

So Many Gloves!

There are so many styles of carriage driving gloves today, how do you know which ones to choose? Here we share the applications of certain styles of driving gloves.

First, why brown gloves for carriage driving? Carriage driving is rooted in tradition, and we know that driving was a method of getting from one place to another. Gloves are meant to protect your hands while driving. Once you reached your destination, you took off your gloves. If you were wearing dyed gloves, the dye from your gloves would leach onto your hands, staining them the color of the gloves. This would have been (and is) absolutely embarrassing! Brown leather gloves were oiled and not dyed, therefore not staining your hands. Also, the American Driving Society rulebook states that, *“Brown gloves are always appropriate for the driver unless rain gloves are needed.”* (We’ll get to rain gloves later.)



Of course, fit is paramount. Trying on the gloves is the best way to determine fit, but if you are ordering them, you may have to measure your hands instead. Using a dressmaker’s tape, measure your hand around the widest part, not including your thumb. The inches are your glove size. You can see that my hand measures between 7” - 8”. Generally, you select the larger size in this case. I tend to prefer that my gloves be snugger, but others like them looser. If you ordered them and they don’t fit, send them back for the right size! No sense keeping gloves that don’t fit (if you didn’t use them).

For what you will use the gloves? Are you using them to practice? To show? For Pleasure Driving shows? For CDEs and obstacles?

Since judges like to see a good pair of quality leather gloves, our family tends to like leather gloves like the one above for dress up classes like judged arena classes and dressage.



For practice and for driving obstacles, we grab the synthetic gloves with good grip. There are quite a few choices for grippy synthetic gloves available. If you drive a lot, you may wear through the synthetics faster than the leather, but it is a small price to pay for the superior grip of some synthetics. If we have to go directly from an arena class to an obstacle class, we will have the synthetic gloves on the carriage so we can change them out before our obstacle go.

So what if it rains? Experience shows that leather gloves and wet leather reins are a cause for disaster. We carry nice Turnout String gloves to tuck under your seat to show the judge you are ready for anything including rain, but if it actually rains, we have cheap string gloves to wear so you can grip those wet leather reins in a judged class. Once you wear string gloves in the rain, they are destroyed. For obstacles, again, nothing beats those synthetic gloves!



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