

Bonding Kit

Golden Cross Ranch, LLC *Having Fun With Your Horse*

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How the Bonding Kit Came To Be

"I don't always want the pressure of riding or training my horse and everything that goes along with those activities. Sometimes I just want to "hang out" with my horse, and do so in a way that brings us both pleasure. By using the bonding kit, I am spending relaxed time with Dylan while continuing to build our bond – 'hey, Nancy is grooming me again and it feels good – she is nice to be around...' is hopefully what my four legged friend is thinking, when I use the bonding kit. The bonding kit is all about having fun with your horse on the ground while working on developing the bond of friendship and respect that will make you both trusted partners."

Recommended experience level: Because the bonding kit requires basic grooming skills, we recommend this kit for anyone that has been taught basic skills of horsemanship including handling a horse on the ground and grooming and bathing

Bonding Kit Item List

Please Note: While we try our best to provide the exact items seen here, if we are unable to order a specific item from our suppliers, we reserve the right to replace it with an as good or better quality item that provides a similar function.



Heavy Duty Tote Bag Bonding Kit Color: Blue

Dimensions: 18 ½" x 14 ½" x 4" with 27" double handles

Material: 600D Flexar Canvas

Our tote bag is very sturdy and has with lots of room. It is a great way to carry the items you will be using in your Bonding Kit!



Sponge for Horse Hydra Finepore All Purpose Body/Bath Sponge 6 ½" x 4" x 2"

What a great way to cool down your horse or to give him a bath!



Hand Towel for Human Color: Blue, Dimensions: 16" x 28" (wash before first use)

Working with horses can be hot, sweaty work so we included a hand towel for you to use to cool off or clean up with.



Insulated Lunch Bag for Horse and Human to share Foam insulated with waterproof lining. Front pocket. Has a handy carrying strap that can also be looped onto a saddle horn and an easy open Velcro fastener.

Bonding Kit Lunch Bag Color: Blue

Dimensions: 9" x 7" x 4 ¾"

Material: 70D Nylon

I get shaky if I go too long without a snack. Our lunch bags can easily hold those snack bars, fruit or sandwiches that are so important for a fun session with your horse – you don't want to get hungry in the middle of your time together and not have something to eat!



Aquaclip for Water or Beverage Bottle (assorted colors) A handy gadget for securing your water or beverage bottle to your saddle or it comfortably slips over your waistband or belt. It also comes with “gripper teeth to open stubborn beverage caps. The aqua clip is durable, non-toxic and recyclable. Water bottle not included.



Spray Nozzle Tough 1 VIP Water Nozzle Blue 5 Settings

What a great way to bathe your horse, mist him (and you) on a hot day, or spray the mud off of legs and tail in the winter time. I chose the water nozzle specifically because you can adjust the spray – something you can experiment with and see which settings your horse likes best. Just make sure you “introduce” your horse to water if he hasn’t already experienced how to enjoy a water hose.



Himalayan Horse Massage Glove Color: Purple

Your horse will love his bath time and you will love how easy it is to pamper and clean your equine friend!



Himalayan Horsey Groom Color: Red

I am always on the look out for grooming supplies that will give a massaging component to groom time. This comfortable, durable groomer fits nicely in your hand and features deep cleaning And massaging fingers on one side and an adorable image of a horse on the other!



Himalayan Horse Love N Care Velvet Touch Groomer Color: Dark Navy Blue

This cute little brush is both durable and ergonomic – but best of all it is the perfect size for giving your horse a gentle massage on his cheeks and forehead and all around his head. Just watch his eyes shut and lower lip droop with pleasure at the attention!



Mrs. Pastures Cookies for Horses A sample pack of three cookies is included in your kit. Dylan loves these cookies and gets two every time I go to the barn – and he knows it too! All natural ingredients made of oats, wheat bran, rolled barley, cane molasses, apples and water with no additives or preservatives. Because they are dehydrated instead of baked, they are hard and crunchy so they won't crumble in your pocket. We also offer a variety of sizes on our website.

HAVING FUN WITH YOUR HORSE AND THE BONDING KIT

The possibilities are really up to you and your imagination. But the first step in any endeavor with your horse when introducing a new object is to allow him some time to get used to it. While grooming tools are usually not considered something a horse finds particularly spooky, he may be very curious at the unusual shapes and textures of the items in your kit, and he also may need to become accustomed to sensations that he may not have experienced in the past. The bonding kit also comes with a water spray, which your horse may also need time to become accustomed to.

We recommend that you only work with one item at a time. Introduce the item slowly and allow your horse to get comfortable with it. As your horse grows used to each grooming tool, you can try the different items in your bonding kit. The challenge will then be finding what your horse likes best! Just like people – horses have certain areas that they enjoy being massaged, while in other areas they may be extra sensitive and prefer you do not groom them in that area. So be extra aware of your horse's body language. Lowered head, sleepy eyes, droopy lip, and cocked rear hoof are all signs of relaxation. When your horse exhibits any of these behaviors – you probably found a favorite spot to groom. And remember that while your horse is a very large animal, his skin is so sensitive that he can feel a fly on him. So go easy and experiment with varying amounts of pressure to see what your horse likes best.

Here I introduced Dylan to the “Horsey Groom”. It sure didn't take him long to decide that this was a sweet deal and by watching his body language, I could tell what he really liked and what he didn't care for. Keep in



mind that since every horse is different, they will respond differently to each grooming item. Some horses may be totally relaxed in a short period of time – other horses may be convinced that you are “up to something” and may remain on alert until they figure out that you really are just trying to engage in social grooming behavior. Be careful to progress at your horse's rate and above all, do so safely. And always remember that at grooming time (or any time) you must still demand that your horse display good manners. Do not allow him to get in your space unless invited – your horse must understand that it is you as the leader of your herd of two that

initiates the grooming session. You can use grooming sessions as another way to build on your relationship by creating a pleasant interlude for you and your horse, but you can still punctuate each session with small training opportunities like moving him around to where you want him to stand by asking him to give to pressure.



One last word of advice – I read somewhere that you haven't spent "real" time with your horse unless you got dirt under your fingernails as part of the process. I believe this statement is absolutely true. When evaluating the grooming tools and their effectiveness, I don't think anything can replace the human hand. Use your hand to give scratches along your horse's withers and along his neck – experiment to see where he likes to be rubbed. Notice in the picture where I am using the red Himalayan Horsey Groom tool – I am also using my other hand to rub and scratch on Dylan's neck.

Also another important observation here – I am NOT slapping Dylan with the palm of my hand. I have noticed that many people do that as a gesture of affection or as a way to tell their horse "Well Done!" The only problem with that is, have you ever watched the horse's reaction when that happens? Often his head pops up (indicating tenseness) and an expression comes on his face of "Uh Oh, What did I do?" If you do that to Dylan there is a high probability that you will also see the whites of his eyes. Although riders usually mean a slap on the neck as a "Thank You, Good Job" gesture, horses don't necessarily interpret them that way. If you watch horses in a herd you will see lots of grooming behavior – nibbling gently with their teeth along the withers is especially popular among herd mates. By mimicking this type of social grooming and scratching your horse's neck or withers, you will have a much higher likelihood of communicating what you intended to your horse – that you are pleased with him. By using your hand properly along with the items in your bonding kit, you can go a long way towards creating a special bond between you and your horse.

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