



## Polo Pony Glossary

### A

#### Above the Bit

When a horse raises its head and stretches forward, so that its mouth and the bit are above the rider's hand.

#### Acceptance

The unhesitant willingness of a horse to allow the maintenance of a steady contact, the application of aids, and/or the rider's weight.

#### Action

The movement of the legs of a horse.

#### Activity

The energy, vigor, and liveliness of the hind legs of a horse.

#### Aged

A horse of at least 15 years of age.

#### Aging

The process of estimating the age of a horse by examining the appearance and development of its teeth, eyes, and

#### Aid

Any signal given to a horse to signal it to halt, turn, or change gaits.

#### Albino

The lack of pigment in a horse. True Albino horses have pink skin, a white hair coat, and pink eyes.

#### Alignment

The lining up of a horse's body parts from tail to poll.

#### Anhidrosis

A horse with a limited ability to sweat.

#### Anthelmintics

Common name for various de-worming medications to control equine internal parasites.

#### Appaloosa

A breed of horse exhibiting one of a number of distinct coloration patterns. Developed by the Nez Perce Indians of Idaho for the River Palouse. The coloration patterns are leopard spot, blanket, snowflake, and frost.

#### Appealing

Claims made by polo players to the umpires that a foul has been committed against their team, expressed by the raising of mallets above the player's head.

#### AQHA

Abbreviation for the American Quarter Horse Association.

#### Arabian

An ancient breed of horse, originating in the deserts of the Middle East and having a strong influence on many other breeds, including the Thoroughbred.

#### Arrappaloosa

Cross between Appaloosa and Arabian breeds of horses.

#### Ascarids

Equine internal parasite, also called roundworms.

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## Artificial Aids

Mechanical means that enable a rider to direct a horse like spurs or a whip.

## At Grass

Turning out a horse in a paddock or field.

## Azoturia

A Myositis wherein a horse has prolonged muscle contractions during exercise. It is also called Tying-Up and Monday sickness because it can appear in fit horses after a period of rest.

## B

### Back at the Knee

A conformational fault where the foreleg bows backwards at the knee.

### Back Breeding

Breeding back to a certain Stallion to preserve a particularly desirable trait.

### Back Shot

A **backhand** swing in the sport of polo, changing the flow of play by sending the ball in the opposite direction.

### Balance

The relative distribution of weight of a horse and rider on the fore and hind legs (longitudinal balance) and the left and right legs (lateral balance). The horse is in good balance when the weight is distributed evenly left and right, and sufficiently low to the legs that the horse can move easily.

### Bald-Faced

A horse with a predominantly white face.

### Balk

When a horse stops short of an obstacle.

### Bandy-Legged

Outward turning of the hocks.

### Barn Sour

A horse that objects to riding away from the barn.

### Barrel

The area of a horse's body between the forelegs and the loins.

### Bars

The fleshy area where the bit rests between the back and front teeth of a horse.

### Bat

Artificial Aid that a rider uses with the Natural Aids of the seat and legs to encourage reluctant or lazy horses to move forward.

### Bay

Standard color name for a horse with a black mane and tail, black lower legs, and reddish brown over the rest of the body.

### Bedding

Wood shavings, shredded newspaper, straw, sand or other materials used to line the floor of a horse's stall.

### Behind the Bit

When a horse intentionally holds his head behind the vertical and decreases a rider's control.

### Behind the Vertical

The position of a horse's head wherein the horse's nostrils fall behind an imaginary vertical line dropping from the top of the horse's chest). The horse may or may not be behind the bit.

### Bell Boots

Protective boots that cover the horse's hooves.

### Billets

Straps to attach the girth to the saddle.

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## **Bit**

Metal mouthpiece attached to the reins.

## **Bit Metal**

A metal bar on a bridle placed in the horse's mouth used to control a horse.

## **Blaze**

A broad white stripe down the face of a horse.

## **Blemish**

A permanent mark or scar on a horse's skin made by an injury or disease.

## **Blinders**

The flaps on a bridle that keep a horse from seeing to the side or back. Also called Blinkers.

## **Blinkers**

The flaps on a bridle that keep a horse from seeing to the side or back.

## **Blistering**

Applying a caustic agent to the leg of a horse. Uses for the treatment of a variety of conditions.

## **Blood Horse**

A Thoroughbred horse.

## **Bloodstock**

Thoroughbred horses bred for racing.

## **Boarding Stable**

An equestrian facility where horse's are boarded for a monthly fee. The fee can include just the space, a stall or a paddock. Some boarding stables also include feed, shoes, grooming, and/or training as well.

## **Bog Spavin**

A condition of mild synovial swelling on the inside of the hock. It does not usually cause lameness.

## **Bone**

The measurement around the leg of a horse just below the knee or hock. Used to determine a horse's ability to carry weight.

## **Bosal**

A braided noseband used in western equitation. Also called a bit-less bridle since no mouthpiece is used.

## **Bots**

Any type of equine parasite.

## **Bowed Hocks**

A conformational fault where the hocks on the hind legs turn too far outward.

## **Bowed Tendon**

A permanently swollen tendon which doesn't result in lameness and is not as strong as a normal tendon.

## **Bowl In**

When the umpire starts or resumes a polo match by rolling the ball down the center of a lineup of players, same as a bowl out.

