Leap Of Faith Equestrian



Student and Parent Handbook

Our Mission

At Leap of Faith Equestrian, our mission is to foster meaningful connections between horses and humans while developing well-rounded equestrians who excel in all aspects of horse care, management, riding, and training.

Specializing in the hunter/jumper discipline, we emphasize correct fundamentals that create a solid foundation adaptable to any riding style. Our program prioritizes horsemanship—from the personalized care we provide each horse to the knowledge and skills we instill in every student.

We welcome riders and horses of all experience levels and backgrounds. Each training program is tailored to the individual needs of horse and rider, ensuring their progress and success. Whether your goals include improving your riding, competing in horse shows, or advancing your horse's training, our experienced team is here to support you every step of the way.

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Required and Optional Gear

Required:

Helmet

For the safety of all riders, an ASTM/SEI-approved helmet is required at all times when mounted. This certification ensures the helmet is specifically designed and tested for horseback riding. Helmets designed for other activities, such as biking or skateboarding, are not permitted.

Riders may borrow a school helmet for their first lesson only at no charge. After the first lesson, riders are required to purchase their own properly fitting helmet. If a rider needs to borrow a school helmet beyond the first lesson, a \$10 rental fee will apply per use.

We strongly recommend purchasing your first helmet in person to ensure proper fit for both safety and comfort. Helmets must be replaced every 5 years at a minimum, as the protective materials degrade over time. Additionally, any helmet that has been dropped or involved in a fall must be replaced immediately, even if no damage is visible.





Nearby Helmet Retailers

Dover Saddlery 444 Center St Moraga, CA Western Saddlery 7038 Commerce Cir Pleasanton, CA

Boots

For safety reasons, closed-toed shoes or boots with a low heel (approximately 1") are required for all riders. The heel helps prevent the foot from slipping through the stirrup, reducing the risk of injury.

Flat-soled shoes such as sneakers, hiking boots, or other non-riding footwear are not permitted. Riders may borrow a pair of boots from our school supply for their first lesson only, if an appropriate size is available. After that, we recommend purchasing your own pair of boots designed specifically for English horseback riding.

Both tall boots and paddock boots are acceptable, with paddock boots being a more affordable and accessible option for beginners.

Please note that Western-style boots ("cowboy" boots) and boots with zippers on the inside of the calf are not allowed, as they can cause discomfort, leg injury, and damage to saddles or other equipment.

Boot Fit

A proper fit is essential when selecting riding boots, as it directly impacts both safety and performance. Boot size and fit can vary between brands, so riders should always try them on to ensure a secure and comfortable fit before riding.

Common brands: Ariat, Dublin



Pants

Long pants and knee-high socks are required for all lessons. For your first ride, snug-fitting pants such as leggings or skinny jeans are acceptable.

Please do not wear baggy or boot-cut jeans, as they can bunch up and cause discomfort or interfere with your ride. After your first lesson, we recommend investing in a pair of riding pants or breeches designed for English horseback riding. These are made with comfort and performance in mind and often include reinforced knee patches or seats for added durability and grip in the saddle.







Shirt & Upper Body Attire Policy

Riders must wear a shirt that thoroughly covers the torso and shoulders. Crop tops, spaghetti straps, and tank tops are not appropriate for lessons. Suitable options include t-shirts, polo shirts, and long-sleeved sun shirts, which also offer added protection against scrapes in the event of a fall.

Oversized or flowy clothing, including hoodies with drawstrings, are not permitted, as it can get caught on equipment and pose a safety risk.

For female riders, we strongly recommend wearing a supportive sports bra. Horseback riding is a high-impact sport—similar to soccer or basketball—so please choose a bra designed for that level of activity to ensure comfort and support.

Jewelry

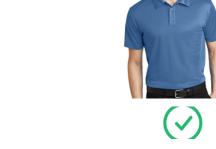
For safety reasons, dangling earrings and hoops are not permitted while riding. Additionally, excessive jewelry should be avoided, as it can pose serious risks — including getting caught on equipment or being pulled, which can lead to injury.

Religious Items

Religious attire, such as headscarves, is permitted provided it does not interfere with safety. Riders are encouraged to ensure such items are secure and do not obstruct vision or the proper fit of safety gear.













