

# **Equestrian Traveler's** **COMPANION**

*Your Essential  
Horse-Trailing  
Resource  
Winter 2021*

**11 Long-Haul  
Strategies**

**Living-Quarters-  
Trailer Camping**

**First-Aid-Kit  
Essentials**

**Build a Travel  
Saddle Stand**

# Equestrian Traveler's COMPANION

Your Essential Horse-Trailing Resource  
**Winter 2021**



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COVER PHOTO BY KENT & CHARLENE KRONE

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## TRAILERING TIP



PHOTO BY REBECCA GIMENEZ

Carry a second spare trailer tire whenever you trailer your horse.

## Carry a Second Spare

Carry a second spare trailer tire whenever you trailer your horse. This will minimize the time spend roadside changing the tire or waiting for roadside service. USRider provides a quick response to roadside-emergency calls. But with only one spare tire available, the disablement will take longer to remedy since a second tire will have to be located for your trailer model and delivered to the scene; or, you may require a tow.

When purchasing a new trailer, adding a second spare mount to the package. For existing trailers, visit a reputable trailer dealer to discuss options for mounting a second spare.

## HEALTH TIP

### Winter Hoof-Care Tips

Here are expert ways to help keep your horse's hooves healthy all winter long.

- **Let pastern hair grow.** Pastern hair protects the hoof head in winter. Use a hairdryer to dry legs if *scratches* (a lower-limb infection caused by prolonged contact with dirt and moisture) becomes a problem.
- **Think ahead.** Meet with your farrier to discuss your winter trimming and shoeing schedule. Set farrier appointments in advance. Form a Plan B if a shoeing appointment is on a "snow day" when driving may be hazardous.
- **Eliminate hazards.** Remove anything around your barn and pasture that could be an under-snow hazard. Fence off low areas where water collects. Inspect fences; remove wire fences that can trap a hoof.
- **Create safe paths.** Decide now which barn and pasture areas you'll plow and where snow piles will go. Chart the safest paths between stalls and turnout areas. Consider using landscaping materials, such as pea rock or wood chips, to provide better traction.
- **Limit sand and salt use.** Use loose sand and salt for traction only on pathways, not in your horse's turnout area. Sand and salt ingestion can lead to colic.
- **Stock up on traction aids.** Keep a supply of shav-



Meet with your farrier to discuss any adjustment of the shoeing or trimming schedule over winter.



PHOTO BY CLIXPHOTO.COM

In deep snow such as this, consider plowing a small turnout area, even if your horse has shelter.

ings, old carpets, and sand on hand to spread on icy areas.

- **Check blanket fit.** Properly fit your horse's blanket, and snug the straps securely in their keepers. Remove any excess strap length, so he doesn't catch a shoe heel and become entangled.
- **Plow turnout.** Consider plowing a small turnout area for your horse, if the area is accessible and the snow is deep.
- **Increase turnout time.** Allow your horse maximum turnout time so he can get used to footing changes.

—Fran Jurga, author of the informational [Hoof Blog](#), and publisher of the [Hoofcare & Lameness](#) news and media website.

## Blanket...or Not?



PHOTO BY CLIXPHOTO.COM

Horses are generally comfortable in cold conditions and most will travel well during the winter. If you have a stock trailer, apply a light sheet to protect him from the wind.

Should you blanket your horse in the trailer in winter...or not? It's not an easy decision. Horses are generally comfortable in cold conditions and most will travel well during the winter. But each horse is an individual. If your horse has a full winter coat and does well day-to-day, he shouldn't need a blanket. But if your horse doesn't have a heavy coat or is body-clipped, apply a blanket that's the same weight as the one he normally wears.

In either case, ventilate your trailer; horses are prone to respiratory illness, and a stuffy trailer becomes filled with toxic air from hay dust, shavings, and any gases from urine and manure. Your horse's body heat also builds up. Ventilate by opening the roof vents and a few windows in the back so air doesn't blow directly on your horse. If you have a stock trailer, apply a light sheet to protect him from the wind. Make sure he isn't sweating too much; he could get chilled and would also be at risk for dehydration, which can lead to colic.

—Tom Scheve & Neva Kittrell Scheve, [Equisprit.com](http://Equisprit.com)

## USRIDER MEMBER TIP

### All-Season Peace of Mind

Experiencing a roadside emergency in the colder months can be miserable for both horse and human. USRider is ready to help you quickly, whether you have a problem with your tow vehicle, your trailer, or both. In addition to towing your tow vehicle and/or your trailer to a repair shop, your Member benefits include the following services. (For details, visit [usrider.org](http://usrider.org).)

- **Battery assistance.** Service providers' vehicles are equipped to boost batteries and perform minor adjustments (exclusive of replacement parts) to batteries, alternators, etc. If you need a battery replaced and installed, you can request a Mobile Mechanic service.
- **Flat-tire assistance.** A flat tire will be removed and replaced with your spare tire. If you have no spare tire or your spare tire is damaged or otherwise inadequate, USRider will locate and arrange delivery and installation of replacement tires. You are responsible for the cost of any replacement tires.
- **Fuel, oil, and water delivery.** USRider's service truck will deliver emergency supplies of fuel, oil, or water necessary to get you on your way again. You're responsible for the cost of supplies.
- **Winch-out service.** If your tow vehicle or trailer is stuck in snow or mud, USRider will dispatch a service provider to free you.
- **Lockout service.** If your keys are lost or locked inside your vehicle, USRider will dispatch a locksmith or emergency service vehicle to assist you.



USRider is ready to help you quickly, whether you have a problem with your tow vehicle, your trailer, or both.

*(Some services provided are subject to certain restrictions and limitations. Member is responsible for non-covered expenses and expenses in excess of coverage limits. Please see your Membership Agreement for complete details.)*

# Be a Savvy Hauler



PHOTO BY CLIXPHOTO.COM

Take precautions on the road, especially in wintry conditions. Drive at least 5 mph under the speed limit, maintain a good distance behind the vehicle in front of you, and don't dart into traffic.



PHOTO BY HEIDI MELOCCO

Your rig doesn't have to be new, but it must be in good working condition, and your tow vehicle must be properly rated to tow your trailer and its load.

Help keep your horse, yourself, and your passengers safe by being a savvy hauler. This includes investing in a safe truck-and-trailer rig, practicing your towing skills before your trip, and being a safe and careful driver as you haul your horse to your destination.

## Your Rig

The foundation of good driving habits is a safe and properly rated rig. Whenever you take your horse out on the road, whether for a short or a long trip, you're putting yourself and your horse at a certain amount of risk. Your rig doesn't have to be new, but it must be in good working condition, and your tow vehicle must be properly rated to tow your trailer and its load.

