

SOP No:	ATT 036
SUBJECT	Approach, catch, apply a halter to, and lead a horse in a yard and through a gateway
POLICY:	These procedures may only be performed by operators who have been educated in the correct techniques, and under the supervision of their Demonstrator who is skilled in horse handling. Leather boots must be worn.
PRECAUTIONS:	Be constantly aware of the horse's body language and responses. At all times work calmly and quietly around them. Make sure gates are closed securely. Ensure there are no hazards which could cause injury. Make sure you do not get into a position where you could get crushed between the horse and the rails, gate, etc, or kicked.
EQUIPMENT:	Safe stock yards, halter and lead rope
PROCEDURE:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Confidently approach the horse, if possible from its left (near) side, making sure it is aware of your presence. With your halter and lead rope ready in your left hand, move towards its left shoulder with your right arm extended and make contact with your right hand on its neck or shoulder. If you must approach from the right hand side, eg if the horse is standing with its left side against the rails, have your halter and lead rope in your right hand.2. Catch the horse by placing a lead rope up high around its neck to gain control of its head. Standing on the left hand side of the horse, put the halter on the horse's head by bringing the headpiece up behind the horse's ears and drawing the noseband up over the nose. Fasten the halter with the buckle on the left side of the horse's head. Secure so the halter sits below the cheekbone protruding on the horses head. You must be able to fit 2 fingers between the noseband and the cheekbone. Make sure the noseband is adjusted so that you can easily fit your hand between the horse's head and the noseband.3. Lead the horse by walking beside its left shoulder with your right hand a few inches below the clip on the lead rope. Have the excess rope in your left hand. Any excess rope should be folded across your hand. DO NOT LOOP OR TWIST THE ROPE AROUND YOUR HAND OR ARM. If the horse becomes agitated try to stay close to its shoulder and turn it in a circle. If the horse is pulling strongly into the halter, DO NOT JUST PULL TIGHTLY ON THE ROPE AGAINST IT. The horse is stronger than you and this will increase its resistance. Use a series of "pull and release" actions with your hand, or a stronger method of restraint eg chain shank. To lead through gateways, always open the gate as wide as possible before proceeding through it. Horses can be nervous of narrow spaces and this avoids injuries to the horse and the handler.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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REVISED:

REFERENCES

1. Rose, R.J. and Hodgson, D.R. Manual of Equine Practice. Second Edition. W.B. Saunders. Philadelphia. 2000.