Optional:

Half Chaps

For riders who wear paddock boots, we recommend using half chaps. Half chaps pair with paddock boots to offer the feel and function of tall boots. They provide extra grip against the saddle and help prevent rubbing or chafing on the rider's legs, especially during longer rides or lessons.



Gloves

Wearing gloves can help prevent discomfort and blisters from holding the reins, especially during longer lessons or in warmer weather.

If you choose to wear gloves, be sure to purchase a pair specifically designed for horseback riding. Riding gloves offer the proper grip, texture, and reinforcement in key areas to ensure both comfort and durability while handling the reins.









Pre- and Post-Ride Expectations

Here's a friendly reminder of what is expected before and after your ride to help keep our barn running smoothly and respectfully for both horses and humans:

Arriving for Lessons

- Please arrive on time for your scheduled lesson.
- If you can tack up independently, arrive early enough to be fully tacked and ready by your lesson start time.
- If you need help tacking up, arrive at your lesson time, and we'll assist you.
- If you're running late, please contact us as soon as possible. We can assist in tacking up your horse for a \$25 fee.
- If you are 15 minutes late or more without notifying us, the lesson will be considered a no-show and cannot be made up.

Cross-Tie Etiquette

- If your horse pees or poops in the cross-ties, please clean it up right away.
- If you notice your horse is about to pee, move it to the designated pee stall and clean the stall afterward.
- When you are finished in the cross-ties, sweep up any hair, dirt, or manure remnants.
 - If a staff member has to clean up after you, a \$25 service fee will be charged.

Grooming Expectations

- Groom your horse before and after your ride, including picking all four feet even if rinsing them off.
- While we prefer that horses' tails are not brushed, if you choose to do so, you must use detangler
 no exceptions. This helps prevent breakage and maintains the health and fullness of the tail.
- During fly season, please use fly spray regularly to help keep your horse comfortable and focused. This simple step significantly reduces irritation and distraction caused by biting insects.
- If rinsing your horse off, check with your instructor first.
- Horses must not enter the arena excessively dirty. You may be sent back to groom, which will cut into your lesson time.
- Horses put away with sweat marks or left dirty will incur a \$25 grooming fee.

Pre- and Post-Ride Expectations Cont.

Health & Safety Checks

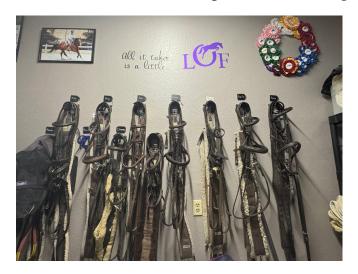
• If you notice any signs of injury or illness while catching or grooming (e.g., cuts, swelling, heat, lameness, missing shoes), you must notify a staff member immediately, before mounting.

Tack & Equipment

- Clean your bridle and bit after every ride.
- If your horse is wearing a blanket, ask your instructor whether to re-blanket before turning out or putting the horse away.
 - Students will learn how to blanket properly during the monthly Horsemanship Session.
- Only use spurs or a crop if instructed to do so.
- All equipment must be returned to its proper place, including:
 - Saddles & bridles
 - Crops & spurs
 - Earplugs, grooming tools, etc.
- If you're unsure where something goes, please ask.
 - Photos of correct equipment storage are included below.

Pre- and Post-Ride Expectations Cont.

Examples of how things should properly be put away









Example of what your crosstie should **NOT** look like after your lesson



Safety and Conduct Guidelines

To ensure a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone, please follow these essential rules while at Leap of Faith Equestrian:

General Behavior

- No running, yelling, or loud/dangerous behavior that could spook horses.
- Always listen carefully to staff and follow their instructions for your safety and others'.

Handling Horses

- When walking a horse, keep a safe distance from other horses—about kicking distance.
- Always ask before walking behind any horse. No exceptions.
- Never leave horses unattended in cross-ties.

Tacking & Untacking

- Before your lesson, gather tack first, then retrieve your assigned horse.
- After your lesson, untack, groom, and put your horse away before putting away your tack and cleaning up.
- Do not leave any personal items on the white mounting block near the cross-ties; store them in the tack or community room.

Mounting & Riding

- Do not mount your horse without prior instruction.
- Once mounted, wait for the instructor's directions before beginning any exercises.
- Do not go over obstacles (jumps, poles, etc.) without explicit instruction.
- When sharing the arena:
 - Pass left shoulder to left shoulder.
 - Announce your passing direction to other riders.
 - If going in the same direction, the faster horse passes on the inside.
 - Communicate clearly if you plan to circle, cross diagonals, pass other riders, or go over jumps or obstacles.