If you're towing a tag-along (bumper-pull) >>

trailer, you must have a Class III or Class IV hitch that's bolted or welded to the frame of your tow vehicle. It must be rated to match or exceed the weight of your trailer. For any type of trailer—tag-along or gooseneck—make sure your trailer is level, the brakes and lights are working properly, the emergency breakaway brake is attached, and the battery is fully charged. Safety chains or cables must be hooked to the tow vehicle. Many states require safety chains or cables for gooseneck trailers, as well.

### Pre-Trip Practice

Besides having all the right equipment, what more can you do to improve your chances on the highway, and help you and your horse arrive at your destination safely and in a good frame of mind?

Take a ride in your trailer. (If you have a tag-along, practice on private property with the owner's permission; it's illegal to ride in the trailer.) You might be surprised how it feels each time the rig takes a turn or makes a sudden stop. Considerate driving can have a real effect on your horse's attitude about the trailer. Always think about your passenger, and chances are, he'll learn to actually enjoy—or at least gratefully tolerate—his trailer trips.

If trailering is new to you, practice driving your rig before you load your horse in the trailer. Know how to park and back up before you go out on the road.

Backing isn't so hard once you know the secret: Put your hand on the bottom of the steering wheel. To turn the back of the trailer to the left, move your hand to the left (turning the steering wheel clockwise). To turn the back of your



PHOTO BY HEIDI MELOCCO

**If trailering is new to you, practice driving your rig before you load your horse in the trailer.**

trailer to the right, move your hand to the right (turning the steering wheel counterclockwise).

To turn your trailer sharply while backing, turn the steering wheel before you move your vehicle. To turn more gradually, turn the steering wheel as your vehicle is moving.

*Note:* A longer trailer is a bit easier to back than a shorter one. A tag-along trailer with a long tongue is easier to back than a trailer with a short tongue. A shorter trailer jackknives more easily than a longer trailer.

### On the Road

On the road, your driving requires special precautions. Loaded horse trailers are heavy. The extra weight strains your tow vehicle and increases stopping distances. You also won't be able to accelerate quickly. These problems will be emphasized if you're close to your maximum towing capacity.

Take precautions on the road, especially in wintry conditions. Drive at least 5 mph under the

speed limit, maintain a good distance behind the vehicle in front of you, and don't dart into traffic. Some states have a separate speed limit for those hauling trailers. Don't let other drivers push you to drive faster. You're bigger than they are; let them deal with it.

On multi-lane highways, change lanes gradually. Flick on your turn signal well before you change lanes so your intentions are clear to those behind and around you. Use your rearview mirrors.

Keep forward motion and tension on the hitch to help prevent loss of control from trailer sway. If your trailer starts to sway, don't apply the brakes on your tow vehicle; instead apply, in brief spurts, the hand brake on the controller to the trailer. This slows your trailer behind you while keeping your tow vehicle going forward, which should result in straightening out your rig. Don't apply the brakes on your tow vehicle until your trailer is under control.

—Tom Scheve & Neva Kittrell  
Scheve, [Equisprit.com](http://Equisprit.com)

# Long-Haul Strategies



Most trailer trips are uneventful. But when you're traveling long distances, you need to think and plan ahead. Here are 11 expert long-haul strategies.

## Use these 11 expert strategies to help enhance your horse's health and comfort on the road.

By Amy DeGeer Oberdorf  
Photos by Betsy Lynch

**Y**ou probably think nothing of loading your horse in your trailer, shutting the doors, and taking off down the road. For most trips, the haul is uneventful. But when you're traveling long distances, you need to think and plan ahead.

The stress and anxiety that your horse experiences simply by stepping onto your trailer can be greater than you think. When that stress occurs for an unusually long period of time, he becomes susceptible to health complications, such as dehydration, colic, physical injury, and *pleuropneumonia* (shipping fever).

But with proper preparation and forethought, and a solid travel plan, you can reduce the inherent risks of hauling your horse long distances. Here, Todd E. Shaarda, DVM, an equine practitioner in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Curt Lange of Brook Ledge Horse Transportation in Oley, Pennsylvania, will offer their expert long-

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haul strategies. Then they'll give you tips on using leg wraps and coping with changing climate as you travel. Along the way, they'll provide seven signs of sickness so you'll know when to call a veterinarian.

## Expert Strategies

Here are 11 measures you can take prior to and during long trips to enhance your horse's health and comfort.

- 1. Think comfort.** Make sure your horse has ample space in your trailer, preferably a box stall. Clean out manure and urine to reduce toxic fumes in your trailer. Train your horse to haul, and practice at home prior to the trip.
- 2. Get a health certificate.** If your horse is healthy when he departs, he's less likely to become sick during a long haul. A Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (health certificate) verifies that he's in good health. Plus, this certificate is required to cross state lines. You can obtain a CVI from any equine vet.
- 3. Boost his immune system.** Dr. Shaarda suggests giving your horse a shot of an immune stimulator two weeks prior to your trip, and again one week prior, to boost your horse's immune system. Also make sure your horse is current on his vaccination and deworming protocols.
- 4. Haul water.** Since horses can get fickle on the road, bring water from home to encourage your horse to keep drinking. Even if he's thirsty and wants to drink, he may not, because the water from the roadside gas station smells and tastes different.
- 5. Consider a water additive.** "Some people add drink flavoring to the water," says Lange. "If it works for your horse, go for it." One popular additive is concentrated apple juice.
- 6. Pack an NSAID.** Dr. Shaarda recommends keeping handy a tube of *flunixin meglumine* (brand name, Banamine, a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug that acts as a pain reliever), in case your horse suffers stomach pain, which could indicate colic. If you suspect colic, call a vet immediately. The Banamine is simply to help relieve your horse's discomfort until you reach a vet. "Banamine also suppresses a fever," Dr. Shaarda warns, "so take your horse's temperature before you give it. Your attending vet will want to know if your horse has a fever."
- 7. Make stops.** Schedule rest stops at least every five hours, especially if your horse won't eat, drink, urinate, or defecate in your trailer. Lange says that in



**Top:** A half-hour rest stop with the motor turned off gives horses a chance to decompress. Although you would never travel with the windows open like this, during the break, the fresh air and view will do them good. Also, untie the horses and let them put their heads down to clear their airways. **Bottom:** Stop and check your horse at regular intervals, and to offer feed and water. Keep in mind that some horses won't urinate in your trailer unless the vehicle is stopped and there's bedding in the stall.

his experience, the rumble of an engine is enough to raise some horses' anxiety. Simply turning off your tow vehicle may make a big difference for your horse, allowing him time to relax, urinate, and defecate.

