

Provide a proper cool-down period for your horse

No matter what the season, when horses work hard they produce heat and sweat. Properly cooling down your horse will ensure he stays sound and healthy. A daily workout for your horse probably consists of four separate periods: warm-up, active conditioning or schooling, warm-down, and cool-down.

Warm-down before dismounting

During warm weather training, the warm-down and cool-down periods are especially important because horses may be hot from conditioning exercises. The warm-down is the steady reduction in exercise intensity and usually consists of 5 to 10 minutes of low-intensity exercise that culminates in a relaxed walk. While horses will invariably sweat less as athletic effort decreases, the importance of a warm-down is more than skin deep. Foremost is the redistribution of blood within the body. When a horse is exercising, oxygenated blood is carried to the hardworking skeletal muscles, and other organs of the body receive slightly less blood than they normally do during periods of rest. As the warm-down period extends, more blood is allocated to those organs and less to skeletal muscle.

Cool-down after dismounting

The cool-down is distinct from the warm-down period. The warm-down, as mentioned previously, occurs when mounted and ends with a relaxed walk on a loose rein. The primary objective of the cool-down is to prevent overheating following dismounting. The horse should be untacked immediately to allow maximum heat dissipation, and should be moved to a covered or shaded area with as much air movement as possible. One of the most common methods of cooling a horse in hot and humid environments is spraying or sponging with cool water. Body-wide application of cool water is acceptable during normal summer weather when temperatures are between 80°-100°F. The most strategic points for effective cooling include the underside of the neck and barrel, and the inside of all four legs. Drinking water can be offered to the



horse once cooling has begun, which is determined by a reduction in body temperature, heart rate, and respiratory rate.

Allowing a few swallows every few minutes during the cool-down helps the horse replace water lost during exercise. Horses should be encouraged to drink their fill. When your horse sweats on a daily basis, even in cold weather, it is best to provide a supplemental electrolyte. Electrolytes replace the minerals lost in sweat and encourage drinking, which reduces the risk of dehydration and muscle disorders.

Proper care of a horse following a ride signifies sound horsemanship as well as a healthy dose of respect for your horse.

Electrolytes—who needs them? Your horse, that’s who.



Electrolytes perform critical functions within your horse’s body. They help regulate nerve and muscle functions by carrying electrical impulses between cells. In addition, they assist the body in maintaining a healthy fluid balance by controlling your horse’s desire to drink.

When your horse loses significant amounts of electrolytes and fluids, problems such as dehydration, muscle cramping, fatigue, tying-up, and colic may occur. Even in mild forms, these conditions can have a negative impact on your horse’s ability to perform and recover after exercise.

Horses that are ridden regularly or those that live in hot, humid climates may lose more electrolytes than their bodies are capable of replacing with a normal diet. In these instances, it is necessary to replenish lost electrolytes and keep your horse drinking.

Electrolytes you can depend on

Top riders and veterinarians turn to Summer Games® Electrolyte to keep their horses healthy in the hot weather, and you can too. Summer Games replenishes the electrolytes and trace minerals lost when your horse sweats, and it stimulates the thirst response so your horse continues to drink and stay properly hydrated.

Summer Games was developed for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta. Trust Summer Games Electrolyte to protect your horse when the going gets hot!

Summer Games® Electrolyte is a balanced, concentrated source of electrolytes and trace minerals, the perfect all-purpose electrolyte for horses of all ages, regardless of lifestyle. Summer Games® Plus is an electrolyte paste with Neigh-Lox® for horses on the go, and supports normal hydration and mineral balance plus a comfortable tummy.



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