

## Clipper Shy

**Is your horse afraid of the clippers? Help him feel relaxed when it's time to clip.**

Is your horse afraid of the clippers? Here's a tip to help him feel completely relaxed when it's time to clip. Remember that you will build your horse's confidence more effectively in small incremental steps, as opposed to rushing him. Stand in line with the girth area, and put one hand on your horse's withers (for safety) and simply turn on the clippers. If your horse reacts to the sound, turn them off, hold them further away, and then turn them on again. Find the place where he can comfortably tolerate the sound. For especially nervous horses, you may even have to stand outside the stall. Observe his reaction. When he relaxes – licks his lips, sighs or drops his head – turn the clippers off. Once your horse is comfortable with the sound, allow him to sniff the clippers. While they're turned off, rub them all over his body. Now switch the clippers on, turn them around backwards, and slowly rub him with them again. If he reacts, always retreat and start again. Using the concept of approach and retreat, build your horse's confidence and he will learn to like the clippers. Turn them upside down and give your horse a good vibrating rub all over. Giving your horse all the time he needs to become confident will work wonders for your relationship.

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