- 8. Unload with care.** Unload your horse every five hours if you can stop in a safe location, well away from roadways and hazards. But keep him in your trailer if loading and unloading is a stressor itself.
- 9. Untie him.** During rest stops, untie your horse's head so he can put it down to expel foreign matter easily. *Pleuropneumonia*, or shipping fever, is one >>

respiratory illness that stems from a horse's head being tied in an "up" position during travel, combined with no rest stops. You can even leave your horse untied in your trailer if he doesn't bother his travel buddies.

**10. Check for dehydration.** Dehydration can be harmful in and of itself, but it can also cause other problems, such as overheating, Dr. Shaarda explains. "If horses sweat too much, use an electrolyte replacement, and watch for other signs, such as depression." Check your horse's hydration level by pinching the skin on his neck; it should draw back tight against his body in two seconds. If it stays out, then your horse is dehydrated; call a veterinarian. Excessive sweating is also a sign of dehydration.

**11. Check respiration rate.** "While at rest, your horse's nostrils should not be flaring, and he should be at 8 to 12 breaths per minute," says Dr. Shaarda. "If he is over 22 breaths per minute, you need a vet." A high respiration rate can be a symptom of several things, including dehydration, colic, and overheating.

## Watch Leg Wraps

Wrapping legs is one of the most common things people do to prevent injury while hauling horses. But leg wraps can cause problems, especially quilts, polo wraps, and heavy shipping boots.

"[Polo] wraps fall down and the horses urinate on



**Leg wraps can either be a blessing or a curse. Applied correctly and on horses used to wearing them, they can prevent leg injuries that occur all-too-often during transport. Shipping boots may be the safest option, says Dr. Shaarda.**

them, then they get stepped on," Lange notes. "Eliminating wraps eliminates trouble."

However, Dr. Shaarda sees a flip side. "I'm not a big fan of wrapping, but many of the wounds I've seen from trailering horses could have been prevented with wraps, especially in young horses," he says.

If wraps are improperly applied, they can *cord* a tendon; that is, excess pressure can cause a minor inflammation at one spot in the tendon. Horses usually recover, but it tends to create a permanent thickening and damage to the tendon.

If wraps are too loose, they slide and flop around, which causes a horse to kick, creating injury risk to himself and others.

"Shipping boots may be the safest," Dr. Shaarda says. "They can't be applied too tightly, and they provide decent protection."

Dr. Shaarda notes that good-fitting trailer mats with bedding for traction can also reduce the risk of leg injuries.

## Consider Climate

"Horses are meant to be in the season," Lange notes. "When you haul a winter horse south, don't haul with

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## 7 Signs of Sickness

If your horse isn't traveling well, he'll show you. Below is a list of common behavioral reactions to stress that may indicate your horse's health is compromised. If you see any of these signs, get your horse to a veterinarian as soon as possible.

- **Decreased appetite.**
- **Decreased water intake.**
- **Repetitive pawing, kicking, licking, and/or scraping.**
- **Biting or kicking at handlers.**
- **A fever (above 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit).**
- **Excessive sweating and overheating (a temperature of above 104 degrees F).**
- **Flared nostrils, coughing, and nasal discharge.**



**When your horse willingly steps into your trailer, he has no idea how long the trip will be. He's simply putting his faith in you that you'll take care of him every mile of the way.**

a blanket. At some point, you will have to wrestle with him to get the blanket off, and you could possibly get hurt."

Lange won't ship a northern horse south, or vice-versa, during extreme regional temperature differences. In his experience, doing so increases the chance of sickness.

"Some climate conditions are more of an issue when you get there," Dr. Shaarda notes. "We see more problems with horses bought in the South and

**This poor horse arrived at her destination with rub wounds on both hips. She was confined in a too-tight compartment and made to travel too many hours without a break.**

brought north in winter." In his experience, these horses tend to develop pneumonia as they go from being in fresh air to a closed-up barn where ventilation is poor and toxic fumes are high.

If you're hauling your horse north to south, he says, "Be ready to body clip, and let him adjust."

Also note that if you're hauling your horse from a lower elevation to a higher one, give him time to adjust to the change in altitude before you ask him to perform. **USR**

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This saddle stand goes together quickly and uses few tools. Here's the finished saddle stand in action.

# Build a Saddle Stand

**This simple stand will help keep your saddle upright in the back of your tow vehicle or trailer.**

By Seth and Michelle Anderson

Photos by Michelle Anderson

## Shopping List

- 20 1½" screws
- 20 finish washers
- 5 1" x 6" x 2' pieces of pre-cut lumber
- 2 1" x 12" x 2' pieces of pre-cut lumber
- 2 heavy-duty handles
- 150-grit sandpaper

## Tools You'll Need

- Skill saw
- Drill with 7/64" drill bit
- Safety glasses
- Screwdriver (manual or power)
- Measuring tape
- Straight edge
- Pencil
- Sanding block

This simple saddle stand is designed specifically for toting a saddle in the back of a pickup truck or trailer with tack room. The project uses all pre-cut lumber (the example is made from an inexpensive poplar), keeping power-tool use to a minimum. Altogether, you'll make only four cuts with the saw.

*Safety tips:* Always be careful when using power tools. Wear safety glasses or goggles to protect your eyes from any flying pieces of wood. Keep your hands and fingers out of the way of saw blades and drill bits. If you're new to woodworking, seek the guidance of someone with experience using power tools.

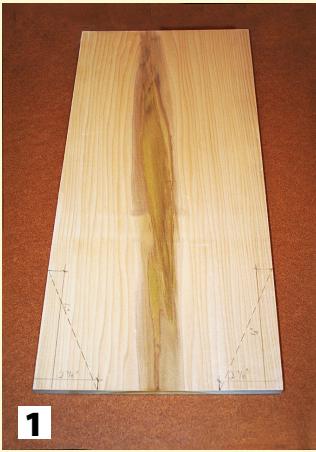
### Measure Twice, Cut Once

Before you rev up the skill saw, measure and mark the wide 1" x 12" x 2' boards. Your cuts help form the shape of the saddle rack. Each of the two boards gets two diagonal cuts at the top, as shown. First, measure in from the top corner, widthwise. Next, measure from the same corner down lengthwise. Connect the two tick marks to create a diagonal line. Make the same measurements on the opposite top corner of the board. Repeat on the second side board. Cut, following the diagonal lines. You now have the front and back ends of your saddle rack.

### Pre-Drill All Holes

Using a power drill and a 7/64" drill bit, pre-drill all the holes for your saddle rack. Start with the 1" x 6" x 2' boards. At each corner, measure and mark 1" in and ½" down. Now, use the power drill to pre-drill the holes.

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**1.** Measure and mark one end of the two wide boards 2 7/8" in and 6" down at each corner. These two boards become the end of your saddle rack.



**2.** Cut along the diagonal lines you marked.



**3.** Here are the finished ends ready for drilling and assembly.



**4.** Mark the boards for pre-drilling 1" from the side and 1/2" from the edge. The dotted line shows where the boards will line up against each other.