## **Boxy Hooves**

Narrow upright hooves with a small frog and closed heel.

## **Breaking-In**

The early training of a young horse when it learns to carry a rider.

## **Breast Collar**

A leather piece of tack placed across a horse's chest to help keep the saddle in place.

## **Breeches**

Tight fitting riding pants that tuck into your boots. Primarily worn by women.

## **Breed**

A horse with a distinct genetic makeup. Recognized members of a breed are listed in the breed's official studbook.

## **Bridle**

A harness of leather straps that fits around a horse's head used to hold the bit in its mouth.

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## **Bridoon**

Snaffle bit used with a curb bit in a double bridle.

## **Brood Mare**

A mare used for breeding purposes.

## **Broken-In**

A horse that accepts tack and a rider and is ready for training.

## **Broken Winded**

A horse that has an abnormal breathing pattern due to Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

## **Bronco**

A wild wild wild horse.

## **Bronco Buster**

A cowboy who breaks-in wild horses.

## **Brown**

Standard color of a horse with a mix of black and brown hairs on the body and black points.

## **Brushing**

A horse's hoof or shoe hits the inside of its opposite leg, at or near the fetlock.

## **Brushing Boots**

Tack to protect the legs of a horse from injury due to brushing.

## **Bucking**

When a horse kicks out both back legs to dismount a rider or shuck-off tack.

## **Buckskin**

Standard color of a horse that has a cream to dark bronze body with a mane, tail, legs, and tips of the ears being brown.

## **Bump**

When a polo player directs his pony into the side of an opponent's pony for the purpose of moving the opponent off

## **C**

### **Cadence**

The measured movement, rhythm, and beat of a horse's footfalls.

### **Cannon Bone**

Bone of the lower foreleg between the knee and the fetlock. Also called the shin bone.

### **Canter**

The gait of a horse where three legs are simultaneously suspended off the ground. **The canter** is faster than **the trot** **the gallop**.

### **Cantle**

The rear edge of an English saddle.

### **Capped Hocks**

Swelling on the point of the hock which can be caused by a blow or injury, or by a horse lying down repeatedly in its bedding.

### **Carriage Horse**

A light horse used for carriage driving.

### **Cart Horse**

A cold blooded draft horse.

### **Cast**

A horse that rolls and gets stuck against the wall of its stall or along a fence.

### **Cavesson**

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A padded noseband with three swiveling metal rings, to which the lunge or side reins attach, used to train a young horse.

## Chaps

These are long leather leggings usually worn over jeans by polo players for greater grip in the saddle. Not to be confused with chaps.

## Check and Turn

In a polo match, to slow the pony and turn safely.

## Check Up

In a polo match, to slow the pony quickly, usually to avoid a foul or because the line of the ball has changed.

## Chestnut

A standard color of a horse with a reddish brown body, mane and tail. It can also refer to a bony protrusion on the inner side of the forearm on each foreleg.

## Chin Groove

Groove above a horse's lower lip where the curb chain of a curb bit is positioned.

## Chrome

The white markings of a horse.

## Chukker

The term used for period of play in polo, seven and a half minutes long, there are six chukkers in a polo match.

## Cinch

Used to secure a Western saddle to a horse, it attaches to the saddle on one side and runs under the horse's barrel to the other side.

## Clean-Legged

A horse without feathering on its lower legs.

## Clydesdale

A breed of horse used for heavy draft work. It originated in Scotland and was made famous by Budweiser.

## Coach Horse

A powerful horse capable of drawing a heavy coach.

## Cob

A strong horse only about 15 hands high and descended from draft horses.

## Coffin Bone

A small bone in the hoof of a horse. In severe cases of [laminitis](#) the coffin bone can detach and rotate, causing extreme pain and even death.

## Coggins Test

Blood test for Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) needed when transporting a horse across state lines. Most states and the federal government require the destroying or permanent quarantining of a horse that tests positive for EIA.

## Coldblood

Heavy European horse breeds descended from the prehistoric Forest Horse.

## Collection

When a rider causes a horse's frame to become compacted and the horse is light and supple in the hand. This results in a shortened stride, its shoulder rising, and its head staying vertical. The opposite of extension.

## Colic

Any [abdominal pain](#) in a horse. It can range in severity from mild to life threatening.

## Colostrum

First milk produced by a mare after foaling. It contains globulins to provide the newborn foal with temporary immunity against disease.

## Colt

A male horse under 3 years of age.

## Conformation

The frame or skeletal build of a horse. A horse with good conformation will look proportional.

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## **COPD**

Abbreviation for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, or Heaves. Brought on by allergies and characterized by an abnormal breathing pattern and reduced tolerance to exercise.

## **Coronet**

Surface of the hoof.

## **Counter Canter**

A movement in which the horse canters in a circle with its outside leg leading instead of the usual inside leg.

## **Cow Hocks**

A conformational fault where the hocks on the hind legs turn inward towards each other.

## **Cracked Heels**

Inflammation of a horse's heels resulting in cracked skin and a discharge of fluids.

## **Crest**

Top of the horse's neck where the mane grows.

## **Cribbing**

A bad habit characterized by a horse grabbing onto a horizontal object, stretching its esophagus, sucking in air, and then releasing it to induce a type of high. This behavior can become obsessive and is usually engaged in because a horse is bored and lacks companionship. Pretty much the same reason people get high.