Safety and Conduct Guidelines Cont.

Arena & Facility Use

- Clean up after your horse if it poops in the arena.
- No dogs/pets allowed on property- no exceptions.
- Closed-toed shoes are required for everyone on the property riders, parents, visitors alike.
- We encourage no use of earbuds, headphones, or noise-cancelling equipment. If you must wear earbuds, wear only one so you stay aware of your surroundings.
- No smoking anywhere on the facility grounds.
- Children under 13 must be supervised by a parent or guardian at all times. No unsupervised drop-offs unless authorized by staff.
- Do not pet or feed any horse without explicit permission from the horse's owner.
 - Treats may only be given by instructors after your lesson, upon request.

Health & Safety

- Notify us immediately if you develop a medical condition or injury that could affect your riding safety.
- We may require medical clearance before you resume riding.
- ASTM/SEI-approved helmets must be worn at all times when mounted.
- Riders with long hair must keep it pulled back out of their face. Hair ties are available if needed.
- Every person on Arriba Vista property, regardless of age or riding status, must sign a barn waiver before participating.

Visitors

- Visitors are more than welcome, but they must remain with the student and/or the student's parent at all times no wandering around the property is allowed.
- Every individual, adult or minor, must have a signed release form on file to be on the premises.
- Please limit the number of visitors to avoid overcrowding and ensure a safe, focused environment for all.

Rider Code of Conduct

Arrive with a Positive Attitude

A positive, willing mindset helps your instructor deliver a fun and educational lesson. Horses are sensitive to human emotions—if you're not feeling your best, you're always welcome to request a horsemanship lesson instead of a mounted lesson.

Be Open to Challenges

Growth comes from trying new and sometimes difficult things. Please give every exercise your best effort and trust that your instructor prioritizes your goals and safety.

Treat Everyone with Respect and Kindness

We have zero tolerance for rude or harassing behavior towards instructors, riders, parents, or anyone on the property.

Support Your Teammates

Whether at home or at a show, be a good teammate. Celebrate each other's successes and encourage one another through challenges!

Respect Other Boarders and Professionals

Arriba Vista shares space with other boarders, trainers, and programs. Please be considerate and respectful of everyone at the facility.

Communicate Openly

If you feel uncomfortable with anything or have questions about what we ask you to do, please speak up. It's important for us to know this so that we can create a positive learning environment. Our goal is to help you try new things with confidence.

Rider Code of Conduct Cont.

Prioritize the Well-Being of Horses and People

Your horse is your partner. If your partner feels unsafe or uncomfortable, they can't perform their best. Always put the health, safety, and well-being of horses and others above all else.

Engage in Positive Behavior

- We have zero tolerance for any verbal or physical threats against others.
- Teach your support team about good sportsmanship; we welcome visitors, friends, and supporters, and ask that you show them how to behave appropriately.
- We pledge to treat all individuals involved in the sport including officials, athletes, coaches, trainers, support personnel, participants, media representatives, and fans fairly, properly, justly, and respectfully. Our actions and words will reflect the values of professionalism, sensitivity, and integrity, ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Medical Conditions

• Please inform Leap of Faith staff prior to your next lesson of any new medical condition or injury, as this may impact your safety or the safety of others. Rest assured, all information will be kept personal and confidential.

Parent and Guardian Code of Conduct

Treat everyone with respect and kindness.

We have zero tolerance for rude or harassing behavior towards instructors, riders, parents, or anyone else on the property.

Supervision of children under 13.

If your child is under 13, we ask that a parent or guardian remain on the premises for the entire duration of their time at the barn. In case of an injury or emergency, a parent/guardian must be easily contacted or found. If a parent/guardian is not present, we reserve the right to have your child participate in an unmounted lesson instead of a mounted lesson.

Allow us to assist with equipment.

Please allow our team to teach your child how to correctly put on and adjust equipment such as helmets, half chaps, gloves, etc.

Student responsibility for care and cleanup.

It is the student's responsibility to groom, tack up, untack, and clean up after themselves. Please do not assist your child with these tasks unless asked by a Leap of Faith team member.

