

Putting On A Proper Bandage

Ill-fitted bandages (too tight or improper bandages) can result in career ending damage to tendons and/or ligaments. Proper bandaging requires significant padding; an inch or more of cushion. The cushion material is held in place by a wrap. Wrap examples being Vetrap™ or similar product, cotton leg wrap, or leg flannel. Sheet cotton (minimum of 4 or 5, 30" x 36" sheets), 'heavy' leg quilts, or 'pillow' bandages work well as cushion material.

Place on leg wrinkle free. Wrap your horse's legs from front to back. This means you push the tendons towards the mid-line of the horse. Said another way, wrap the horse's left legs in a counter clockwise direction and the horse's right legs in a clockwise direction. Apply the cushion holding wrap in a spiral manner, starting about mid-cannon. Wrap down the leg, and then come back up the leg over lapping the wrap about ½ the width of wrap. Leave approximately 1 inch cushion hanging out the bottom and top. Cushion should cover to just below knee or hock, extending down the leg to below the coronary band, covering the heel bulbs, almost sitting on the ground..

Upon completion you should be able to get a finger – snug – down between cushion and leg. Remember: Apply uniform pressure, compress cushion padding evenly, have no creases underneath, not too loose (a loose bandage will rotate on leg) and not too tight (fingers down snug). Check your bandage throughout the day, and change (re-set) bandage every day; unless directed by your veterinarian differently.

For the most part, bandages are applied to horses for a few basic reasons:

- To provide support for tendons and ligaments;
- To prevent or reduce swelling;
- To protect from injury;
- With wounds, we bandage to provide a barrier from contamination; and
- Again with wounds: we bandage as an aid in healing.