## **Criollo**

A horse with a medium head, convex face, muscular neck, and short deep body and legs. Argentinean polo ponies are Criollos. They are very fast and intelligent.

## **Crop**

A stick, sometimes with a leather loop at the end, used by a rider to get a horse's attention.

## **Cross Breeding**

The mating of horses of different breeds or types.

## **Cross Canter**

When a horse canters on one lead in front and the other lead behind.

## **Cross Country**

Riding that through open country including jumps.

## **Cross Ties**

A method of tethering a horse using two ropes or ties, one on each side, connected to a solid post or wall.

## **Croup**

Top of the hindquarters from the point of the hip to the tail.

## **Crow Hopping**

When a horse jumps in the air repeatedly with all four feet suspended off the ground.

## **Crupper**

A piece of leather under the tail to keep a saddle from sliding forward.

## **Curb Bit**

A single bar mouthpiece that attaches at each end to upright bars, unlike rings on a Snaffle Bit, to provide more control and is gentler on a horse's mouth than a Snaffle Bit.

## **Curry Comb**

Plastic or rubber comb with several rows of short flexible bristles for removing loose hair and dirt from a horse's coat.

## **Cutting Horse**

A powerful, fast horse trained to single out a calf from the herd.

## **D**

## **Dam**

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Mother of a horse.

## Deep Going

Ground that is so wet or soft that a horse's hooves sink in. This is often the cause of a dangerous fall for both rider and horse.

## Diagonals

A rider's movement when posting in an up-down motion along with the diagonal movement of the horse's legs at the trot.

## Dipped Back

A hollow back between a horse's withers and croup.

## Dished Face

A horse that has a concave head in profile. Many Arabians have this trait.

## Disobedience

When a horse does not want to follow a rider's cues such as a refusal.

## Distemper

A very contagious disease caused by streptococcus equi bacteria. It is also called Strangles.

## Disunited

The legs of a horse are out of sequence in [the canter](#).

## Dock

The top of a horse's tail.

## Docking

The cruel amputation of a horse's dock for the sake of appearance.

## Don Horse

A tough and reliable horse that can withstand harsh winter conditions, with a plain head, long neck, broad back, strong short straight shoulders, and hard legs.

## Dorsal Stripe

A dark stripe along a horse's back.

## Double Bridle

Traditional English bridle with curb and snaffle bits that provides a rider with greater control versus a single bit.

## Draft Horse

Any horse used for hauling vehicles or heavy loads.

## Draw Rein

Set of reins attached to the girth at one end, passing through the rings of the bit and back to the rider's hands. Used to align the horse's head position.

## Dropped Noseband

Noseband that buckles beneath the bit to prevent the horse from opening its mouth and getting hold of the bit and reins.

## Dun

Standard color of a horse ranging from a light to medium sand color with dark skin, dark points on the mane, tail, and legs.

## Dutch Warmblood

A popular sport horse bred from English, French, and German horses mixed with Dutch horses.

## E

### East Friesian

A saddle horse with a straight profile, elegant head, strong neck and body, with a light build and short legs.

### EIA

an abbreviation for Equine Infectious Anemia, also called Swamp Fever, a viral disease for which there is no known cure.

### English Saddle

A simple, small saddle without a large pommel used for polo, dressage, and eventing.

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## EPM

Abbreviation for Equine Protozoal Myeloencephalitis. A neurological disorder caused by protozoa in the spinal cord. Symptoms include nerve damage, stumbling, loss of coordination, and muscle atrophy.

## EPSM

Abbreviation for Equine Polysaccharide Storage Myopathy. A muscle wasting condition seen mainly in draft horses.

## Ewe Neck

A conformation fault in which the neck is concave along the upper edge along with a bulging of muscles along the lower edge.

## Extension

The lengthening of the horse's frame and stride. The opposite of collection.

## F

### Farrier

A professional blacksmith who shoes horses.

### Farriery

The practice of shoeing horses.

### Feathers

The long hairs of the fetlock that cover the hooves of some draft horses.

### Fetlock

Ankle joint of a horse's leg.

### Field

A **polo field** is usually 300 yards long by 160 yards wide and outlined by sideboards.

### Figure Eight Noseband

A noseband with thin leather straps that cross over at the front and buckle both above and below the bit.

### Filly

A female horse under 4 years of age.

### Firing

A treatment that burns the skin with a hot iron, usually over a leg injury, to produce scar tissue.

### Fistulous Withers

The inflammation of the bursa at the height of the withers.

### Flagman

An unofficial goal observer appointed to signal, by waving a flag over the head, if a goal is scored, or under the waist if a goal is not scored, during a polo match.

### Flexion

The full bending of the hock joints. Veterinarians perform flexion tests when diagnosing lameness.

### Flexor Tendon

A tendon at the back of the leg of a horse.

### Foal

A male or female horse less than one year old.

### Forearm

The upper part of the foreleg above the knee of a horse.

### Forefoot

One of a horse's two front feet.

### Forelock

The part of the mane between a horse's ears that hangs forward over its forehead.

### Foundation

Quarter Horses whose bloodlines have not had any Thoroughbred blood added since 1940. They must be registered with the American Quarter Horse Association.

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and have less than 10% Thoroughbred blood.