No holding or leading horses for your child.

For safety reasons, parents should not hold or lead horses for their children, regardless of experience.

Please leave the coaching to the coaches.

Please allow the instructor to coach your child during lessons and competitions. Save feedback or questions for after the lesson

Do not enter the arena without permission.

In the event your child falls, please do not enter the arena. Our staff is trained to handle falls and will give you instructions if needed. Most falls do not result in injury, and riders often continue their lesson after a quick recovery. Handling falls safely is an essential part of the sport.

Parent and Guardian Code of Conduct Cont.

Inform us of any physical disabilities or ailments.

Please notify Leap of Faith staff about any conditions that may affect your child's safety or the safety of others. This information will be kept personal and confidential.

Be a positive role model.

We ask that you and your guests act as positive role models by demonstrating respect, courtesy, and support for all students, instructors, officials, and spectators during shows and lessons.

Commit to sportsmanship.

You and your guests agree to refrain from any unsportsmanlike conduct towards instructors, students, boarders, other parents, and anyone else on the propertythe use of rude langauge, bullying or harassing behaviour, or inappropriate gestures.

Focus on skill development over winning.

Emphasize the importance of learning, growth, and enjoyment over competition results.

Cancellation and Make-Up Lesson Policy

• Cancellation Notice:

• Either party may cancel this Agreement with at least 60 days written notice prior to the desired termination date. No refunds will be issued upon cancellation.

• Long-Term Absence:

 For long-term absences or travel, a 60-day notice is required. We can hold your spot for \$250 per month during your absence. Without this arrangement, your place will be forfeited.

• Commitment to Lessons:

• To get the most value from the program, we encourage you to prioritize and commit to your scheduled lesson times.

• Make-Up Lessons:

• Leap of Faith offers one make-up lesson per student per month, which must be completed within the same month as the canceled lesson. No rollovers of make-up lessons are allowed.

• Cancellation by LOF:

 Any lessons canceled by Leap of Faith due to unforeseen circumstances will be rescheduled.

• Late Cancellations:

• A 24-hour notice is required for all lesson cancellations. Failure to provide this notice may result in forfeiture of the lesson without a make-up.

• Late Arrivals:

• Arriving 15 minutes or more late will result in the cancellation of your mounted lesson. However, you may choose to use the remaining time for an unmounted horsemanship lesson instead.

• Lesson Modifications:

• LOF reserves the right to provide an unmounted horsemanship lesson in place of a mounted lesson due to inclement weather, late arrival, or other unforeseen circumstances.

Horse Leasing Program

At Leap of Faith, we offer various partial lease options tailored to how many days you want to ride each week. Leasing allows you to:

- Ride the same horse consistently in every lesson
- Enjoy hack days when your riding level permits
- Participate in horse shows with your leased horse (in some cases)

Leasers pay a monthly lease fee, which varies based on the horse and the number of riding days, plus a portion of the horse's regular maintenance costs.

Lease Options

- In-barn, partial leases are available, depending on horse availability and rider suitability.
- We carefully match horses to riders to ensure successful partnerships.
- Lease commitments generally include 1-3 lessons per week, plus an optional hack day based on your skill level.
- Leasers receive priority booking for their lesson and hack days, but Leap of Faith reserves the right to use the horse for other lessons outside those times.
- If we don't have a suitable lesson horse available, we can assist you in bringing in an outside horse for lease.



Buying Your First Horse

At Leap of Faith Equestrian, we love helping our riders find their perfect first horse! We know that buying a horse can feel overwhelming, especially for new riders—but you're not alone.

Working closely with your trainer throughout the process ensures you find the best match, setting you up for a successful and rewarding partnership.

If you're interested in purchasing a horse, please don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to guide you every step of the way!



Horse Shows/What to Expect at Your First Show

Horse Show Guidelines

Before the Show

- Riders must deep-clean saddles and bridles before packing for the show.
- Help pack trailers the day before the show (tack, equipment, hay bags). Refer to the horse show packing checklist.
- At your last lesson before the show, arrive in full show gear with your hair and helmet styled as you will wear them at the show. Ensure that you are comfortable riding in your attire.
- Boots should be cleaned and polished prior to the show.

Hauling Out & Setup

- We aim to arrive 1-2 days before the show to settle horses and unpack trailers.
- Setup/teardown is included in your show fee. Assistance is appreciated but not required due to work/school schedules.

