

















## Volunteer Orientation

HorsePower operates on a schedule of 5 nine-week sessions throughout the year. For consistency for both volunteers and riders, we ask for nine week commitment. Please note, we understand previous commitments or emergencies may come up during a nine week session. Please notify our General Manager for any times you wouldn't be available.

### Guidelines

-  Please wear appropriate clothing = long pants (finger tip length shorts may be worn), modest shirts, closed-toed shoes, hat and water. Please avoid tank tops, low cut tops, Hanging jewelry or scarves.
-  Appropriate conduct = treat others as you would wish to be treated, when working with clients (especially when giving physical support) ask: May I touch your back/leg/arm to help give support/help cue? I am going to help reposition your hand/back/leg/heel, is that all right?, giving **SIDE-HUGS**, high fives, thumbs up, smiles, and verbal praise are wonderful
-  Please make sure you are current on any immunizations.
-  Please keep in mind your own physical limitations, we will work with you to find appropriate volunteer positions (we want you to have **FUN** 😊)
-  Please park in designated areas only
-  Please keep your cell phone in your car. Only instructors/therapists are allowed to have cell phones during classes for emergencies.  
Please avoid offering food or drink to a client unless you have had permission to do so.
-  Please do **NOT** rest or hang on any horses, railings, fencing, or rider
-  IF you have visitors coming please ask a staff member **FIRST** and help them to the designated area for family and friends to watch and enjoy.
-  Please feel free to introduce yourself to the students and families
-  **DO NOT** chew gum or food during a riding session, please keep any extra food away from the horse area(s)
-  Follow all directions given by the HorsePower staff, if you have comments or constructive criticisms please wait until after the riding or volunteer time is over, and comment on it in private
-  **PLEASE** ask before using or moving any equipment
-  Close all gates behind you, latching securely
-  And above else...**HAVE FUN!!!**










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## Side Walking

Side walking is essential to therapeutic riding, providing physical and emotional support. There are two positions in side walking:






### **Coach – arrive 15 minutes before lesson time**

-  Greets rider
-  Helps ensure correct helmet/correct fit
-  Provide extra help to Head Walker in helping rider prepare for lesson (if applicable)
-  Assist Instructor in mounting/dismounting (if applicable)
-  Provides physical support to rider during lesson
-  Assists rider with directions, tasks, or skills during lesson as needed
-  Assists rider in case of emergency
-  Provide extra help to Head Walker in helping rider put horse away after lesson (if applicable)
-  Helps rider put helmet away

### **Silent Partner – arrive 15 minutes before lesson time**






-  Assist Instructor in mounting/dismounting (if applicable)
-  Provides physical support to rider during lesson
-  Assist rider with directions, tasks or skills ONLY if needed on the opposite side of the Coach
-  Assists rider in case of emergency

Both positions give physical support in one of five ways:

-  **Ankle hold:** provides minimal support for the balanced rider, provides support for individuals with tight legs or heels, provides support in finding proper lower leg/heel position
-  **Knee hold:** provides support for riders with some balance issues
-  **Thigh hold:** provides a high level of support for riders with poor balance, low trunk control
-  **Double arm lock:** provides highest level of support
-  **Passive:** walking besides rider, ready to give support if needed

**Both positions require the ability to walk for roughly an hour during the riding lesson. Most lessons will mainly consist of walking, but there will be occasions where some jogging will be required.**

Some important tips to remember:

-  Encourage rider to focus on the Instructor
-  Allow time for the rider to process an instruction – sometimes mistakes can make great learning opportunities
-  Too much talking or chatting can overwhelm the rider and lead to confusion and overstimulation
-  Remember to try and stay even with the rider's knee, putting you in the optimal place to give support
-  Please **do not** wrap your arms around a rider's waist, this can pull the rider off balance

👉 You are here to help **support** the rider and to **encourage growth**  
If an emergency would arise, please say **EMERGENCY WHOA** to alert your Head Walker and  
Instructor.

Your only concern in an emergency is the RIDER.

