



Equestrian Studies Western Equipment List

Equestrian students are required to own and maintain the following equipment for their personal use in riding classes. Our faculty recognizes this list, though extensive, is not a complete list of equipment needed by professionals in our industry and is intended to accommodate the basic needs of students at the beginning of their careers. Substitution of some items is possible; however, the specific equipment listed below is recommended. During our first week of the academic year the incoming class tours local vendors for the purpose of acquiring supplies and equipment. Many students choose to leave the bulk of their personal gear at home and acquire a set of school equipment during the shopping days. Local vendors typically give discounts to RMC students on the items they purchase during the tours. If students have any questions, we recommend waiting until the faculty can assist in the purchasing process. We have strong opinions about what works best in our program and can best guide our students toward appropriate choices after the school year is underway.

All personal gear should be clearly and indisputably labeled. Brass tags or plates riveted to leather tack are recommended. More economical “dog tags” can be purchased at a local PetSmart and work well to identify the owner. Additionally, black permanent markers can provide effective labeling of various items. Students may choose to color coordinate their gear using patterned duct tape or spray paint to create a distinctive “brand” on their equipment.

Rider apparel

Students need to manage their personal attire with a balance of professionalism in concert with practicality for weather conditions and budget. Long pants, low heeled work boots, and work tops appropriate for the physical labor in a horse barn are required. As the weather can change abruptly, we recommend students dress in layers appropriate to working both inside and outdoors. Horses must be cared for in all kinds of weather and students should have an assortment of attire options to maintain their comfort both while riding and at chore time.

Required

- riding helmet with safety harness, ASTM-SEI certified (look for the label certifying the helmet has been tested by the American Society for Testing and Materials/Safety Equipment Institute); if in doubt about proper fit, please wait to purchase
- riding jeans
- riding boots- low heeled style of western boots or paddock boots are required
- spurs (Spurs are useful tools. Short shank spurs with blunt rowels are suggested. If in doubt about style, consult your instructor.)

Recommended

- muck boots; water proof, insulated boots for cold, wet, or muddy conditions
- leather work gloves
- insulated work overalls (i.e. Carhartt)

Grooming equipment

Students will need a grooming kit to maintain their assigned horse. This list will provide the essential tools to groom the horse but personal preferences for brand, budget, and style should be considered. These tools will need to be maintained to hygienic standards to protect horse welfare and replaced periodically, as needed.

Required

- grooming items:
 - soft rubber curry
 - dandy brush - stiff bristles
 - body brush - soft bristles
 - mane comb
 - hoof pick
 - four standing wraps with Velcro closures
 - four quilted leg wrap pads, 16” to 18”, quilted with flannel or high quality “no bow” preferred
 - polo wraps, set of four
 - soft lycra tail bags or cotton tube socks
- bathing equipment
 - shampoo and tail conditioner
 - sponge
 - sweat scraper
 - assorted towels
 - small scrub bucket
 - hair bands to hold tail braid
- banding kit
 - bands
 - small toothed comb
 - butterfly or flange clips to hold back mane
 - water spray bottle
 - metal comb or thick toothed plastic to pull mane
 - scissors
 - seam ripper to remove bands
- electric clippers and clipper blades (size #10 and # 40); Andis, Oster, and Wahl make sturdy clippers; cordless is easier to use in our facility

Recommended

- Grooming bag or tote to organize grooming supplies
- bag, toolbox, or zippered tote to contain banding supplies

Stable management equipment

Students must care for their horse’s stall daily during the week and will work on chore teams during scheduled weekends throughout each semester.

Required

- stall fork – durafork is an economical, lightweight plastic fork
- three flat back five gallon plastic buckets (light colors work best to maintain cleanliness), with three large double end snaps or bucket hangers

- tack trunk – space limitations do not allow for extra-large trunks; Students will have space for one average sized tack trunk in front of their stall and additional space in the tack room for another storage container. As with any storage container, padlocks are recommended.
- pocket knife- students need to carry a pocket knife when working at the barn
- duct tape

Recommended

- scoop shovel
- small tool accessory kit: scissors, leather hole punch, pliers, screw driver, electrical tape, spare Chicago screws, etc.