## Founder

The detachment and rotation of the coffin bone that occurs in severe cases of [laminitis](#).

## Free Walk

A relaxed walk that allows the horse to lengthen and stretch to the bit.

## Frog

The fleshy triangular underside of the hoof.

## Full Mouth

A six year old horse with all his permanent teeth.

## Furacin

A brand name for the antibacterial medication nitrofurazone.

## Furioso

A horse with a compact build, good deep girth, and strong hindquarters, most commonly used for Steeplechase.

## Futurity

An breeding program to promote a particular breed or type of horse.

## G

### Gait

The four different ways a horse can move (Walk, Trot, Canter, and Gallop) by lifting its feet in rhythm.

### Gaited Horse

Horses that move at additional paces besides the walk, trot, and canter. One example is the fifth gait of the Iceland

### Gallop

The fastest of the four natural gaits of a horse. All four feet are in [suspension off the ground](#) simultaneously. This is

### Galvayne's Groove

A [dark line](#) that first appears on the upper corner incisor of horses at about 8 years of age. It extends downward and makes it easier to estimate the age of a horse. It is not always accurate and can be altered through a practice known as Bishoping.

### Gelderlander

A carriage horse with a strong back, compact body, long back, powerful hindquarters, and short clean legs.

### Gelding

A castrated male horse.

### Girth

The strap around a horse's belly that secures the saddle to a horse's back.

### Goal

A goal is [scored](#) in a polo match anytime the ball crosses the line between the goal posts, regardless of who (including the horse) knocks it through.

### Gray

A standard color of a horse that ranges from white to dark gray and can include some dappling. Gray horses have been

### Grease

Inflammation of a horse's skin at the back of the fetlock and pasterns. Usually occurs in horses pastured on wet grass.

### Green Horse

A horse that will accept tack and a rider, but has not yet been trained for polo.

### Groningen

A solid colored horse with a strong head, short neck, strong withers, long body, and thick legs.

### Grooming

The maintenance of a horse's coat, including clipping, brushing, washing, or trimming the horse's mane and tail. It is

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shaving of the mane and braiding of the tail before a polo match.

## Ground Manners

The behavior of a horse while in the stable, being groomed, or saddled.

## H

### Hackamore

A bridle without a bit used with reins. It applies pressure on the horse's nose and jaw to provide control to the rider

### Half Hitch

A type of simple knot.

### Halt

The term for stop, usually preceded by "whoa", a tug on the reins, and sitting back in the saddle.

### Halter

Harness of leather, rope, or nylon that fits over a horse's head, like a bridle but without a bit or reins, used for leading and tying up.

### Halter Broke

A young horse trained to wear a halter.

### Handicap

In the sport of polo, team play is handicapped on the basis of ability. A polo team's handicap is the total of its play. The team with the lower handicap is awarded the difference in goals at the start of the match. An exception is when "On The Flat" which means no goals are awarded based on differences in the team's handicaps.

### Hands

A hand is approximately 4 inches. A horse's height is measured from its withers, the highest point on a horse's back where the mane begins.

### Harness

The driving tack of a horse.

### Harness Horse

A horse used in harness and having a harness type of conformation, with straight shoulders and an elevated harnes

### Heart Room

A horse with a deep chest and wide ribs will have enough heart and lung capacity for strenuous exercise.

### Heaves

Term used to describe the abnormal breathing pattern seen in horses with COPD.

### Heavy Horse

Any large draft horse such as the Clydesdale or the Belgian Draft.

### Hind Foot

One of a horse's back feet.

### Hind Quarters

The part of the horse's body from the rear of the flank to the top of the tail down to the top of the gaskin.

### Hives

Allergic reaction characterized by bumps on the skin.

### Hobbles

Restraints that fasten around a horse's front legs below the ankle to keep it from running off while a rider is out of t

### Hock

The knee of a horse's hind legs.

### Hocks Well Let Down

Conformational trait referring to a horse with short cannon bones which give a horse strength in its legs.

### Hogged Mane

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A horse's mane that has been shaved close for its entire length. All polo ponies have their manes shaved for the safety of the rider.

## Hoof Pick

Metal or plastic tool with a pointed end for picking debris out of the underside of a horse's hooves.

## Hook

A polo player positions their mallet to catch an opponent's mallet in mid-swing below the level of the horse's back. A hook can be used to stop an opponent's shot or cause the hit to be less accurate.

## Horn

The surface of a horse's hoof.

## Hot

A horse that becomes overly excited or is easily excitable.

## Hotblood

Horses of Arabian or Thoroughbred blood.

## Hunt Seat

A type of equestrian discipline using an English saddle that involves riding cross country and jumping as in foxhunting.

## Hybrid

A cross between a horse and one of the other Equids, such as a Zebra.

## I

## Icelandic Horse

A beautiful ancient breed of horse originating in Iceland. They are versatile riding horses, exhibiting a unique gait, called a tölt, which is a very fast running walk.

## Impulsion

Strong controlled forward movement in a horse.

## Inbreeding

Mating of brother and sister, or sire and daughter, or son and dam. This practice accentuates a particular trait or characteristic.

## Indirect Rein

The direct rein is the one you directly pull to move the bit in the horse's mouth. The indirect rein is the one you press against the horse's neck.

