

Essential Grooming Supplies Checklist

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Compiling a basic grooming kit for your horse is part of good horsemanship. Grooming your horse on a daily basis gives you a chance to look him over for wounds, hoof maladies and general well-being. Every horse should have its own grooming kit; this helps prevent disease spread from one horse to the next. Here's a list of basic grooming items to stock:

Tote: Even if you only have one horse, you'll probably find that you need more than one grooming tote to carry your supplies. It all depends on how you like to organize your gear. Many people like one tote for regularly used supplies and another one for bathing supplies. **Rubber Curry:** Usually shaped like an oval or circle, a rubber curry has soft teeth that help loosen dirt and dander before brushing. **Stiff-bristled body brush:** removes dirt and caked mud. **Soft-bristled body brush:** Used as a finishing brush to remove dust. **Soft-bristled face brush:** Used exclusively on the horse's face. **Towel or rag:** An all-around tool to remove sweat marks and wipe the horse's face. (Note: keep a separate rag for cleaning around your horse's eyes to prevent causing infection.) **Sheepskin mitt:** Rub over coat after brushing for a finished shine. **Mane and tail comb:** Choose a wide-toothed comb and you'll be less likely to break the hairs. **Hoofpick with brush:** The pick/brush combo lets you pick your horse's hooves and then brush away the remaining debris. **Shampoo:** Be sure to find a mild shampoo that won't dry your horse's skin. **Two-gallon bucket:** Used for mixing water and shampoo. **Scrub mitt:** Used during bathing, this tool helps scrub away dirt and debris that lies beneath your horse's coat. **Green spot remover:** For light-colored horses, green spot remover products wash away hard-to-clean grass and manure stains. **Sweat scraper:** Used after bathing to remove excess water. **Equine mane and tail conditioner:** Use after shampooing and before combing to prevent hairs from breaking. Leave-in conditioning sprays are also helpful for detangling and leave a nice shine. **Mane pull:** If you like to keep your horse's mane tidy, add a simple metal pulling comb or invest in one of the specialty tools for the job. **Cooler:** During the colder months, outfit your horse in a cooler after bathing to help him stay warm and dry off faster. **Coat polish:** Adds a finishing gleam to your horse's clean coat. **Clippers:** Even if you don't show your horse, clippers are nice to have on hand for small jobs like whisker trimming. **Fly spray:** Technically not a grooming product, but you'll find that fly control goes hand-in-hand with the daily grooming process during the summer months. **Bot fly knife:** If bot flies are the norm in your area, you'll need one of these to remove fly eggs from your horse. **Blankets:** Horse blankets serve many purposes: Winter blankets help keep your horse warm during inclement weather and they're a must-have if you body clip your horse. Lightweight sheets are useful for cool spring and fall weather transitions. Fly sheets help protect your horse from insects during summer. All of these styles also help keep your horse clean. This article was originally published in the 2008 edition of *Horses USA*. [Click here to purchase the current edition.](#)