help is currently being given to the victim(s).**
- 5. ASK THAT EMERGENCY VEHICLE NOT USE SIRENS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THE BARN.**
- 6. Remain on the line until you are told you can hang up.**

A staff member certified in first aid is always on-site during program activities. This person is the ideal contact for reporting all accidents/incidents.

Topfield Equestrian Center is open and delivering services throughout the year, even during the winter months. In the event of severe storms, tornado threats or advisories, Side Walkers should escort clients and their parents/ guardians to the Volunteer Lounge, which is indicated on the building map as quickly as possible but always in a calm and orderly fashion. First and foremost, if time permits, Lead Walkers should bring the horses to the barn untack and return them to their stall as quickly as possible and immediately move to the storm shelter, which is indicated on the building map.

If a building or buildings need to be evacuated, all volunteers should report to the outdoor grass paddock as indicated on the building map.

Universal Precautions/Handling Bodily Fluids

Contact with bodily fluids (which may include but are not limited to: blood, drainage from scrapes and cuts, urine, vomit and respiratory secretions) may present a risk of infection from any number of germs. Personal protective equipment like rubber gloves is the best precaution and is always available.

Topfield Equestrian Center recommends that as a precaution, you check with your primary care physician about whether you are up to date on your immunizations.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE IN LESSONS

Leader and Side Walker Roles:

- Remain with your team, stay calm and follow your instructor's directions.
- Leaders: Stop and face off your horse.
- Sidewalkers: Remain in position, employing an arm over thigh hold to secure the rider. The closer you are to the horse, the safer you are.
- A staff member may designate a volunteer to retrieve a first aid kit, get participant emergency paperwork, or assist with an injured rider or horse.



Our primary objective is to keep the rider on the horse (especially adults). However, if the instructor calls for an emergency dismount:

- Halt or line up where the instructor indicates.
- Leader: Face off with your horse.
- Sidewalkers: Remove the rider's feet from the stirrups and release the reins from the rider's hands.
- Leader: Bring the reins up to the horse's ears and secure the reins in one hand with the lead rope.
- Near (left) sidewalker: Assist the rider's upper body forward (hug the horse) and have the rider look at off (right) sidewalker.
- Off sidewalker: Assist with the rider's right leg over the horse's croup.
- Near sidewalker: Assist the rider in dismounting by allowing him or her to slide down the horse. Cradle the rider around the waist and direct him or her back and away from the horse.
- Leader: Move the horse away from the rider and sidewalkers, and stay with the horse.
- Sidewalkers: Walk/carry the rider to an instructor designated area and stay with them. Leader: Run up the stirrups, place the reins through the handhold and await further instructions from the instructor.

RELIABILITY & COMMITMENT PLEDGE

We understand that you are volunteering out of the kindness of your heart and in service to your community, but we do ask that you treat your time of service in the same manner and with the same responsibility as you would school or your job. That means contacting the Volunteer Coordinator 24 hours in advance

of a scheduled service obligation if you are unable to make it so that we may find a replacement. Please arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of any program or lesson. This is a time when the instructor can explain what the lesson will be for that day and may share any necessary specifics on how to best work with your assigned client.

Please remember to always sign-in on the Volunteer Log, take a name-tag and go straight to the barn.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Topfield Equestrian Center recognizes confidentiality as a living principle based on the sanctity and dignity of the human person. Therefore, the agency will respect the privacy of personal information of those it serves or employs. You are responsible for maintaining confidentiality of all information to which you are exposed while serving as a volunteer, whether this information involves staff members, volunteers, clients, or other people or involves overall program or organization business. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in termination or other corrective action.

HARASSMENT POLICY

Topfield Equestrian Center is committed to a work environment that is professional and harassment-free for all employees and volunteers. Harassment includes, without limitations, verbal, physical, visual, and innuendo. It also includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact and other verbal or physical conduct, or visual forms of harassment of sexual nature when submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of employment or is used as the basis for unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment for employees and volunteers.

Volunteers should report any issues to their supervisor.

MANDATORY REPORTING

While volunteering for Topfield Equestrian Center you have the legal obligation to report:

- Any known or suspected child abuse, neglect or any other behavior placing the health and welfare of children in jeopardy.
- Any known or suspected adult abuse, neglect or exploitation .

Per organization policy, staff are trained in reporting requirements and associated procedures. Because we do not train volunteers according to New York State Mandatory Reporting Standards, we ask that volunteers immediately consult with a supervisor or staff member when presented with a situation that they feel may warrant a child or adult protective report.

APPENDIX



Bareback Pad

Used for riders working on balance or movement exploration, or who may have difficulty sitting in a saddle.



Fleece Pad

Similar to the bareback pad. Also used for riders working on balance or movement exploration, or who may have difficulty sitting in a saddle.



Anti-cast Surcingle

Can be used over a bareback pad to provide a handhold and additional support for riders with decreased stability.



Devonshire Boors

A stirrup with a leather enclosure on the front of the stirrup that gives additional support to the rider's foot and prevents it from sliding through the stirrup.



Peacock Stirrups

A stirrup with an elastic side that faces away from the horse.

When pressure is applied to the elastic, it releases,

allowing the foot to leave the stirrup.



"S" Stirrup

Another form of safety stirrup. The "S" faces front and is located on the outside of the foot.



Handle

Leather strap that

Attaches to the front of the saddle and is used as an aid for balance.



