



PONY CLUB



ACHIEVEMENT BADGES

EQUIPMENT SAFETY

Achievement Badge

Learning Objectives/What you will learn:

What is the correct safety equipment when riding and how to check equipment continues to be safe to use.

Syllabus

- 1 Understand why we wear certain clothing and footwear for riding and handling horses.
- 2 Know that equipment must fit to be safe. Understand the basic rules of fitting a hats and body protectors.
- 3 Realise why there are safety standards and how to check if a hat or body protector is of the current standard. Know that the Pony Club has a hat tagging system.
- 4 Discuss the correct footwear to use when riding and how feet should fit into stirrups. Look at safety stirrups and how they work.
- 5 Show where tack may be damaged or worn and the importance of regular checks

Teaching Ideas & Resources

- 1 Discuss the use of hats, body protectors, correct boots and gloves when riding and handling horses. Working as a group, on a large piece of paper write against hats what type of injuries could occur if you don't wear one, repeat for body protectors and boots.
- 2 Have a few different styles of hat and body protector to look at and check the fastenings and how they are adjusted. Discuss the need for correct fitting and examples of things that don't fit. YouTube has videos by manufacturers such as Charles Owen and Champion as well as BETA on how to fit hats and body protectors. Ask members to fit each other's hats and body protectors.

- 3** If possible, have a selection of equipment of different standards including some that is out of date to make a comparison. Discuss how some older styles of hats don't have the amounts of padding that is now required. Show where the body protectors and hats are labelled for the standard. Ask members how often hats should be tagged and who can do the tagging?
- 4** Get members to check a boot in the stirrup by putting a finger either side of the boot. Talk about the safety issues if the stirrups are too big or small. (Dismounted), allow them to get a foot stuck in a small stirrup and put their foot through a large stirrup. Remind them that as their feet grow they will need bigger stirrups.
- 5** Use some tack to indicate common areas where tack can become weak, or stitching can rot. Make sure the group understands some of the accidents that may occur and the importance of regular checks. Ask each member to check a saddle or bridle and tell the group what they have found.

Recommended Reading

- ▶ The 14th Edition Manual of Horsemanship P141
- ▶ Safety information leaflets published by the British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA). www.beta-uk.org

Questions

- 1** What safety equipment do we use when riding horses and ponies and why?
- 2** Why is it important that equipment fits properly? Give 3 important things to note when fitting a hat.
- 3** How do you know if a hat is up to the current safety standards? How do you know if a body protector is up to the current safety standards?
- 4** How do you check that your stirrups are the correct size? What problems can arise if stirrups are too big or small?
- 5** Understand there are different types of safety (quick release) stirrups and stirrup treads.
- 6** What problems can occur if tack is worn and breaking? Where are the common areas that you should regularly check on tack for weakness?

Answers

ACHIEVEMENT BADGES

- 1** Hat, body protector and appropriate boots. All of these are required to minimise the risk of injury as horse can be unpredictable!
- 2** Equipment that does not fit may not protect the part of the body that it is covering. Make sure the hat is not too loose on the head therefore too big. It should fit level on the head about an inch above the eyebrows, any higher could be too small and uncomfortable. Check the hat is up to current safety standards.
- 3** Look for the labels inside hats and check the number and kite mark and if it has a Pony Club tag. Find the coloured BETA label on a body protector and check it is the right year and colour. A coach, DC or Centre coach will say if it is current.
- 4** When a riding boot is in the stirrup at its widest part, you should fit a finger either side of the boot on the base of the stirrup. Boots could get stuck in a small stirrup and could slip through a large one.
- 5** Show different types of safety (quick release) stirrups, discuss how some can bend and it can be easier to put a foot through swan neck stirrups. Explain that locking boots and treads are not allowed in Pony Club in case of a foot getting stuck.
- 6** Worn tack and bits can break causing a loss of control or a fall. Stirrup stitching, girth holes and stitching, reins and billets/buckles.