

Healthy Turnout TRIMMING TIPS

By Ruthann Smith

Fashion should follow utility. Here are a few tips to assure you prepare to show with your horse's best interest in mind:

Eyes

The horse uses the long lashes around the eyes to see at night. If you cut them, you'll likely notice more bangs on your horse's face. In fact, he'll walk into his stall walls in the dark. Judges love horses. They know those lashes are important to the horse's well-being. If your horse is well turned out, with long lashes around his eyes, the judge should understand and respect that you made a decision in your horse's favor.

Muzzles

If your horse does not like his muzzle trimmed, it is likely that he has been burned by a hot machine. So, keep your clippers clean and well-oiled. Using a disposable razor is an easy and convenient way to get a quick, comfortable and clean shave.

Coronary Bands

Many people believe that you will dry out the hoof by trimming the hair short around the coronary band. Others say it makes the hoof more sensitive. Whatever the truth, all you need is a clean line around the hoof. I like to just cut the hair around the coronary band with scissors. They avert any of these problems and are quicker and easier to use than mechanized trimmers.

Ears

Horses that essentially live on the road have the inside of their ears trimmed bald. It accentuates the lines for showing. If you brush the inside of the ears daily, the skin will get very shiny and be more resilient to irritation and the sun. If you don't groom vigorously each day or show at a lot of A shows and your horse spends a lot of time outside, I don't recommend trimming your horse's ears bald. You can look well prepared for smaller shows by squeezing the ears together and trimming along the edges. This will keep long hairs from sticking out like a teddy bear. The horse will look clean cut enough for less competitive shows and still have protective hair.

Either way, you can trim to enhance his conformation. If the ears are really big, cut straight across the top. A blunt line over the ear will make it look smaller. Follow the natural form over the tip of small and normal-sized ears to accentuate their beauty. Cismont Manner leaves the tips long to enhance the horse's expression.

Enjoy all!
~Ruthann

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