



Why Prepare the Horse for the Vet?

Expecting a horse to stand still while an unfamiliar person handles him/her is a big ask for that horse. Some horses find it particularly stressful and/or difficult, especially if they have had previous bad experiences. It is not the vet's responsibility to train your horse.

Preparation:

- ❖ helps to keep the experience more positive for the horse and alleviates anxiety about a veterinary visit
- ❖ keeps everyone safe
- ❖ reduces likelihood that vet will become frustrated with horse
- ❖ increases likelihood that vet can complete a procedure
- ❖ saves time in the long term



About EBTA

EBTA aims to:

- ❖ Improve public knowledge and understanding of the physical and psychological well-being of equines
- ❖ Promote awareness of human behaviour and its impact on equine behaviour
- ❖ Bridge the gap between academic research and practical application
- ❖ Protect equine welfare whilst maintaining safety and achieving equestrian goals

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Equine Behaviour and Training Association
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In Advance...

Talk to the vet and warn him/her your horse needs extra time and patience. Simulate and practice tasks with which your vet will need your horse to be relaxed and tolerant:

- ❖ being caught
- ❖ being present on the yard when the vet visits other horses
- ❖ standing patiently whilst in-hand
- ❖ being touched and handled all over the body
- ❖ having the tail lifted and supported by a hand (in readiness for taking temperature)
- ❖ lifting and manipulating legs and feet
- ❖ walking and trotting in-hand
- ❖ walking and trotting on the lunge
- ❖ having a fold of skin held (in readiness for injection)
- ❖ hold syringe near horse (in readiness for injection)
- ❖ holding the mouth open for inspection
- ❖ loading and travelling in a horse box
- ❖ all the above with a stranger



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On the Day...

- ❖ Ask the vet to greet the horse quietly and give a gentle scratch and/or treat
- ❖ Have another horse close by for company
- ❖ Have food available
- ❖ Make sure the horse has already had turn-out and is not overdue feed
- ❖ Ideally have the horse in a location with which he/she is most comfortable (field, stable or yard?) But discuss possibilities with vet in advance
- ❖ Make sure the vet is aware of any physical issues that cause the horse to struggle, e.g. size, injury, stiffness



If things go wrong....

- ❖ Give horse lots of calming scratches
- ❖ Use food rewards as a distraction (if safe to do so)
- ❖ Use more palatable hay/haylage or lick
- ❖ Consider doing any non-urgent procedures another day. Plan how it would be done differently.
- ❖ If possible, take a break and assess what is happening. Maybe ask in a different way.
- ❖ Contact EBTA for more personalised help

