

Praying Hands Ranch Guidelines for:

- Horse Handling
- Grooming
- Headwalking
- Sidewalking

Purpose: To promote safety and consistency around our clients and horses

HORSE HANDLERS - CATCHING HORSES

- Always good idea to use the buddy system and take someone with you to help with gates and controlling other horses.
- Approach the horse from the left side, never from behind, extend fist to let the horse smell you and pet his neck.
- Gently put lead rope over the horse's neck and lead him away from others if necessary. Keep lead rope over the horse's neck and don't allow it to drop on the ground.
- Staying on the left side of the horse, slip the nose piece over the horse's muzzle and extend the long strap behind the ears toward you and buckle.
- You're now free to lead your horse out making sure the gate is closed behind you.
- When walking behind horses, always make sure the horse knows you're there and keep hands on the horse's rear.
- When returning a horse to a stall or turnout, always lead the horse through the gate/door. Turn the horse around and shut the gate/door before removing the halter.
- If there are any questions, please ask!

GROOMING

- Very important for a horse's health and identifying sore spots or other issues. Pay special attention to the saddle and girth area.
- Horse handler will always have control of the horse during grooming
- If the client is assisting, one side walker will be by the horse's neck facing the client and the other by the horse's hip again facing the client. Do not allow the rider to walk behind the horse.
- Never tie the horse unless the instructor approves and use only a quick release knot.
- Only clean hoofs and stretch horses with instructor's approval.
- Each horse has their own grooming bucket. Generally start with a curry comb used in a circular motion followed by a brush going with horse's grain being very gentle around the neck. Grooming tools will vary according to season.
- Remember to keep your hands on the horse's rear if passing behind.

HEADWALKING

- Assignments for headwalking and sidewalking are at instructor's discretion
- Instructor will have tack ready for each client. If unsure about tacking procedures ask for assistance
- If the client helps groom and tack, make sure the sidewalkers are in proper position.

- After the horse is groomed and tacked, always take the horse on a warm-up lap doing some stops and turns making sure the horse is responding
- Before the client is mounted, the instructor will always make the final tack and girth check.
- During mounting, whether using a block or ramp, headwalkers job is to keep the horse calm and steady. Instructors will always be present during mounts and dismounts.
- Lead horse from left side with both hands on lead rope. Right hand approximately two feet from the halter and left hand for rope slack. Never wrap lead rope around your wrist or hand.
- If there are any issues with the horse during the session, tell the instructor. Don't discipline a horse with a rider.

SIDEWALKING

- Most important task is to maintain riders stability and safety during a session.
- Generally, sidewalkers will be on each side of the rider.
- Instructions will communicate what "hold" to use; thigh hold, ankle hold, etc.
- Sidewalkers may assist in grooming and tacking as previously explained.
- Always be alert for instructions and any issues with the rider.
- A loud "whoa" will alert the headwalker to stop the horse and get assistance.
- Emergency dismounts are practiced.
- If the client is assisting, one side walker will be by the horse's neck facing the client and the other by the horse's hip again facing the client. Do not allow the rider to walk behind the horse.

FINALLY:

- If not sure what to do, ASK!
- Phones off
- Proper / sensible clothing
- Positive Attitude
- Give our clients the best possible experience!