Warm-Up Day (Optional)

- Attendance is optional; horses will be cared for and schooled regardless.
- The warm-up schedule will be sent the night before by the head trainer.
- Riders attending will get a "ticketed warm-up round" a chance to warm up and ride a course in the show ring. Times are approximate and may change.
- Arrive well before your ride time (suggested 1.5 hours early) to learn the course, dress, tack up, and warm up your horse.
- Wear clean schooling attire: breeches, sun or polo shirt, tall boots or paddock boots with half chaps.

Horse Shows/What to Expect at Your First Show Continued.

Show Day

- The head trainer will send the schedule the night before; times are approximate and subject to change.
- Arrive early (at least 1.5 hours prior) and monitor notifications for time updates.
- All riders are expected to help out as needed throughout the day.
- Arrive early enough to walk/learn your course before grooming and tacking up.
- When instructed, mount at the barn and proceed to the warm-up ring for flat warm-up and jumping warm-up jumps.
- Follow your trainer's instructions promptly and be mindful of other riders.

Responsibilities for Riders NOT Paying for Full Grooming:

- Muck stalls and pick throughout the day
- Groom the horse before and after rides
- Bathe the horse as needed
- Tack up and untack your horse
- Clean bridle and bit after each ride
- Put away all used equipment
- · Assist with barn chores and help others when needed

During the Show

- You will typically jump three courses ("classes"); hunter riders may have a flat class as well.
- Classes may be consecutive or have breaks in between.
- Stay as long as possible to support teammates, watch others, and help with chores.

Packing Up & Last Day

- All riders and parents must stay until the last day's end to help pack the trailer.
- Follow the horse trailer back to the barn to help unpack and care for horses upon return.
- The responsible party (parent or rider) must check out at the show office before leaving the grounds.

Payment

- Show fees are paid directly to show management on the last day of the show.
- Leap of Faith show fees are invoiced separately and are due upon receipt.

Horse Show Packing Checklist

Horse Show Packing Checklist - All underlined items must go in trailer

[] Cash or credit card

[] <u>Bridle (deep clean)</u>
[] <u>Saddle (deep clean)</u>
[] <u>Girth</u>
[] Martingale/breastplate if your horse uses one
[] White saddle pad (if using your own, ensure it is clean)
[] Black horse boots (if using your own, ensure they are clean)
[] <u>Fill hay bag</u>
[] Black crop (if needed)
[] Spurs (if needed, please bring your own as we do not have extras at the show)
[] Rider's boots (clean and polished)
[] Belt
[] Hair accessories (hairnet, hair ties that match your hair color, bobby pins as needed. Bring extras
[] Hair brush
[] Helmet (must be clean)
[] Black gloves (mandatory in the hunters)
[] Show coat
[] Safety vest (if you wear one)
[] Walking/tennis shoes
[] Sunhat
[] Extra socks
[] Extra breeches and show shirt (in case of spills and accidents)
[] Stain remover pen
[] Clean rag
[] Boot polish
[] Sunscreen
[] Personal care items
[] Snacks and water

Riding Program FAQ

• Will I ride the same horse in each lesson?

 Before each lesson, our instructors match you with a suitable horse. This means you'll learn to ride a variety of horses to develop a well-rounded skill set. Unless you lease or own a horse, riding the same horse every lesson is not guaranteed.

• Why does each horse have its own labeled saddle, girth, and bridle?

• Each horse has equipment explicitly fitted for them properly fitted saddles, bridles, and bits. Imagine trying to run in someone else's shoes or wear clothes that don't fit! To help our horses perform their best, we provide them with their own gear and ask that you help keep it in great shape.

• Do I use a half pad with every horse?

• Yes! Unless your instructor tells you otherwise, always place a half pad over your saddle pad.

• Will I ride with the same instructor at each lesson?

 While all our instructors are knowledgeable and qualified, you may not always ride with the same one. Sometimes you'll ride with different instructors to experience varied teaching styles and fresh perspectives, which can enrich your learning.

