

## THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO

# HORSE BLANKETING

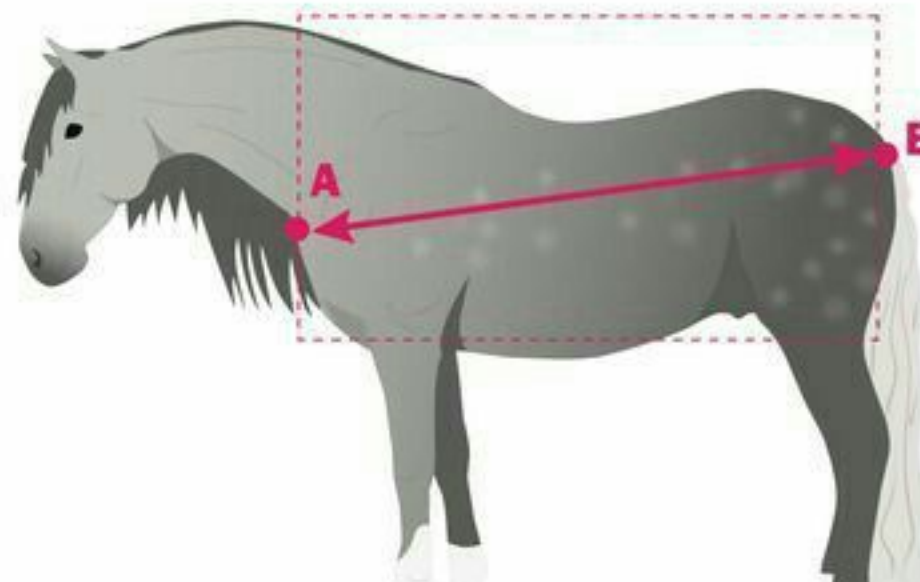
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## Everything you would ever need to know about **BLANKETING** your horse.

### MEASURE YOUR HORSE

Measure the distance from the center of the horse's chest (Point A) to the point of the buttocks (Point B). Include the widest part of his shoulder and keep the tape measure level. Record this distance in inches. This is your horse's blanket size.



### LEARN THE TERMINOLOGY

#### TURNOUT SHEET



Turnout sheets are lightweight (usually 0g - 100g of fill), waterproof, and securely fit the horse. They provide your horse with some degree of protection against environmental elements (wind, rain, snow, hail) while turned out in the pasture.

#### ANTI-SWEAT SHEET



Anti-sweat sheets help keep the horse clean while they cool off after a bath or hard workout. Can be used as an added layer of warmth underneath turnout or stable blankets.

#### QUARTER SHEET



Quarter sheets are designed to cover the horse's hindquarters and wrap up under the saddle flaps or over your legs. They are useful for cool mornings while warming up.

#### TURNOUT BLANKET



Turnout blankets have an inner layer of fill for warmth, a waterproof outer layer, and has multiple fittings to allow it to stay securely on the horse while they are turned out in the pasture. Many come with a hood or allow for a hood option.

#### STABLE BLANKET



Stable blankets provide your horse with warmth during the colder months of the year, worn while they are in their stall; they are not waterproof and do not securely fit the horse. They can be used for additional insulation underneath turnout sheets.

#### STABLE SHEET



A stable sheet is a lightweight, snug-fitting layer used to keep your horse's coat clean while they are in their stall; they are not waterproof and do not securely fit the horse. They can be used for additional insulation underneath turnout sheets. A stable sheet can have a snug fit.

#### FLY SHEET



Fly sheets are used during the summer months to provide your horse with some degree of protection against biting insects. Can be used underneath other sheets or blankets as an added layer of warmth.

#### COOLER



Coolers are placed on horses after baths or if they are sweating from a hard workout during the winter. Their purpose is to help your horse dry faster while keeping them from getting too cold.

#### RAIN SHEET



A rain sheet is a waterproof throw-over sheet which fits over on top of riding tack, to protect it and the horse from getting wet. Useful for in between classes at horse shows.

