

Some Safety Tips When Working Around Horses

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During the course of a riding session, safety of horse and rider should be a primary concern. Listed below are some safety points to keep in mind.

1) Moving around horses:

a. Never "sneak up" on a horse

1. Avoid approaching horses in "blind areas" which are located out of the horse's range of vision (Figure 1).
2. Announce your presence if horse doesn't see you.
3. Approach horse from shoulder whenever possible, never in a position to be kicked or pawed.
4. Move around a tied horse from behind, never pass in front of the horse (Figure 2).

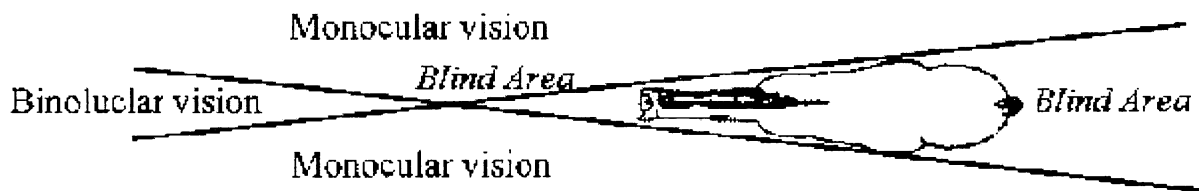


Figure 1. Horses have "blind areas" of vision located directly in front of, and behind the animal. Horses primarily use their monocular vision.

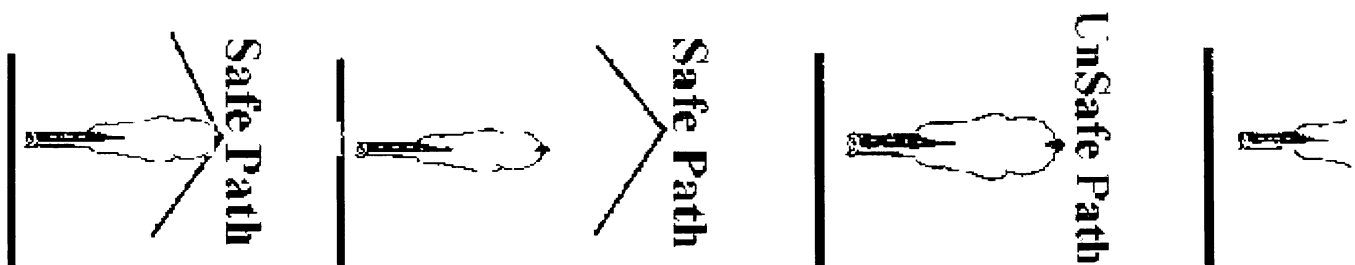


Figure 2. When moving around a tied horse, never pass in front of the animal. Move around the animal's rear, either close to the animal's body (where kick impact is minimal) or out of kicking range.

II) Tying

- a. Always tie horses to solid object. Never tie a horse to insecure objects such as gates, boards, or loose objects.

- b. Use only sturdy equipment (halter & lead) that is fitted properly (see figure 3).
- c. Tie at approximately eye level with a quick release knot (figure 3). Length should be 18-24 inches. Too short or too long will lead to accidents and/or injury.

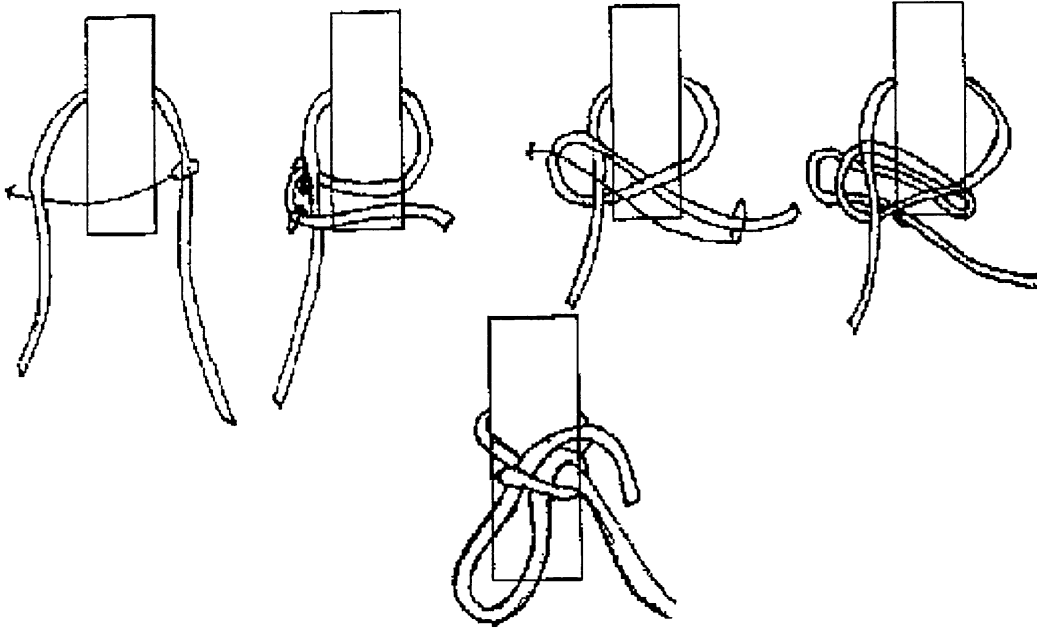


Figure 3. Diagram depicting procedure for tying quick-release knot.

III) General - Riding

- a. When possible ride when someone else is present.
- b. Never ride in tennis shoes or shoes without heels.
- c. Never grain or water a hot horse. Cool horse down before putting horse up or allowing horse to eat. Current research suggests that if horses are very hot, cooling the horse down is most important and thus water can be given during the cool down.
- d. For saddles with back cinches - cinch up back cinch last and undo back cinch first.
- e. Make sure equipment is in good repair.
- f. Wear an SEI-approved safety helmet.