

Horses Need Winter Care Too!

Usually, horses can withstand a lot of cold, but they are not invincible. Making sure your horse gets the winter care he deserves can insure a healthy, happy horse all year round.

FIRST, make sure your horse gets annual vaccinations for rhinopneumonitis, Eastern and Western encephalomyelitis and tetanus. Get him checked for worms in the fall since he will have more energy if he is not playing host to a load of worms.

NEXT, be sure to have his teeth checked before winter so he can chew his food properly. This is a time he will need to burn more energy to stay warm, therefore increase his ration of hay.

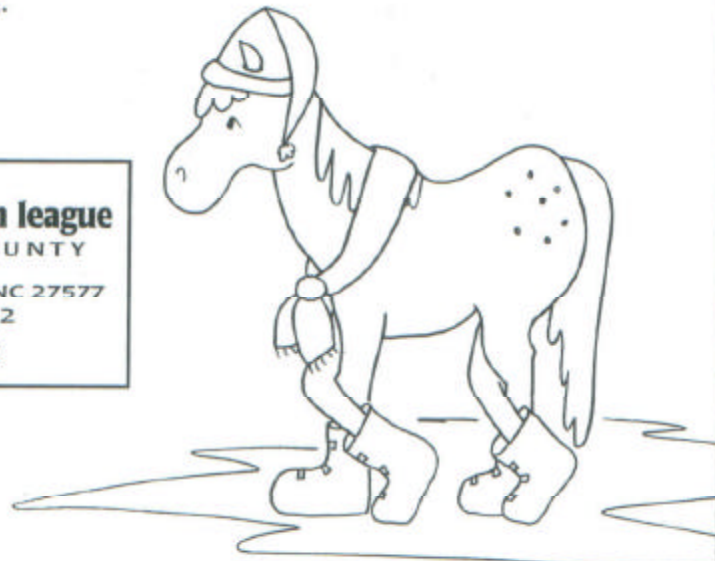
ALSO, one of the most important things to check is that your horse has a clean, dry, but well ventilated place to stay. A damp environment can lead to colds, coughs and viral infections. Poor ventilation can cause respiratory diseases while your horse can develop pneumonia if the stable is too hot or too tight. If you don't have a barn, your horse should at least have a three sided shelter, open on the down-wind side. Moist bedding can cause foot infection, so keep it dry.

BESIDES THIS, snow might be deep. Shoes should be pulled, because snow could ball up badly in shod hooves. This makes it difficult for your horse to walk. Trim the hooves enough so they won't crack or break, but not too short. As your horse paws through the snow, he will wear them down, causing sore hooves.

REMEMBER, if exercising your horse in cold weather, give him more time to warm up his muscles so he will be limber. And, don't forget to break the ice in his water bucket or trough.



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Provided by The American Humane Association