## In Front of the Bit

A horse pulling or hanging heavily on the rider's hand.

## In Hand

Controlling a horse from the ground rather than in the saddle.

## Inside Leg

The 2 legs of a horse and 1 leg of its rider that are on the inside of a curved path the horse is going on.

## Irons

English stirrups used for polo.

## J

## Jack

Male donkey.

## Jenny

Female donkey.

## Jockey

Rider on a race horse.

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## Jodhpur

Flared calf-length trousers worn with riding boots.

## Jog

A slow trot.

## Joint Ill

A disease in foals caused by bacteria entering its navel. The infection spreads to the foal's joints and causes inflamm heat.

## Jumper

A horse ridden for its strength and its ability to jump obstacles.

## Junior

A polo player under 18 years of age.

## K

### Knackers

Slang for slaughterhouse or someone who buys horses for the purpose of taking them to slaughter.

### Knock In

When the ball crosses the back line in the sport of polo, the defending team knocks the ball back into play from thei

### Knock Kneed

Conformation fault where the horse's knees point in toward each other.

## L

### Lame

A horse that is lame cannot carry its weight equally on all four legs. Lameness can be caused by disease or injury.

### Laminitis

Inflammation of the inside lining of the hoof ([Laminae](#)).

### Lampas

Swelling of the hard palate in a horse's mouth. This can occur when a young horse is switched to hard feed and/or c

### Laryngeal Hemiplegia

Partial paralysis of the horse's larynx causing it breathing difficulty. You will hear a noise, called roaring, when the h

### Lateral Cartilages

Cartilage attached to the coffin bone within a horse's foot.

### Lead

The right or left leg on a horse that leads during the [canter](#). The horse's inside foreleg reaches the farthest when its lead.

### Lead Change

A rider asks the horse to change its lead foot in a transition.

### Leave It

A polo player uses this command tell a teammate to ride past the ball so that another teammate in better position c

### Leg Up

A rider is assisted mounting by another person holding the lower part of his left leg and giving the rider a boost as a up off the ground into the saddle.

### Light of Bone

Conformation fault due to insufficient bone below the horse's knee to support a rider's body weight without strain.

### Line Breeding

Mating horses with a common ancestor to accentuate a particular trait.

## Line of the Ball

Every hit in polo creates an imaginary line produced by the direction of the ball when it is hit or deflected. This line is the rule of safety for players and their mounts. The line of the ball creates a right of way for players, specifying when they can cross the line or hit the ball safely. Penalties are awarded for fouls committed that violate this rule. More fouls regarding the ball and right of way are awarded penalty shots and argued over than any other single aspect of polo.

## Livery Stable

English term for a boarding stable.

## Loins

Weakest part of a horse's back.

## Longe

Training a horse by working it in a circle using a longe or lunge rein attached to the cavesson.

## Lope

A slow **canter** used by Western riding disciplines.

## Lymphangitis

A disorder of a horse's Lymphatic system often in the hind legs which become painfully swollen. Usually seen in workhorses getting full feed but confined to their stalls due to inclement weather or another illness.

## M

### Made Pony

A polo pony that is well trained for polo and has been played in games for some time.

### Mallet Head

The part of the **mallet** used to strike a ball in polo. The wide face of the head is used to strike the ball.

### Mare

Adult female horse over 4 years old.

### Martingale

Leather strap that goes from the girth to the bridle underneath the chin to **prevent a horse** from throwing its head up on **polo ponies**.

### Meconium

Firm dark brown or black fecal matter passed by a foal after birth.

### Melanoma

A skin growth or tumor, common to gray or white horses, it can be malignant or benign.

### Middleweight

A horse that receives judging, by virtue of its bone and substance, capable of carrying weights up to 196 lbs.

### Mitbah

The angle which the neck of an Arabian horse joins its head. It defines the characteristic Arabian arched neck.

### Mucking

Cleaning out the manure and soiled bedding from a stall.

### Mule

The offspring of a male donkey and a female horse.

### Mustang

A wild horse from the American West. Mustangs are protected and managed by the government and roam free in the Yellowstone National Park.

### Mutton Withers

Wide flat withers on horses like the Quarter Horse as opposed to the sharp bony withers on the Thoroughbred.

## N

# Polo Pony Glossary

## Natural Aids

Subtle body signals given to a horse by a rider's seat, hands, and legs. Voice commands to a horse are also considered.

## Navicular Bone

Small bone within the hoof between the short pastern and the coffin bone.

## Navicular Disease

A disease of the navicular bone usually induced by improper horseshoeing or excess stress on a horse's hooves it causes lameness.

## Nearside

The left hand side of the horse.

## Neck Rein

A rider, holding both reins in one hand as in polo, turns a horse by placing one rein against its neck. To turn left the right rein to the horse's neck, and the opposite to turn right.

## Neck Reining

Turning a horse by using the indirect rein against the neck. The indirect rein is the one that is not pulling on the bit.

## Neck Shot

One of 4 basic shots in polo. A neck shot is hitting the ball under the horse's neck, usually to pass or change the direction of the ball.

## Neck Strap

The part of a martingale that goes around a horse's neck.

## Nerve Block

A diagnostic tool used by veterinarians to progressively block nerves in a horse's leg to determine the source of a horse's lameness.

