

Ground Wranglers Program Badges

- **Horse Sense** – Understanding your horse’s body language and ways of communication is key to having a working relationship with your equine partner. Your horse is in tune to your body language, but are you in tune to what they are telling you? Since horses can’t verbally tell you what they are thinking or what they are about to do, you need to read all the subtle signs they are sending your way. Horses use nearly every part of their body to talk to you; you just have to know what to look for.
- **Grooming**- Daily grooming gives you a chance to detect and monitor any injuries or other health problems such as cuts, skin infections, allergic reactions, thrush, etc. in your horse. Finding health problems early gives you the best chance of treating them successfully. As the horse’s caretaker, we can help with the feel-good grooming process. Grooming is also a great way to get to know your horse better by spending time with them and learning their likes and dislikes.
- **Leading**- Leading the horse for a lesson is the most common way of handling for lessons, and is the most used horse handling skill at any farm. It is also the most frequently misused technique. When leading a horse during a lesson, it is essential that the horse be lead correctly. Poor leading also compromises the biomechanics of the horse and may affect the long term welfare and soundness of the horse. Horses are most comfortable and willing when they know who is in charge, so leadership skills and communication skills are important in leading correctly and safely.
- **Horse Body Parts** – It is extremely important for any horse person to be knowledgeable about the parts of the horse. Should your horse ever be injured and you have to call the vet, it’s important that you know what part is injured so that you can confidently talk to the vet about the injury and be informed on how best to communicate where the injury is.
- **Horse First Aid**- Having a thorough and confident knowledge of horse first aid is crucial to being a well-educated and prepared horse person. In case of an emergency, it could mean the difference between a more minor incident versus a very serious injury for your horse, depending on if you can competently help them while the vet is on the way.
- **Barn Management**- If you’re ever interested in owning a horse or running your own barn, it’s important to have a knowledgeable approach to barn management. Knowing what feed and hay is best for each individual horses’ needs is crucial to keeping healthy and happy horses. It’s also important to know how much water your horses should be drinking, how to correctly clean stalls, and when temperature climates may force interventions (stall fans/blanketing/etc.).
- **Tack and Equipment**- Having a thorough knowledge of many different types of tack and equipment is crucial to being able to know what tools will get the best results out of your horse. If you have more tools in your toolkit to pull from, you’ll have more options to see what will work best for your horse. Each horse is different and will respond to different tools. From various types of halters, saddles, bits, bridles and training equipment, the more knowledge you have, the better equipped you will be to help your horse succeed.
- **Horse Gait and Lameness Badge** - Learning the gaits of the horse is important to being able to effectively train and work with these special animals. Being able to identify gait issues and lameness in your horse is crucial to being a knowledgeable horse person and caretaker. Missing any sign of lameness could be detrimental to your horse’s health and well-being, and an injury could be made worse if the horse is worked while lame.

- **Round Penning-** Round penning is a great tool to build a relationship with your horse and also a way to help them get exercise and focused if you are unable to work them under saddle. By round penning your horse, they become more in tune with your body language, and you will also become more in tune with how they are communicating with you.
- **Horse Conformation Badge** – Knowing correct and preferred conformation in horses is extremely important. This will enable you to see what conformation flaws may lead to common issues, and also know what kind of conformation is preferred for which disciplines. This will enable you to be a well-informed purchaser should you ever decide to buy a horse, as well as know what issues may arise from different conformation flaws.
- **Bathing and show preparation Badge** – Learning to bathe your horse and get them prepped for a show is crucial to being able to make a classy and prepared entry into a show environment. Judges not only look at your riding, but also the appearance of you and your horse. Learning to braid or band your horse's mane, braid the tail, trim whiskers and ears are all important parts of preparing your horse for a show.
- **Hoof Care Badge** – A horse's hooves are one of the most important parts of their body. It has been said that you can't have a good horse without good feet. Being on top of upkeep of your horse's hooves is imperative to the health and well-being of your horse. From farrier care to being able to identify soreness to treating basic hoof issues (such as fungus or dryness), knowing how best to keep your equine friend comfortable on their feet will save many problems in the long run.
- **Horse Facility Maintenance Badge** – If owning a horse or managing a horse farm is something you see for yourself in the future, it's imperative to have the knowledge to be able to keep your horses safe and provide them with the best care possible. Knowing the safest types of fences, how to best maintain pastures and being able to recognize what plants are safe or poisonous is extremely important to being able to ensure that your horses have a safe home.
- **Lunging-** Lunging is a great way to exercise your horse and get them focused. It is also an excellent tool to help them learn how to properly carry themselves if utilized with other training aids (such as a Pessoa, surcingle with side reins, etc.). While many people will put an "up" horse on a lunge line before riding, this is not the most beneficial or productive use of this tool unless the lunger is asking the horse to be focused and engage its mind.
- **Horse Desensitization Training Badge** – Horses by nature have a "flight" reflex, which can be a very dangerous thing. It's important to work with your horse to get them used to a variety of strange props, noises and feelings in order to help them be confident in any situations, which in turn will keep you safer.
- **Massage badge** – Horses selflessly give of themselves to us each and every day, and learning equine massage is a great way to be able to give back to your horse. You can learn ways to help your horse relax, relieve pain or pressure and help them feel loved and appreciated.
- **Long Lining** - Long Lining is a great way to help condition your horse if you are unable to ride, and is also useful in many different therapeutic settings or for teaching certain riding skills. Long Lining can be used to help strengthen a horse without having the added weight of bearing a rider, help strengthen areas that are being brought back from an injury, or just to bring some variety to their training regimen.
- **Natural Horsemanship Badge** - Natural Horsemanship is a great way to build a partnership with your horse and learn how to best communicate with them in order to achieve successful results. Through playing games, learning their communication cues and spending time together, this is a great way to really get to know your horse and build a working relationship with them.