Horse care

Required

- veterinarian thermometer for large animals (with string and clip attached)
- stethoscope (Quality varies, as does price. Large animal veterinary stethoscope preferred, but any average quality will suffice.)
- first aid supplies (vet wrap-useful for many, many things, antibacterial scrub such as chlorhexadine or betadine, first aid cream)

Tack

- Western Saddle – ****Please contact the Program Director or your riding class instructor prior to purchase.**** There are many styles of western saddles and most of these saddle styles are purpose built for a specific sport. Our faculty can best direct you in the purchase of a saddle appropriate to program content.
- saddle blankets- Preferred pads have fibers (felt or wool) to wick sweat from the back, are easily cleaned, and are thick enough to adequately distribute rider weight. Some horses have particular back/wither conformation and may need to be addressed during the school year.
 - fleece “kool back” or ¾” felt pad
 - wool Navajo or Double weave “wool” blanket
 - “impact” gel pads are more expensive than the sturdy and workmanlike felt pads but they do provide for better weight distribution for the horse’s back
- lunge whip and lunge line (cotton is recommended)
- nylon halter with snap-on lead rope
- stud chain (18 inches)
- harness leather headstall (sturdy browband with throat latch is preferable) and harness leather split reins 5/8” or 3/4” wide (rider preference) and 7’ - 8’ long
- bits- any that you own; Instructors will aid in bit selection most appropriate to the individual horse.
- Tack cleaning supplies- leather cleaner, leather conditioner, sponges, towels, etc.

Horse blankets

Program horses must be maintained in peak condition, including their hair coat. In order to accommodate the climate and meet this goal our students need to supply a wardrobe for their

assigned horse. Layers work best to maintain comfort in our climate. Quality blankets, when cared for properly, should serve the student well past graduation.

Required

- cooler (acrylic coolers are a practical alternative to the traditional wool; dress sheets are also acceptable)
- horse blanket set (blanket and hood)- We recommend Big D or Schneider's brands for durability and fit; the usual program horses have an average size of 78 or 80 and the hood size large. Open front blankets allow for extra adjustability.
- horse sheet set (sheet and hood)- This lighter weight covering is the perfect "jacket" weight for the many in-between temperature days in Montana. They also layer nicely under the heavy blankets for the cold winter months. Sizing is the same.
- turn out blanket- the overcoat for horses as they go outside for free exercise during the cold winter months

Recommended

- lycra hood or "sleezy"

Some Useful Online Retailers

SmartPak	Big D blankets, better quality tack/equipment, stable supplies https://www.smartpakequine.com/
Schneider's	For economical blanketing options, most tack, stable supplies http://www.sstack.com/
Dover Saddlery	This business is geared toward English equipment but quality stable supplies can be found here http://www.doversaddlery.com/
KO Trading Co	Economical training saddles, basic work tack on a student's budget http://www.kotrading.com/trainersaddles-2.aspx
Paul Taylor Saddle Co	Tack, equipment, saddles, economy horse blankets, stable supplies, etc. http://www.paultaylorsaddlecompany.com/

Estimated costs

Acquiring start-up equipment in any industry can be expensive, but informed shopping can mitigate those costs. In general, students who need to acquire every item on the list will spend an estimated \$2200- \$3500 with the following breakdown provided to supply a basic understanding of how these costs might break down.

Grooming supplies \$200-\$400

Horse care \$100-\$200

Stable management equipment \$200-\$400

The tack trunk can cause a lot of variation in this category with some trunks costing nearer to \$1000. For most students the \$70 rolling tool box is generally adequate. Clippers of quality generally run between \$150-250.

Tack \$1500-\$2000

Saddles range widely in price and value is a strong consideration. This vital piece of equipment is far and above the single largest expense for students. Quality saddles will last a lifetime, hold their value for resale, and are considered to be worth the investment. However, more economical choices can be made for durable and appropriate saddles. Training saddles are made by most saddle makers. These are typically rough out leather with no stamping and are rugged in design. KO Trading Co. makes durable, yet economical saddles for \$899. Paul Taylor offers theirs for \$695. There are others on the market that can be purchased for less money but these will typically cause problems for the riders and/or horses due to poor construction. Used saddles are always a desired option, when they can be found, as better quality saddles can be purchased at discounted prices. Please discuss all saddle purchases with your riding class instructor before investing a large sum of money as this saddle will become a vital tool for your future coursework.

Horse blankets \$250- \$450

Students must maintain and secure their tack, equipment, and supplies. Rocky Mountain College will not be held liable for damage, loss, or theft.