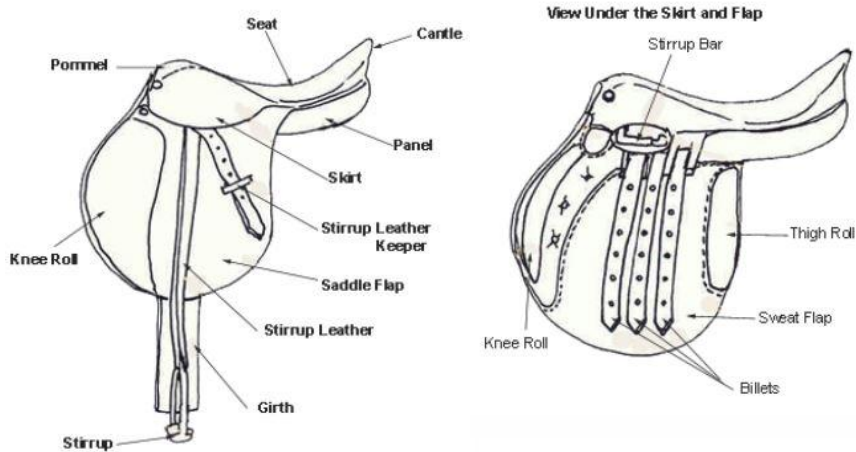
Neck Strap

Leather strap around the horse's neck that is used as an additional aid for balance

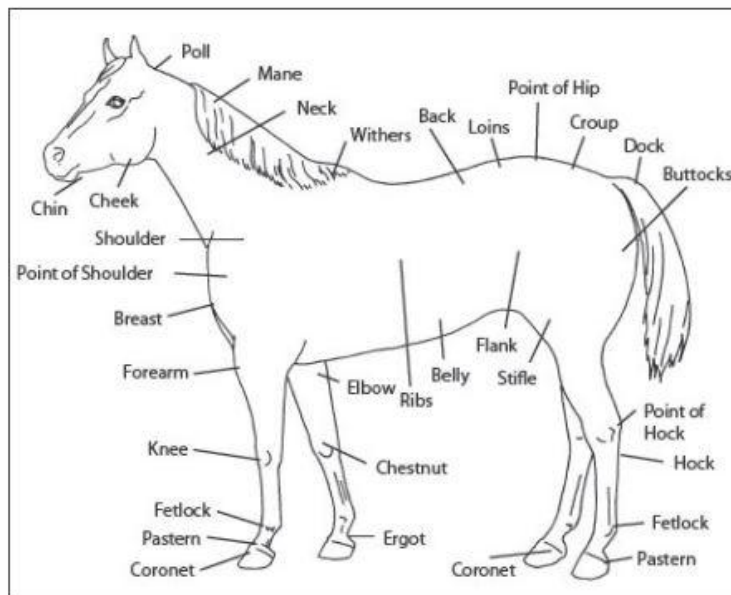


Safety Belt Belt worn around a rider's waist. The safety belt should only be used for a rider who has a tendency to jump off the horse, or if a physical therapist chooses to use one when working with a rider. NOTE: Sidewalkers are to avoid holding the belt handles during lessons, as it will provide uneven input to the rider and horse. This might cause difficulty with balance for the rider and discomfort for the horse.

Parts of the English Saddle



Parts of the Horse



EQUINE TERMINOLOGY

Aide: A tool for riding: natural (leg, hand, seat, voice) or artificial (spurs, crop)

Balanced Seat: A riding position that requires minimal muscular effort to remain in the saddle and not interfere with the horse's movement or balance

Collected Gait: A horse's gait that possesses lightness of forehand with engaged hindquarters

Crop: A short riding whip; an artificial aid

Equitation: The art of horseback riding

Far Side: The right side of the horse

Forehand: The front of the horse, including head, neck, shoulders and forelegs

Forging: Occurs when the toe of the hind foot hits the heel of the front foot on the same side, which can make the horseshoes click

Girth: The strap that holds the saddle in place

Half-Seat: A riding position in which the rider's seat is up and out of the saddle, the upper body is bent forward, and the hands rest on the horse's neck about one third of the way up

Impulsion: Energy coming from the hind end of the horse, allowing forward, balanced motion

Near-Side: The left side of the horse

Posting: The raising and lowering motion of the rider in time with the trot

Rhythm: The pace (timing) of the footfalls at each gait

Stride: Distance covered at any particular gait

Surcingle: A strap that passes over the saddle or saddle pad to hold it in place on the horse's back

Tack: Equipment used for riding horses (ex. Saddle, bridle, girth) **Transition:** Any change of pace – it can be upward (slower to faster) or downward (faster to slower)

Trot: A two-beat gait in which the horse's feet move in diagonal pairs

Walk: A four-beat gait in slow, even rhythm

ENDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE

RESIGNATION & LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Your volunteer position may conclude at the end of a particular project, event, or set time period, but you are also free to end your volunteer service with Topfield Equestrian Center at any time. Because volunteers are so important to the programs and organization, however, we request that you provide advance notice of your departure and a reason for your decision.

TERMINATION

You may be terminated from your position as a volunteer for a variety of reasons. Some of these include: gross misconduct or insubordination, being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, theft of property or misuse of organization equipment or materials, abuse or mistreatment of clients or coworkers, failure to abide by organization policies and procedures, failure to meet physical or mental standards of performance, and failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties.

EXIT SURVEYS

When you leave your position, you will be given an opportunity to fill out an exit survey detailing why you are ending your service. The exit survey is also a great place to give us any further comments about your experience and to provide any potential ideas for improvements.