## Side Walking Positions

### ANKLE HOLD

- Gently cup the back of the heel, be careful not to squeeze
- ENCOURAGE the stretching of the calf but DO NOT force the ankle down
- The ankle hold can be used to provide minimal physical support to stabilize balance, encourage balance awareness, encourage the correct heel position, provide emotional support with minimal physical support



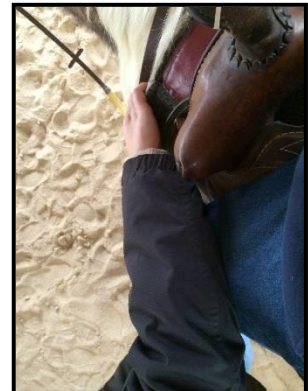
### KNEE HOLD

- Gently place a hand on the knee, be careful not to put any pressure on the knee or you may unbalance the rider
- The knee hold can be used to help stabilize a rider who has minimal to moderate balance concerns, provide emotional support through physical support for a rider who may be nervous



### THIGH HOLD

- Hold onto the front of the saddle or saddle pad, with your forearm coming across the rider's thigh
- This position helps to 'lock' in a rider who has several balance concerns
- The thigh hold is a taxing hold and if your arm becomes sore or tired, signal your HEAD WALKER to stop the horse, change position ONE SIDE WALKER AT A TIME – never leave a rider with NO support



### DOUBLE ARM LOCK

- Arm nearest the rider will use the THIGH HOLD position while the other hand will use the ANKLE HOLD position
- This is the highest level of physical support a Side Walker may provide, and used for riders with little to no control for balance
- The double arm lock is taxing and if your arms become sore or tired, signal your HEAD WALKER to stop the horse, change position ONE SIDE WALKER AT A TIME – never leave a rider with NO support



## Head Walking

Head Walkers are also essential to therapeutic riding, providing an opportunity for individuals to ride.

### Head Walker – arrive ½ hour before lesson time

- 👉 Halter, Groom, and Tack horse(s)
- 👉 Help rider groom and tack horse (if applicable)
- 👉 Cue horse during lesson appropriate for each individual rider
- 👉 Help rider Un-Tack, Groom, and put horse away (if applicable)

Head Walkers can provide cueing in four different ways:

- 👉 **Active:** riders are not cueing horse, Head Walkers provide all cues during the lesson OR riders are beginning to learn/have difficulty with cues and the Head Walker helps aid in cueing the horse
- 👉 **Passive:** riders skills have progressed to where they cue and maintain control of their horse, Head Walkers provide cues as needed if horse and/or rider loose focus/control or in case of an emergency
- 👉 **Passive Off-Lead:** riders are working on independent skills, Head Walkers provide assistance to rider or in case of an emergency by maintaining position at horse's head with lead rope draped over horse's neck
- 👉 **Spotter:** Head Walkers stay in arena as a spotter for an independent rider ready to help in case of emergency

Some important tips to remember:

- 👉 The Head Walker's attention is on the horse at all times, and does not help assist or cue the rider during the session
- 👉 In an emergency situation the Head Walker stays with the horse at all times
- 👉 While helping to control/cue the horse, the horse must be free to have forward movement and movement of the head
- 👉 Riders may be able to help groom and tack their horse but the Head Walker is ultimately responsible to the instructor for any potential concerns of the horse's ability to perform
- 👉 Remember any correction for horse behavior has ramifications for the rider, please talk with the Instructor or Mentor Head Walker for advice on correcting a horse during a lesson
- 👉 Review Skill #7 in the Skill Handbook for leading

If an emergency would arise, please say EMERGENCY WHOA to alert your Side Walkers and Instructor.

Your only concern in an emergency is the HORSE.

## Head Walking Positions

### ACTIVE

- The Head Walker is giving all cues and has 100% control of the horse
- This position may be used for participants who are being introduced to therapeutic riding, may not have the ability to control or cue their own horse, may be working on advanced skills such as balance work and must have someone cueing the horse



### PASSIVE

- The Head Walker is only giving cues when needed to help reinforce a rider's correct cues or to be ready to help control the horse if an emergency situation would arise
- This position may be used for participants who are working on strengthening their skills in independence, may be able to perform some skills independently but not to the point of being off-lead



### PASSIVE OFF-LEAD

- The Head Walker has wrapped the lead rope around the horse's neck UNDER the reins and stays in the ACTIVE position while walking and/or jogging with the horse
- This position may be used for rider's working on independent riding skills but may need the Head Walker in case of an emergency situation



\*Failure to follow guidelines and/or direction of instructor/therapist can result in volunteer dismissal