**5.** Pre-drill holes to prevent the wood from ripping when screwed together.



**6.** Line up the end boards with the side boards. Use the drill holes in the sides to pre-drill the ends of the stand.



**7.** Thread all screws through finishing washers.



**8.** Build each half of the saddle stand independently.



**9.** Join the halves together to create the base of the saddle stand.



10. Line up the pre-drilled holes in the top board with the top of both ends of the stand, using the holes to pre-drill the receiving lumber.



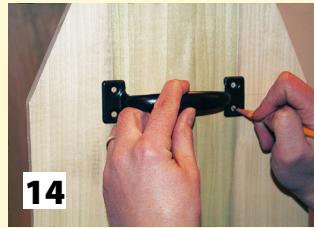
11. Screw the top of the stand into place. You may have to use a little force to get the sides to match up.



12. Fasten the top side boards onto the stand. These boards will help hold your saddle in place.



13. Lightly sand any rough edges on your saddle stand.



14. Measure and mark where you want to attach the handles. Pre-drill the holes, then fasten the handles into place.



15. The finished saddle stand.

*Time-saving tip:* To pre-drill the holes, measure one board, and stack it neat and square on top of another board. Now drill through the stack, drilling two holes at once. You should end up with holes drilled in each corner of all five narrow boards.

### Attach the Base Sides to Ends

Once all the holes are pre-drilled, you can start assembling the saddle stand. Attach one bottom side piece to each end piece, creating two diagonal halves of the saddle stand. Then attach the two halves to each other to form a base. Thread each screw through a finishing washer before driving it into the pre-drilled holes.

### Add the Top and Sides

Next come the top and sides of the saddle stand. Again, pre-drill holes in the receiving lumber before driving in the screws.

### Add Handles

After the stand is assembled, run sandpaper over any rough edges. Then add handles to the ends of the stand. When you're ready, use the straight edge to measure, center, and mark where you want to place the handles. Pre-drill holes, then fasten the handles into place on each end of the saddle stand. **USR**



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# First-Aid-Kit Essentials



**Be sure to include these  
vet-recommended  
supplies in your on-the-  
road first-aid kit.**

By Eleanor M. Kellon, VMD

PHOTO BY HEIDI MELOCCO

Nothing is worse than trying to hunt down supplies when your horse becomes ill or injured on the road. Here's a run-down of items to include in your first-aid kit, plus expert tips.

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If your horse appears sick, first check his temperature for signs of a fever. You can use an equine mercury thermometer or a digital thermometer.



PHOTO BY HEIDI MELOCCO

Use a stethoscope to check you horse's pulse, listen for gut sounds, and listen to his lungs.



Keep a supply of sharp items in your first-aid kit. These come in handy for everything from trimming bandage materials to pulling a loose horseshoe or even cutting through a halter or cross-tie if your horse becomes hung up or tangled.

Nothing is worse than trying to hunt down supplies when your horse becomes ill or injured on the road. A little pre-planning on your part—assembling your own first-aid kit—will make handling these emergencies go more smoothly. The most common first-aid situations with horses are: (1) colic; (2) injuries of all sorts; and (3) respiratory or other infectious diseases. Your first-aid kit contents should reflect these situations. Here's a rundown of items to include in your first-aid kit, plus bonus tips.

## **“Any time your horse is off feed, looking droopy, or acting out of sorts, take his temperature first.”**

**Thermometer/stethoscope.** A thermometer is number one for your first-aid kit. Any time your horse is off feed, looking droopy, or acting out of sorts, take his temperature first. Even if he has obvious symptoms, such as a cough or diarrhea, your veterinarian will need to know if your horse has a fever.

Traditional mercury thermometers for horses are five inches long, have a heavy plastic screw-top case, and a loop at the end. A heavy string or tape can be run through the loop and secured to an alligator clip or clothespin. This is clamped to the tail hairs while the thermometer is “cooking,” to prevent it from falling and breaking if the horse forces it out. Digital thermometers also work, but may be less accurate if you don't insert them far enough into the rectum.

You'll use a stethoscope to check your horse's pulse, listen for gut sounds, and listen to his lungs.

**“Sharps.”** There are several small sharp implements you should store in your first-aid kit. First, you'll need scissors to trim back long hairs overlying wounds and to trim bandaging materials to fit. Then, heavy shears (medium-weight garden shears are good) or a knife strong enough to cut through a halter, cross-ties, leg straps, or blankets should be handy—in the event your horse gets tangled or hung up. Also, a sturdy pair of pliers comes in handy for pulling off loose or sprung shoes.

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Gently washing a wound is the first step in reducing the number of bacteria on its surface. A disinfecting scrub will create a lather that can sit on the wound for 5 to 10 minutes before rinsing.



**Wound wash.** Gentle washing is the first step in removing surface contamination (dirt, plant material, hair, bedding, etc.) from a wound and reducing the number of bacteria on its surface. Unless there's heavy bleeding that needs to be stopped first, wounds with obviously visible contamination should be cleaned by directing a stream of water above the wound and allowing it to run over the surface. Never direct water under pressure, even light hose pressure, straight onto a wound. This can actually drive debris or contaminants deeper into the wound or cut.

The initial water cleaning may result in a little bleeding. If this isn't heavy, it's to be expected from loosening surface clots. Ignore this, and proceed to cleansing. Betadine scrub or another wound-disinfecting scrub made with povidone ("tamed") iodine is a good choice, although some horses may be sensitive to it. A 2% chlorhexidine-based scrub is well-tolerated even by sensitive-skinned horses. These surgical scrubs are widely available in farm-supply stores or online.

Leave the removal of materials deeply embedded in a wound to your vet to avoid triggering heavy bleeding. If you don't have gloves, wash your hands with the surgical scrub, including under your fingernails, for a good five minutes before touching the wound. For the initial cleansing, use either gauze sponges or just your hands to gently work up a lather on the wound. Use very light pressure only. Leave the lathered scrub on the wound for 5 to 10 minutes, then rinse thoroughly. Never use cotton balls or roll cotton to clean a wound. These leave irritating fibers behind, embedded in the tissues.

**Topicals for wounds.** Wounds heal best in a warm, moist environment. Simply covering a wound is a good way to fight dehydration of the tissues and trap body heat. (This is why our own cuts heal much faster underneath a bandage.)

If you do choose to put a medication >>



Wounds heal best in a warm, moist environment. Topical medications can help speed wound healing, prevent bandages from sticking, seal scraped tissues, protect from insects, and offer some amount of pain relief.