## Neurectomy

Cutting the nerves supplying sensation to a horse's foot to treat navicular disease.

## Nick

A cruel procedure that divides and then resets a horse's muscles under its tail to give the horse artificially-induced tail set.

## O

### Officials

In a polo match two mounted umpires do most of the officiating, with a referee at midfield on the sidelines who has authority to settle any dispute between the mounted umpires.

### Offside

The right hand side of a horse.

### On the Bit

Restraining a horse by putting pressure on the bit.

### On the Flat

A polo match played on the flat makes no allowances for team handicap differences.

### Open

A polo tournament without any entry restrictions based on previous wins. The [U.S. Polo Open](#) is an example of an open tournament.

### Outlaw

A wild horse that can't be broken or ridden.

### Over at the Knee

Conformational fault where a horse's foreleg bows forward at the knee.

### Overbent

A horse can drop his head in to its chest to reduce the rider's control of the bit.

### Over Reaching

While a horse is galloping it catches the toe of its hind foot with the back of the pastern or heel on its front foot.

## P

### Pack Horse

Any horse used to carry goods placed in packs on either side of its back.

### Paddock

A small enclosure where horses turnout for grazing.

### Paint Horse

A breed of horse with Pinto coloring.

### Palomino

A gold colored horse with a blond or white mane and tail.

### Parietal Bones

The bones on the top of a horse's skull.

### Parrot Mouth

An overbite where the top jaw in a horse extends forward over the lower jaw.

### Part Bred

Breeding a Thoroughbred with a horse of another breed.

### Paso Fino

A breed of horse originally from Spain known for comfort and endurance.

### Pass

A polo player hits the ball forward or laterally to a teammate or thru the goal posts.

### Pastern

The area between a horse's hoof and fetlock joint on each leg.

### Pedigree

Details of a horse's parentage and ancestry which are recorded in a studbook or registry.

### Pelham Bit

A bit that with a chain that goes under the chin. A rider uses two sets of reins with a Pelham bit.

### Penalty

Polo penalties are numbered from 1 to 10, a free hit is awarded to the team fouled, from a set distance determined the foul committed.

### Piebald

A horse color made up of white with black patches.

### Pigeon Toed

Conformational fault where the horse's hooves turn in towards each other.

### Pinto

A standard color of a horse which is also called Paint. A Pinto horse has large patches of brown or black and white.

### Player Positions

There are four players on a [polo team](#), numbered 1 through 4, each with different responsibilities.

### Points

The mane, tail, and lower legs of a horse.

### Poll

The highest point on the top of a horse's head.

### Polo

Imagine a ball hit so hard ... that it comes at you at a speed of 110 miles per hour, so fast, you can hardly see it. You [gallop](#), get your [horse](#) in [line](#) with the [ball](#), and either [pass](#) it ahead to a [teammate](#), or [carry](#) the ball down the field at [goal](#). The king of sports and the sport of kings. Refer to [www.sportPOLO.com](http://www.sportPOLO.com)

### Polocrosse

A sport played on horseback that combines elements of polo and lacrosse. Since only one horse is used by a player,

# Polo Pony Glossary

considerably less expensive than polo where a player must mount a new horse in each **chukker**.

## Pommel

The front of a saddle that fits over the horse's withers.

## Pony

A fully grown horse that is 14.2 hands or less. However, a **polo pony** can be **any size** and most are well over 15 hands.

## Pony Goal

In any polo game when a pony causes the ball to go through the goal posts the score is counted. A good horse will not stop if it is in front of the goal posts.

## Port

The raised section in the center of the mouthpiece on some curb bits. The higher it raises the greater the severity of the bite.

## Posting Trot

The action of a rider rising from the saddle in rhythm with **the trot** of a horse. In polo, players use a variation called **post**.

## Primitive

The early species of Equus Caballus including the Asian Wild Horse, the Tarpan, the Forest Horse and the Tundra Horse.

## Pulling Leather

The horn of the saddle, on the pommel, that a cowboy holds to keep from being thrown when a horse is bucking.

## Pure Bred

A horse with both parents from the same breed.

## Purity

The correctness of the order and timing of a horse's footfalls for all gaits.

## Q

### Quarter Horse

A breed of horse originated in the USA that is very popular for ranch work, Rodeo, Cutting, polo, racing, and riding in many other disciplines.

### Quarters

The hind part of a horse's body from the rear of the flank to the top of the tail down to the top of the gaskin.

### Quidding

A horse that drops partially chewed food from its mouth. Usually caused by old age or dental problems.

### Quirt

A weighted short-handled whip made of braided leather.

## R

### Racehorse

A horse bred for racing. It can be an Arabian, Quarter Horse, Standardbred, or a Thoroughbred.

### Rack

A single-footed extremely rapid and smooth four-beat gait unique to the American Saddlebred and the National Show Horse.

### Rearing

A horse stands on his hind legs with both forelegs in the air to unsettle a rider or rid itself of irritating tack.

### Registry

A breeding organization which has registration papers on horses.

### Reining

A Western style of riding that demonstrates tremendous agility in turning, stopping, lead changing, and more. For the most advanced Western riders perform an individual, preassigned pattern from memory, demonstrating a variety of maneuvers.

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figures at various speeds. The emphasis is on the technical application of natural aids and the rider's ability to ride u

## Resistance

Acts by a horse that indicate a refusal to continue such as rearing, making a half turn, or stepping back.

