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OUNG OR OLD, HORSES need to know what hobbles are – it helps them learn not to fight against being restrained. If a horse were to get a foot in the fence and he has been hobble trained, the chances of him getting hurt are slimmer because he knows to stand still when he gets something around his foot or feet.

Mehl Lawson will tell you more about hobble-training a horse on Page 20, but I'm going to tell you about the type of hobbles I prefer and how to put hobbles on your horse.

I prefer a Figure 8 hobble – that's the shape it makes when it's on a horse's legs. It's made of real soft 1-inch latigo leather and has two stainless steel rings. I like the 1-inch rather than the 1½-inch hobbles because the buckle gets too big on the wider hobbles. On hobbles that are narrower, the buckle is too small.

Don't buy nylon hobbles. The nylon is very abrasive and will cut a horse's legs. Also, look for hobbles on which the leather strap between the two rings is short – 6 inches or less. If the leather strap is too long, a horse can actually walk with the hobbles and you are defeating your purpose.

I also like a set of hobbles that has a long tail. Sure, when it's on the horse, you're going to have a lot of tail hanging, but if you have a colt that is squirming, you can buckle one of the first holes and gradually tighten it as the colt settles down.

Putting a set of hobbles on a horse is fairly simple:

1. Starting with the right front leg, wrap the end of the hobble strap clockwise around the leg and lace it through the first metal ring.
2. Lace the strap through the second ring.
3. Run the strap behind the left front leg.
4. Buckle the strap. ■

AQHA member Dennis Moreland has been making quality working tack since 1976. Visit www.dmtack.com to learn more about his Dennis Moreland Second Edition line.

Hobble Along

By Dennis

Moreland

Here's how you put hobbles on your horse.