Bandages generally are two to three layers: an innermost layer of nonstick material directly over the wound, a middle layer of padding to absorb wound drainage and cushion, and an outer layer of self-adhesive, disposable pressure bandaging to hold it all in place.

on the wound, what you use is largely a matter of choice. A layer of petroleum jelly on the wound-surface side of the first layer of bandaging works great in preventing the bandage from sticking to the wound. Others prefer antibiotic wound creams or herbal-based products, such as aloe vera. If you use a petroleum-jelly-impregnated wound dressing under a bandage, no other topical is needed.

On the other hand, superficial abrasions that ooze but don't go completely through all skin layers may be best handled by a spray that will seal the tissues and protect them from insects. Sprays based on aluminum, gentian violet, and scarlet red oil serve this purpose well. If you have a large open wound that can't be bandaged, consult with a vet for the best approach.

One human product, Bactine, can come in handy with painful wounds. You can use it to desensitize tender wounds before working on them or to saturate sticking bandages before removing them. You can also use it as the sole dressing on superficial wounds and immediately eases the pain of sunburn on pink-skinned horses.

**Bandaging materials.** Whenever possible, injuries should be bandaged to keep them in a warm, moist environment to enhance healing. For the outer layer of bandage material, a self-adherent bandage, such as Vetrap, Co-Ban, or Co-Flex, is ideal. These materials "breathe," allow you to fine-tune the pressure, and are disposable. Use a pair of scissors or a knife (be careful!) to cut a vertical line through the bandage and open it up to remove it. Keep four to six rolls of Vetrap in your first-aid kit.

A layer between your outermost self-adhesive wrap and the wound dressing will help absorb drainage and pad the wound. 3M Gamgee Highly Absorbent Padding is a favorite for this. It's a two-layered material, with a center of highly absorbent cotton wool and a synthetic outer surface that will resist sticking to the wound. Keep at least one roll (12 feet) on hand. Gamgee can also be used to pack hoof abscesses.

For the early stages of healing of open wounds—when there's a high volume of drainage—use a petroleum-jelly-impregnated gauze (available at drugstores) for the layer immediately over the wound. Without this, wound drainage may dry out between bandage changes and stick to even something like Gamgee.

As the amount of drainage lessens, you can switch to dry non-stick/non-adherent wound pads. Once drainage has ceased, or an open wound has granulated over to a smooth bed, this additional layer can be eliminated and the wound wrapped with only Gamgee.

**USR**

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*Eleanor M. Kellon, VMD, owns Equine Nutritional Solutions, a nutritional consulting firm based in Robesonia, Pennsylvania, that also hosts online courses on nutrition and horse care. She has written eight books and thousands of articles on equine nutrition, care, and health issues.*

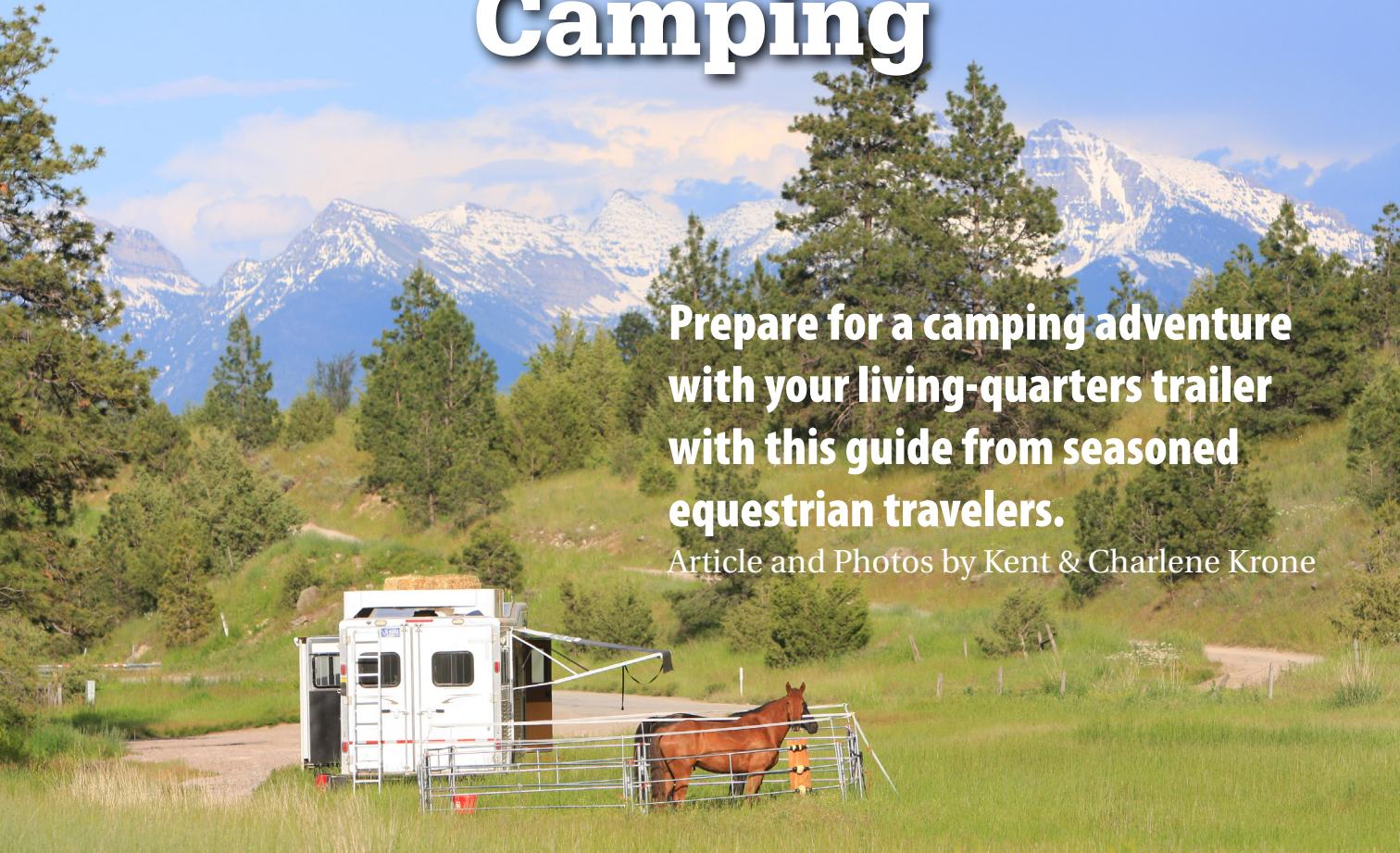
## Expert Tips

- **Saline vs. water.** You may have read or been told that water shouldn't be used to clean wounds because it can damage delicate exposed tissues. Saline is supposed to be preferred. However, several studies have compared saline, tap water, distilled water, or cooled boiled water in the cleansing of surgical wounds, injuries, and both fresh and old wounds. None of them found saline to be superior to plain water in preventing infections or speeding healing. However, if you're using untested and untreated well water, bacterial counts may be higher than in municipal tap water. Keep a gallon of distilled water on hand to use as a final rinse.
- **Bandage removal.** In the early stages of wound healing, the tissue is inflamed and very sensitive. Traction on the wound during bandage removal is often painful. To make this easier on the horse (and you), first saturate the area over the wound well with very cold water. This eases bandage loosening and provides a numbing effect. Then cut open the bandage using a pair of scissors or a knife (be careful!). Cut a vertical line through the bandage, open it up, and remove it.
- **Storage solutions.** Store your first-aid supplies separately from other supplies—such as grooming tools or medical supplies—yet all together in one place. They'll stay cleaner and be easier to find. An inexpensive plastic storage bin with a lid is a good choice. A covered toolbox also makes a good first-aid kit; the handle enables easy transport.