## Ride Off

In polo two riders may make contact and attempt to push each other off the line of the ball to prevent an opponent ball. A ride off is a particularly useful strategy when a player takes an opponent, who does not yet have the ball or to play, thereby eliminating the opponent's effectiveness either defensively or offensively.

## Ridgling

A male horse retains one testicle within the body. It can cause stallion-like behavior that is treatable with surgery.

## Riding Horse

A horse suitable for riding with a conformation and a comfortable riding action unlike draft or carriage horses.

## Ringbone

Bony changes within the Pastern and Coffin joints. Lameness can occur during these changes but disappears once completely formed.

## Ringworm

Contagious fungal disease in a horse characterized by small circular patches where hair falls out.

## Rising Trot

The action of a rider rising from the saddle in rhythm with the horse's trot. In the sport of polo a variation is used called [Meadowbrook](#) post.

## Roach

The shaved mane found [polo ponies](#).

## Roach Back

A convex curvature of a horse's spine between its withers and loins.

## Roan

A standard color of a horse in which white hairs are mixed with a base coat color: black (blue roan), bay (red roan), (strawberry roan). A strawberry roan is from a mix of chestnut and white hairs that create an overall reddish effect. mix of black and white hairs which create an overall blue effect.

## Roaring

Characteristic abnormal noise produced when a horse with Laryngeal Hemiplegia inhales.

## Rodeo

A equestrian discipline where riders (cowboys) display their skills at bronco busting, cutting, and roping that began

## Roll Back

A tight turn performed between two fences to show control of the horse and a rider's ability to maintain position through Western reining a rollback is a 180-degree pivot turn with speed after a halt.

## Rosin Back

A broad-backed horse used for trick riding acts.

## Roundworm

An internal equine parasite called Ascarids.

## S

### Saddlebred

A breed of horse popular for its spectacular gaits. It originated in the USA. Some Saddlebreds are used for indoor ar

### Saddle Horn

A horn or handle on the pommel of a Western saddle where a rider loops his lariat during the roping of a steer to sec

### Saddle Horse

Any fully broke riding horse.

# Polo Pony Glossary

## Saddle Marks

These are white hairs in the saddle area caused by galls.

## Safety

Also known as Penalty 6, a defending player hits the ball over his own back line during a polo match.

## Scours

Term for diarrhea in foals.

## Scratches

Scabed, oozing skin inflammation on the back of the pasterns just above a horse's heel.

## Seedy Toe

The separation of a horse's hoof wall from the sensitive Laminae caused by neglecting the horse's feet.

## Set Tail

A horse's tail that has been intentionally broken or nicked to produce an artificially high tail carriage.

## Shank Bone

Hind Cannon.

## Show Jumping

A horse and rider must clear a number of obstacles on a course within a specified time.

## Shy

A horse that jumps suddenly to one side when startled by a real or imaginary object.

## Sideboards

Long short boards along the sidelines of the polo field to help keep the ball in play.

## Sidebone

The ossification of the lateral cartilage on either side of a horse's coffin bone within the hoof.

## Side Reins

Reins used to position a horse's head. They attach on one end to the bit and to the girth or the training surcingle at

## Sire

Father of a horse.

## Slab Sided

Narrow ribbed.

## Snaffle Bit

A simple bit consisting of one or two bars linked in the middle. Rings at each end attach to the reins.

## Snip

White marking between the nostrils on a horse.

## Sock

An area of white coat hair extending up to a horse's fetlock.

## Sound

Any horse that is free from lameness or injury.

## Spavin

A bone enlargement of a horse's hock that results in lameness in one or both hind legs.

## Splay Footed

Conformational fault wherein a horse's hooves turn away from each other.

## Splints

An injury to one or both of the metacarpal or splint bones that run up the back of a horse's cannon bone. Stress or : the ligaments that attach these bones to the cannon bone to pull apart or tear, causing heat, swelling and lameness additional bone forms over the injury producing a bony swelling.

## Spur

A pointed device on the rider's boot heel used to urge a horse forward. In the sport of polo, spurs are rounded and : the horse.

# Polo Pony Glossary

## Stallion

Any male horse that is not gelded.

## Star

Any white marking above or between a horse's eyes.

## Straightness

A horse's weight distribution and straightness allow it to follow any line of travel while maintaining a steady rhythm never wavering from the rider's chosen line. This especially important in the sport of polo where the rider is up in the air swinging his mallet at a ball, while simultaneously another player is pushing his horse against him to move him off the ball.

## Stick

A polo mallet.

## Stick and Ball

Personal practice time in the sport of polo.

## Stirrup

A loop or ring hung from the saddle that supports a rider's foot.

## Stock Horse

Horses that used for ranch work, driving, and cutting cattle.

## Stocking

White area of a horse that extends up to the cannon.

## Strangles

A highly contagious horse disease caused by streptococcus equi that is also called distemper.

## Stride

The amount of ground a horse covers in one step.

## Stripe

A narrow white stripe down a horse's face.

## Strongyles

An equine internal parasite also called bloodworms.

## Stud

A stallion used for breeding purposes.

## Studbook

A list kept by a horse breeder society or registry that contains the pedigrees of horses eligible for registration.