### PARTS OF A BLANKET

#### Neck styles



**Waterproof** - Means that the blanket or sheet's outer fabric has been treated to repel water.

**Tail flap/cover** - Provides additional protection from wind and helps keep the blanket sides down during wind gusts.

#### Front closure styles



**Shoulder gussets/darts** - Helps alleviate pressure on the horse's shoulders during movement.

**Elastic Leg Straps** - Straps which are found along the rear sides of the blankets, which criss-cross between the horse's back legs.

**Tail Cord** - Ties the back ends of the blanket together and rests under the tail, helping to keep the blanket in place.

**Breathable** - The level of breathability is determined by how easily air can pass through the fabric. If fabric doesn't breathe well, mold and mildew can become a problem.

**Denier (D)** - A unit of measurement that describes the linear mass density of the material; a good measure of strength and durability when comparing two deniers of the same material. The higher the number, the higher the stronger the material.

**Polyfill** - Synthetic fibers, as polyester, used as filling or insulating material in blankets which gives them warmth. It is measured in GSM (grams per square meter), commonly depicted as 'g' in the U.S.

### MATERIAL COMPARISON

|               | Ballistic Nylon                        | Polyester        | Polypropylene    |
|---------------|--|------------------|------------------|
| Durability    | ★★★★★                                  | ★★★              | ★★★★★            |
| UV Resistance | ★★★★★                                  | ★★★★★            | ★★★★★            |
| Cost          | \$\$\$\$                               | \$               | \$\$\$           |
| Weight        | 📦📦📦                                    | 📦📦               | 📦                |
| Cleaning      | Machine washable; can't be dry-cleaned | Machine washable | Machine washable |

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

#### What price range can I realistically afford?

New horse blankets range in cost between \$60 - \$500.

#### How destructive is my horse---or the horses in the pasture my horse goes out with?

There are horses which find a way to destroy even the so-called 'bulletproof' blankets. Sometimes they get help from their pasture mates. There is no point in spending money on the most expensive blanket that is knowingly going to get destroyed promptly.

#### Who will be putting on and taking off the blankets? Will the service cost extra?

The temperature constantly fluctuates, which requires daily blanket management to ensure the horse doesn't get too hot. When a horse breaks a sweat under its blanket, it should be removed or replaced with a lighter blanket. If a horse is shivering, increase the warmth level by switching to a warmer blanket, or adding a layer underneath or on top. If your horse is at a boarding facility, some places charge extra for blanketing. Some blankets are also quicker to put on and take off than others.

#### How old is the horse? What is their body condition score?

Older and/or thinner horses tend to require more warmth than younger horses or horses with higher body condition scores.

#### Will I need to body clip my horse this season?

Horses are often clipped in the winter to prevent them from getting a chill if their winter coats are wet after a workout. This is because a horse with a longer coat sweats easier and also takes much longer to dry off. However, a body clipped horse will require heavier blankets to stay warm.

#### Will my horse be outside 24/7 or inside a stall in a barn part of the time?

If your horse stays inside a stable at night, then you might be able to save some money by purchasing stable blankets (which are cheaper than turnout blankets). However, it is a good idea to have at least one waterproof, turnout sheet or blanket for when the horse is turned out. This is where the blanketing layering systems can be useful.

### BLANKETING CHART

| °F       | °C       | Coat Type                               |   |
|----------|----------|---|---|
|          |          | Horse w/ a Full Coat                    | Clipped Horse                                 |
| >60°     | >15°     | Nothing                                 | Nothing or sheet if rain/wind                 |
| 50 - 60° | 10 - 15° | Sheet if rain/wind                      | Light blanket (100g)                          |
| 40 - 50° | 4 - 10°  | Nothing or light blanket (100g)         | Light/medium blanket (150-250g)               |
| 32 - 40° | 0 - 4°   | Nothing or light/med blanket (150-250g) | Medium/heavy blanket (200-300g)               |
| 14 - 32° | -10 - 0° | Nothing or light/med blanket (150-300g) | Medium(200-300g) w/ liner or heavy (300-400g) |
| < 14°    | < -10°   | Medium/heavy blanket (300-400g)         | Heavy (300-500g) w/ liner                     |

\*The horse's age, general health, body condition score, breed, natural coat thickness, length of time turned out in the pasture, intensity of pasture play, available shelter access, and previous climate exposure are also factors to consider which are not accounted for in the above chart.

### References

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