# Living-Quarters-Trailer Camping

Prepare for a camping adventure with your living-quarters trailer with this guide from seasoned equestrian travelers.

Article and Photos by Kent & Charlene Krone



A living-quarters trailer allows you to be self-contained on the road, then camp in comfort with your horse—a plus anytime, but especially helpful while traveling during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Horse camping lets you design an equestrian vacation that fits your own needs and tastes. As a bonus, you'll likely develop a deeper bond with your equine friend.

If you've never camped with your horse, now might be a good time to reconsider. A living-quarters trailer allows you to be self-contained on the road, then camp in comfort with your horse—a plus anytime, but especially helpful while traveling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Horse camping lets you design an equestrian vacation that fits your own needs and tastes. You can set your own schedule and do as much or as little as you like. You're limited only by your personal time, the weather, and how much you can conveniently take with you. As a bonus, you'll likely develop a deeper bond with your equine friend.

We travel seven to eight months per year with our horses and living-quarters trailer. Here are a few tips we've learned from going down the road. >>

## Find the Right Trailer

When searching for a living-quarters trailer, we realize everyone has different needs. For ourselves, we didn't want the trailer to be too long, as we wanted to be able to access parking spaces at small trailheads.

We also gave a lot of thought to width. We opted for a trailer that's eight feet wide as opposed to seven feet. That extra foot amounts to a lot in a small living area. Slide-outs give increased floor space. A raised roof over the bed area provides a feeling of spaciousness.

Look for a good bathroom design. Ample elbow room at the sink and a good sized shower were important to us. Also, light-colored wood and mirrors give a light, airy feeling to the living space. Simple matters such as this make time spent in the trailer pleasant.

Check for recessed sewer drops. If they're recessed up under the trailer, they'll stand a better chance of surviving high spots in the road. Large propane tanks will make life easier, because you don't have to refill them as often as you would small tanks.

When deciding on number of stalls to have in your trailer, consider hay storage. Some folks store hay in one of the stalls, while others store it on top of the trailer in a hay rack. You can also turn a spare stall into a mud room and back porch.

Consider what you'll do if you don't have access to electrical hookups.

We just completed a six-month trip and were only "plugged in" for seven weeks. When not plugged in, we have three power sources in the trailer: batteries; a solar panel; and a generator.

We use deep-cycle batteries.



**If you're new to trailer camping, look for a campground that offers pull-through campsites for ease of negotiating your rig.**

Make sure they're the most powerful you can buy. A solar panel on the trailer roof helps maintain and recharge the batteries.

A generator also assists in keeping batteries powered up and can run heavy-load items, such as a microwave oven and air conditioner. The furnace will generally run fine with good deep-cycle batteries, as long as they charge some each day.

## Plan Your Trip

In our travel planning, we look at how many miles a day we want to drive, then search for layover spots. We like to find large pens or corrals for the horses to stay in overnight. After a long day in the trailer, they appreciate room to stretch.

Generally, rodeo grounds and fairgrounds are good, inexpensive places to stay at with your horse while traveling to your destination camp. You can find their contact information online or from the local town's chamber of commerce.

If you're having a hard time finding a suitable campground for your horse on your route, consider boarding your horse and finding a place for your trailer where you can overnight. Online overnight-stabling resources include the "Where to Ride Guide" on [HorseandRider](#).

[com](#) (*Horse&Rider* is this magazine's sister publication), [Horse Motels International](#), and [Traveling Horse](#).

Call ahead, and ask about the size of the pens and horse-water availability. Upon arrival, search and remove any nails, wire, and other potentially hazardous objects from the corral.

For your destination camp, look for a location that has multiple trails going out from one campsite. This allows for several days of riding without moving camp.

Check in advance for the availability of horse water. We've been to some locations where the streams were dry due to drought.

If you'll be camping for a long period of time, consider the available electrical, water, and sewer hookups. At most campgrounds, "full hookups" means that they offer all three. "Partial hookups" typically mean that the campground offers electrical and/or water hookups, but not sewer. A "primitive" campground offers no hookups and very few or no amenities (such as horse water, picnic tables, and hitching posts).

If you're new to trailer camping, look for a campground that offers pull-through campsites for ease of negotiating your rig.

>>



**“If there’s no corral in the campground, we use three horse-containment methods: an overhead tie system (shown), portable panels, and an electric corral,” share the Krones.**

## Plan Horse Containment

How will you contain your horse when camping? Some campgrounds have corrals, which, of course, is the easiest. If there’s no corral in the campground, we use three horse-containment methods: an overhead tie system, portable panels, and an electric corral.

**Trailer-tying system.** For a quick, easy setup, we use [EasyCare Inc.’s HiTie System](#), an overhead tying system made up of a heavy-duty fiberglass rod, plus a tie strap, clips, and a connector. You attach the rod to your trailer, fold it out, and tie your horse to it. Your horse can turn around and even lie down. You can hang hay bags on your trailer below the ties.

**Portable panels.** For overnight or day use, we have a collapsible corral made up of metal panels. We store it in the back of our pickup, but we can also put it on top of our trailer. The expandable panels form a 100-foot corral. Another option is to use a portable panel system, such as one available from [Carri-Lite Corrals](#). Look for a panel system that you can either attach to your trailer or set up as a stand-alone corral.

**Electric corral.** A fully electric corral is easy to set up and can be moved to prevent overgrazing. However, we don’t like to leave horses overnight in an electric corral, as they can roll around and roll right out.

## Consider Feed

When traveling with horses, we try to keep our horses on the same feed. An abrupt switch in feed may increase the chance of colic. We feed grass hay. On the road, we add a cup of bran and an ounce of electrolytes, with some complete feed morning and night.

Bran helps to soften the stool, decreasing the chance of colic. Electrolytes entice our horses to drink more frequently, once again decreasing the chance of colic.

Check local requirements for certified weed-free

feed. Generally, but not always, weed-free feed is required in Western states. Bring along enough water and food for yourself and your passengers, as well as for your horse, so that you can stay as long as you desire.