## Submission

When a horse has unresisting obedience to its rider.

## Sudden Death

Overtime play in polo when the score is tied at the end of the last regular chukker, the first team to score a goal wins.

## Surcingle

A webbing strap that passes around a horse's barrel to enable the attaching of side reins.

## Suspensory Ligament

Ligaments involved in the support of the fetlock and the fetlock joint.

## Swing

Hitting at the ball with a polo mallet using one of four basic shots: forehander, backhander, neck shot, tail shot.

## T

## Tack

Any equipment worn by a horse including saddle, bridle, reins, martingale, leg wraps, saddle pads, et cetera.

## Tapeworms

An internal equine parasite.

# Polo Pony Glossary

## Tail Shot

One of the 4 basic shots in polo. A player hits the ball behind and under the polo pony's rump.

## Teaser

Substitute stallion used to test a mare's readiness for breeding.

## Tetanus

Serious bacterial infection in horses caused by clostridium tetani. It enters a horse's body through puncture wounds  
Lockjaw.

## Third Man

In every polo match there is a referee sitting on the sidelines at midfield, if the two mounted umpires on the field are in disagreement, the third man makes the final decision.

## Thoroughbred

A breed of horse descended from three Arab stallions brought to Britain in the 17th century. Thoroughbreds average  
racehorses are thoroughbreds. Thoroughbreds make excellent polo ponies.

## Three Point Position

The basic riding position with three points of contact to the saddle: 2 legs and the seat. Two Point is when the rider  
irons, seat above the saddle.

## Throw In

Whenever the umpire starts or resumes a polo match, he rolls the ball down the center of a lineup of players and then

## Thrush

A fungal or bacterial infection of the frog characterized by foul smelling discharge from the cleft of the frog.

## Tied in Below the Knee

Conformation fault wherein the measurement below the knee is substantially less than that above the fetlock.

## Time Out

In polo an umpire may call a time out when a foul is committed, an accident occurs, or at his or her discretion, a player  
a time out if he has broken tack or is injured.

## Top Line

The line from the back of a horse's withers to the end of the croup.

## Trailer

A vehicle used to transport one or more horses that is towed by a truck.

## Transition

A change of pace or movement in a horse.

## Trot

One of the four gaits of a horse. One foreleg and the opposite hind leg are on the ground as the other foreleg and the other  
hind leg are moving forward. This is faster than a walk but slower than a canter or gallop.

## Turnout

The practice of turning horses loose in a field or pasture.

## Turn the Ball

In a polo match a defending player will backhand hit the ball away from the goal being defended.

## Twitch

A metal clasp applied to a horse's top lip to restrain it for medical treatment.

## Two Point Position

The position of a rider with seat out of the saddle and the legs firmly in the irons. This position is most often used in  
to hit the ball with a mallet while riding.

## Type

Any horse that fulfills a certain purpose, such as a polo pony or a hunter, and is not necessarily of any particular breed.

## U

# Polo Pony Glossary

## Umpires

In the sport of polo there are two mounted officials, one for each side of the field.

## Undershot

A deformity in a horse where the lower jaw projects beyond the upper jaw.

## Unsoundness

Any condition or conformation fault that limits the ability of a horse to work or exercise.

## Urticaria

An allergic reaction characterized by bumps on a horse's skin also known as hives.

## USET

Abbreviation for the United States Equestrian Team which fields teams to represent the USA in international compet jumping, eventing, dressage, and driving.

## USPA

United States Polo Association, the governing body of polo ([www.uspolo.org](http://www.uspolo.org)).

## V

### Vaulting

Gymnastics on a moving horse.

### Vetting

Subjecting a horse to a veterinary evaluation, examination, medication, or surgery.

## W

### Walleye

A horse's eye with no pigment or a slight blue tint. However, the color of the iris in a horse's eye has no affect on its

### Walk

The horse's **slowest gait** in which the legs move individually in a diagonal pattern.

### Warmblood

A type of sport horse resulting from crossing heavier draft horse breeds with lighter Thoroughbreds.

### Weedy

Any horse weak in the quarters and shoulders with long legs.

### Well Ribbed Up

A horse with a short, deep, and well rounded body that has well sprung ribs.

### Well Sprung Ribs

Long rounded ribs with ample room for lung expansion and suited to carrying a saddle.

### Western

A style of riding that includes reining, roping, pleasure, trail and cutting. The cowboy style saddle has a large pomm both reins in one hand and steers the horse moving both reins in the direction of the turn.

### Whip

A long thin device held by a rider and used to urge the horse on.

### Wind Sucking

Stable vice where a horse arches his neck and sucks air in through his open mouth.

### Withers

The slight ridge on a horse's back just before the mane begins. The point used to measure a horse's height.

### Wraps

The colorful **protective bandages** that polo ponies wear on their legs.

## X

### Xenophon

A General in the Greek army (430-356 BC) renowned for his treatise "On the Art of Horsemanship". His progressive horses has become the basis for classical riding today.

## Y

### Yearling

a Colt or Filly between one and two years of age.

### Yield

A horse moves away from pressure, without resistance, is flexible and supple at the slightest touch of leg or hand.

## Z

### Zebra

A member of the Equus family characterized by its striped coat pattern.

### Zorse

A hybrid cross between a Zebra and a horse.



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