Glossary/Other Helpful Terms

Terms and definitions

Tack

• equipment that the horse wears while being ridden, ie the saddle and bridle

Tacking Up

• the process of putting tack on the horse

Horse

• an equine 14.3 hands or taller

Pony

• an equine 14.2 hands or shorter at full maturity

Hand

• a unit of measurement for horse height, equal to 4 inches

Bridle

• a piece of equipment worn on the horses head while riding

Halter

piece of equipment worn on the horses head to lead it from the ground

Lead Rope

a rope attached to the halter that is used to lead the horse from the ground

Saddle Pad

 a piece of fabric, usually square shaped, that the horse wears under the saddle to keep the saddle clean

Half Pad

 a saddle- shapped piece of material that goes between the saddle pad and saddle to improve the horse's comfort

Crossties

• A set of two ropes that attach to either side of the halter. These are used to keep the horse in one place while grooming and tacking/untacking

Untacking

• The process of removing tack from the horse.

Girth

• A long strap that goes under the horse's belly, used to prevent the saddle from sliding.

• Bit

• A metal piece attached to the bridle which goes in the horse's mouth.

Glossary/Other Helpful Terms Continued

Blanket

• A covering for the horse's body, which they can wear in their stall or in pasture. Typically, blankets are warm and/or waterproof for use in cold or rainy weather.

Cooler

• A special blanket that helps the horse to dry quickly when it is wet or sweaty.

• Fly Sheet

• A special blanket used to protect the horse from flies in the summer.

• Fly Mask

 A covering for the horse's head, which protects the face from flies. They are made of mesh so the horse can still see.

Grooming

• The process of cleaning and inspecting the entire horse. This must be done before and after every ride.

Picking Feet

• The process of cleaning and inspecting the horses feet. This must be done before and after every ride.

Stall

• An enclosed space inside the barn where one horse can live.

Pasture

• A large fenced-in area where multiple horses can live.

Turnout

• A fenced-in area where a horse can be placed temporarily to enjoy some time outside.

Boots/Splint Boots

 These protective boots are used to shield the horse's legs from potential injuries caused by fence contact, overreaching, or striking their own legs during work. Proper use of boots helps prevent scrapes, bruising, and more serious leg injuries.

• Spray with fly spray.

• When asked to spray with fly spray, this means using one of the labeled bottles found on the grooming cart to apply fly spray to the horse. This helps keep the horse comfortable and focused during work.

Round Pen

The round pen is a circular, enclosed training area used for groundwork, lunging, and starting young or green horses. Its shape encourages consistent movement and focus, allowing for safe, controlled interaction between horse and handler. The enclosed space also provides a secure environment for teaching basic commands, building trust, and improving communication.

Glossary/Other Helpful Terms Continued

• Indoor Arena

• The indoor arena is a covered riding space designed to allow for year-round training and lessons, regardless of weather conditions. It provides a safe, enclosed environment for flatwork, jumping, groundwork, and other equine activities. The consistent footing and protection from the elements make it ideal for both horses and riders to stay focused and comfortable.

• Jump Arena

• The jump arena is a designated outdoor riding area equipped with jumps for practicing jumping courses, grids, and flatwork exercises related to jumping. It offers ample space for riders to work on technique, timing, and control in a safe, structured environment. Riders should always inspect the arena and equipment before use and follow posted safety guidelines.

• Lunging

• Lunging is a training technique where the horse moves in a controlled circle around the handler, who uses a long line (lunge line) and voice commands to guide the horse's speed and direction. It's used to develop balance, obedience, fitness, and to warm up or cool down the horse before riding. Proper lunging helps improve communication and groundwork skills between horse and handler.

Appendix 1: ArribaVista Barn Rules

- 1. No drugs, alcohol, or smoking at anytime on premises
- 2. All adults & children must be wearing closed toe shoes at all times while at Arriba Vista
- 3. Park only in designated places & please do not block walkways
- 4.5 mph or less once you reach the gates
- 5. No potential noise making items are prohibited
- 6. No dogs are allowed on premises
- 7. Small children must always be accompanied by an adult
- 8. Small children are to be kept from yelling, running or engaging in other activates that could scare a horse
- 9. No strollers, bicycles, remote control cars or toys likely to scare a horse
- 10. All riders are required to wear ASTM/SEI approved equestrian helmet with chinstrap in place
- 11. Lunging a horse in an area with a rider is prohibited without approval from rider
- 12. No lunging in upper arena
- 13. Turnouts are only allowed in designated areas. You are **NOT** to put your horse in the cutting pen and walk away under any circumstances.