## Check Your Rig

Just before you leave, perform a trailer and tow-vehicle check. Check tire condition and air pressure, emergency brake, trailer brake, lights and turn signals, safety chains, and hitch condition. (For a complete pre-trip checklist, go to [usrider.org](#).)

Make sure everything is connected, the doors are shut, the electric cord is plugged in, and your horse or horses are secured.

## At the Camp

When you arrive at your camp, avoid locating your horse’s portable living quarters over a wildlife trail. Mayhem and mischief may result from deer, elk, or other animals going through your camp and even your horse’s containment fence.

Also, check nearby trees for stability. Many trees in the West have been weakened by beetles and fire.

We were once camping in Wyoming amid gorgeous old cottonwoods. A storm barreled in with roaring thunder and spears of lightning. We thought it would be entertaining to sit outside and watch the atmospheric display. Soon, powerful winds swooped into camp and knocked down three nearby cottonwoods. We quickly relocated the trailer!

## Just Go!

When all the planning is said and done, don’t worry about the fine details. Pull out of the driveway with your horses in tow, and head down the road. You can always modify and adjust. You’ll pick up useful ideas during your travels.

We were once at a horse camp in Arizona when some folks from Manitoba drove in. They wondered about the feasibility of trailering their own horses from Manitoba to Arizona for the winter. Our answer was, “Just do it!” And, of course, “Have fun!” **USR**

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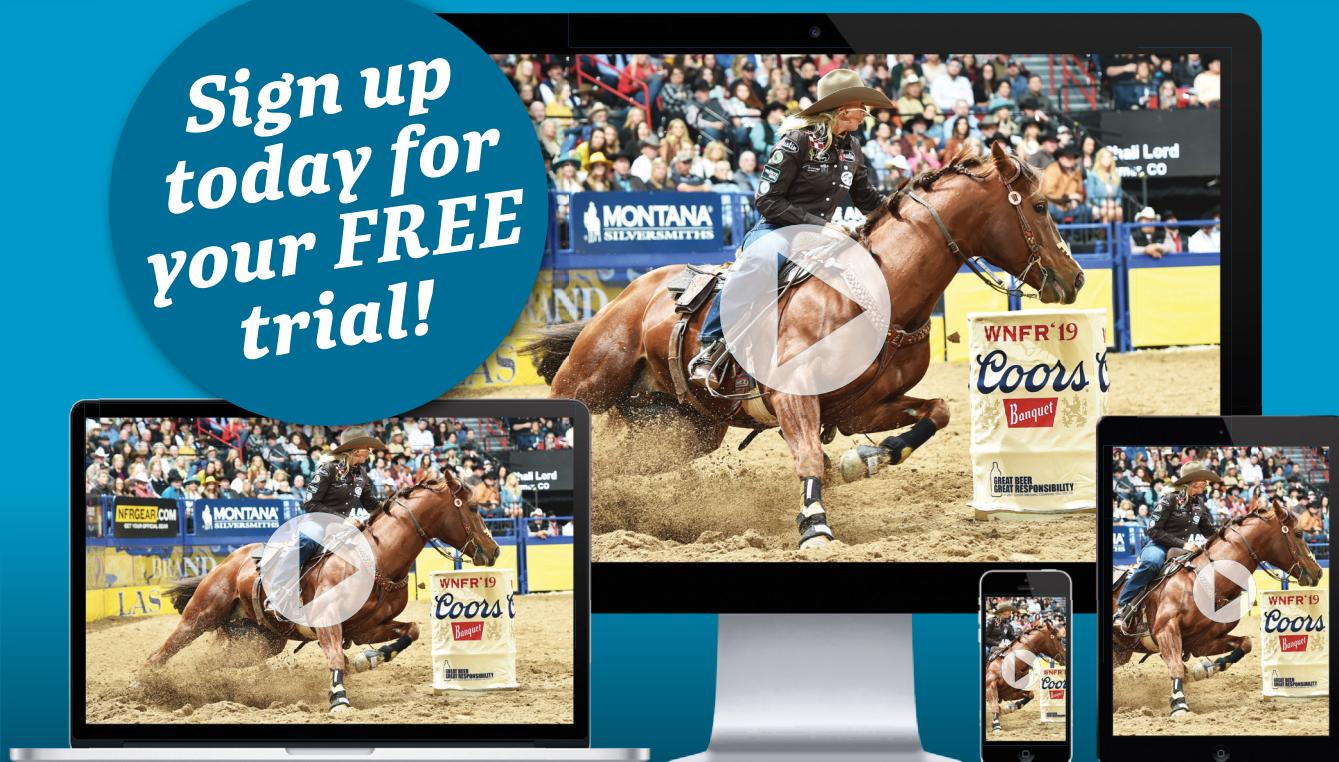
*Seasoned equestrian travelers Kent and Charlene Krone combine their interest in photojournalism with a passion for horses. They enjoy sharing their horseback adventures and equestrian-travel tips with fellow enthusiasts.*

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# One Good Mechanic

When this mounted shooting competitor had tire trouble, the decision to call USRider was easy.

By Jessie Warner



PHOTO BY DOUGLAS SMITH PHOTOGRAPHY

After arriving at a mounted shooting competition in Arizona, USRider Member Jessie Warner noticed a problem with her truck's tires.

One recent January, I trailered a few horses to Phoenix for a mounted shooting competition. After arriving at the arena, I noticed both of my truck's rear tires were damp on the inside. After crawling under my 1996 Ford F-250, I concluded there was a problem with either the U-joint or a rear-wheel bearing.

## Easy Decision

I had a decision to make. I could either walk around hoping I ran into somebody who had a friend who's a mechanic or call USRider.

The decision was easy! I made one phone call and had a list of numbers of local mechanics in no time at all. I called the first one on the list, who just happened to be finishing up a personal vehicle after work.

He told me to drive my pick-

up over to the shop, which was only a few miles from the arena. He explained that he would take me back to the arena while he looked at my truck. This was at 5:30 p.m. on a Friday night!

## Problem Solved

Bright and early the next morning, the mechanic called to tell me what he'd found and to give me a price quote. I told him I was competing that morning, but would be over as soon as I could. The mechanic stayed an extra hour and didn't charge me any outrageous weekend-emergency price.

He almost seemed insulted when I tried to tip him for being so courteous! I took a stack of his business cards and handed them out to my fellow competitors, instead.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JESSIE WARNER

"Thanks to USRider, my trip was stress-free, my horses weren't stranded anywhere, and my competition was wonderful!" enthuses USRider Member Jessie Warner.

## Thanks, USRider

Thanks to USRider, my trip was stress-free, my horses weren't stranded anywhere, and my competition was wonderful! Thank-you, USRider, for taking care of my crew! **USR**



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# Equestrian Benefits & Emergency Travel Services

Imagine traveling with your horse and your tow vehicle breaks down—or you get into a trailer accident—far from home in an unfamiliar area. Or your horse becomes sick or injured and your trusted veterinarian is miles away. Or your horse loses a shoe and is at risk for a horseshoe-nail injury.

