

Equine Leg Bandages

Equine leg bandages are used for many reasons, but we will focus on the most common types of bandages: standing wraps, shipping wraps, and polo wraps.

Applying bandages to a horse's leg is difficult to do well, and requires a lot of practice. If not done correctly, bandages may cause injuries to the soft tissues of the lower leg. This is usually due to uneven pressure or constriction.

Standing wraps are commonly used in stalled horses to prevent edema of the lower legs which can commonly develop in horses standing for long periods. In addition, medications may be applied to the leg, covered in saran wrap, with a standing wrap then applied over the saran wrap. Standing wraps only cover the cannon bone, and fetlock, but not the knee, hock or pastern.

Shipping wraps are used to protect the feet and lower legs during trailering. For this reason they will extend over the fetlock and coronary band, and may include protective bell boots to provide additional protection to the vulnerable coronary band. Leg injuries during loading and unloading from trailers can be very serious.

Polo wraps are used during exercise and training. They provide a small amount of fetlock support, but primarily serve to prevent lower leg injuries due to interference or striking objects. If polo wraps are not applied properly the results can be dangerous to horse and rider. Special exercise boots may serve a similar protective purpose and be safer.

Standing Wraps



Start with quilt on the cannon bone and wrap counterclockwise for left leg, clockwise for right leg. Quilt should just cover fetlock. Start the wrap within the quilt about $\frac{1}{2}$ way down the cannon bone



Work down the leg using even pressure and overlapping about half of the bandage. Keep pressure even and continue down wards. Leave about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of quilt showing at bottom.



Circle the fetlock, then work back up the leg and end at the top. Secure with velcro. If bandaging a back leg it is helpful to tie the tail to keep it out of the way.



Shipping Wraps for Trailering

These are similar to standing wraps, but the quilt covers the coronary band to protect it during shipping.



Shipping Wraps with Bell Boots for Trailering

Bell boots provide additional protection for the coronary band.



The quilt is applied to cover the top of the bell boot.



The coronary band is now doubly protected.



A few notes on quilts and bandages

When purchasing quilts, note that the one on the right in the picture is thicker, has more padding and is therefore preferable



When rolling up the bandage remember to start rolling with the velcro on the inside. That way it comes at the end of the bandage when applied to the horse.



Your leg provides a great surface to conveniently roll up bandages.



Applying polo wraps



Start high on the cannon bone at an angle, folding down the exposed corner



Work your way down the leg



Create a sling under the fetlock by dropping under, around and up to create the "V" in front of the fetlock



Work your way back up and finish at the top.