If you experience one of these nightmare scenarios on the road, USRider will be there for you with an array of prompt, reliable travel services.

Here's a rundown of USRider's Equestrian Benefits and Emergency Travel Services if you're a Member of USRider's Classic Plan. To access any of these services, simply call the emergency toll-free number on the back of your membership ID card. (For more information, and for details regarding USRider's Classic and Premier membership plans, go to [usrider.org](http://usrider.org).)

## Equestrian Benefits

- **Emergency trip interruption services.** USRider will reimburse you for unexpected expenses due to a collision that results in the injury of a horse or horses you're transporting. Covered items include veterinary care, overnight boarding, lodging and meals, and a rental vehicle. (Reimbursement is

limited to the first 72 hours following your accident and up to \$1,000.)

- **Emergency-stabling arrangements.** If, while traveling, your tow vehicle breaks down or is in an accident that *doesn't* involve injury to a horse or horses you're transporting, USRider will contact facilities to make stabling arrangements for your

horse or horses. (You're responsible for stabling costs. USRider cannot guarantee availability.)

- **Veterinarian-referral services** In the event that you have an equine-health emergency while traveling, USRider will provide the name and contact information of qualified large animal practitioners from its exclusive DVM Directory. This electronic >>



If your tow vehicle breaks down or is in an accident that doesn't involve injury to a horse or horses you're transporting, USRider will contact area stabling facilities to make overnight arrangements for your horse or horses.



PHOTO BY CLIXPHOTO.COM

If you have an equine-health emergency while traveling, USRider will provide the name and contact information of qualified large animal practitioners from its exclusive DVM Directory.



If your horse needs hoof care while traveling, USRider will provide the name and contact information of qualified farriers in your area.

database contains information on veterinarians throughout USRider's service area in the 48 contiguous United States, plus Alaska and Canada.

• **Farrier-referral services.**

In the event that your horse needs hoof care while traveling, USRider will provide the name and contact information of qualified farriers in your area.



PHOTO BY HEIDI MELOCCO

**Emergency Travel Services**

- **Emergency transportation.** If, while traveling, you need emergency transportation resulting from an accident or mechanical breakdown, USRider will arrange for taxi service.
- **Emergency-lodging arrangements.** If, while traveling, your vehicle breaks down or is in an accident that *doesn't* involve in-

**If your tow vehicle breaks down or is in an accident that doesn't involve injury to a horse or horses you're transporting, USRider will contact area hotels and motels to make lodging arrangements.**

jury to a horse or horses you're transporting, USRider will contact area hotels and motels to make lodging arrangements. (You're responsible for lodging costs. USRider cannot guarantee availability.)

*(Some services provided are subject to certain restrictions and limitations. Member is responsible for non-covered expenses and expenses in excess of overage limits. Please see your Membership Service Contract for complete details.)*

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# Equine-Travel Products

Top products to make traveling with your horse a breeze.



## Hybrid Leather Halter

The patented leather [HYBRID Halter®](#) from the Horse Education Company is a handy training tool, combining a traditional leather halter with breakaway functionality and innovative features that apply precise, targeted pressure. Knots on the nosepiece's yacht rope encourage lightness and discourage leaning. A sliding ring under the chin allows the halter ring and lead-rope snap to slide a full 180 degrees for the precise application of pressure and leverage. The halter comes pre-punched for a halter nameplate (optional). Matching lead rope available.

## Heated Camp Chair

The [Chaheati All-Season Heated Chair](#) is a lightweight, collapsible canvas chair that features a low-voltage heating system. Designed to withstand the elements, this system produces comfortable, even heat for chilly nights when you're horse camping or at the barn. The Chaheati features four temperature settings and

heats up in 20 seconds.

The high-efficiency, rechargeable battery

provides up to six hours of heat per charge and lasts for more than 500 uses.



## Hitch Protection

When it comes to trailer-hitch protection over the winter or between trips, the Hitch Cover available from the Horse Trailer Accessory Store presented by Trail Pals, provides far better coverage than an upside-down bucket. [The Hitch Cover](#) wards off winter elements, as well as sun damage, while helping to prevent rust and peeling paint. The durable, waterproof cover is constructed from 600-denier polyester with a vinyl backing. It's easily installed over the trailer tongue and buckled into place.



## Camp Kitchen

If your horse-camping adventures include outdoor cooking and meal preparation, a place to set up your food and supplies is a must. [The Coleman® Pack-Away® Deluxe Kitchen](#) is a complete outdoor food-preparation center. The side stand fits most Coleman stoves and coolers, while a separate food-prep surface allows ample space for slicing meat and vegetables. A removable sink fits into the prep surface for easy cleaning. The setup includes a wire-storage shelf, paper-towel holder, lantern hook, and produce bin, plus condiment shelves and utensil hooks. The whole setup packs into an integrated storage system for compact, one-handed carrying (right).



# Trailer-Emergency Prep

By Tom Scheve & Neva Kittrell Scheve

Before you go on the road with your horse, have these important items on hand. Know how to use every item in your first-aid kit. If you need to, ask your veterinarian to help you. Check your inventory frequently, and replace used or removed items before each trip. (For information on what to include in your equine first-aid kit, see “First-Aid-Kit Essentials” in this issue.)

For a downloadable PDF of this checklist, [click here](#).

## In Your Trailer

- Two spare trailer tires**
- Hydraulic jack**
- Lug wrench**
- 3 emergency triangles (or flares)**
- Chocks**
- Flashlight**
- Electrical tape**
- Duct tape**
- Equine first-aid kit with splint**
- Sharp knife**
- Hay**
- Water**
- Buckets**
- Sponge**
- Water hose**
- Spare halter and lead rope for each horse**
- Spare bulbs for exterior and interior lights**
- Spare fuses, if applicable**
- Fire extinguisher with up-to-date charge**
- WD-40 or other lubricant**
- Broom, shovel, fork, and manure-disposal bags**
- Insect spray (bee and wasp)**



PHOTO BY HEIDI MELOCCO

Before you go on the road with your horse, have these important items on hand.

## For Your Tow Vehicle

- Jumper cables**
- Spare tire**
- Jack**
- Tire iron**
- Tow chain**
- Wiring materials**
- Spare belts and hoses**
- Replacement fuses**
- Portable air compressor**
- Toolkit**
- Work gloves**
- Cellphone**
- CB radio**
- Extra cash/credit card**
- Registration for vehicle/trailer**
- Proof of insurance**
- Travel papers**
- Road atlas/GPS**
- Emergency-information placard**
- USRider Membership Kit**