

## Protecting your horses legs with polo wraps

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Horse: Fidelis, photos by Effie Benjamin Potter and Kristin Reese



The safest way to lunge, ride or turnout your horse is with protective splint boots or polo wraps. Today we will discuss how to wrap your horses legs with polo wraps.



Wash and rewrap the polo wraps after purchase. Most new polo wraps are sold with the Velcro closure on the outside. Before you use them for the first time, you should reverse them, press the velcro to the Velcro and re wrap with the Velcro on the inside of the wrap. You may tie the other end to a hitching post or stall door handle to apply even pressure when re-rolling.



When using previously used wraps, wash them, then check the wraps to make sure they are clean and free of any debris. Because they are made of fleece, they tend to attract dirt and debris which should be removed before use. Hay or a fox tail would be uncomfortable for the horse.

Start wrapping at the top of your horse's cannon bone. Wrap clockwise on the right pair of legs and counterclockwise on the left pair of legs.



Wrap down the leg, overlapping the previous wrap halfway each time you spiral down the leg until you reach the fetlock. Make sure to smooth the wrap as you go, keeping the same pressure on the wrap.

Wrap down around the back of the fetlock, directly across the horny growth behind the fetlock known as the ergot.



Now begin spiraling up the leg. Try and keep the spacing between spirals the same, fabric smooth, the tension in each wrap the same.

If done correctly, when you start the upward spiral, the wrap should form a small upside down "V" at the front of the fetlock.



Spiral up the leg until just below the knee or hock. Try and have the Velcro closure end on the outside of the leg, then secure the wraps with a complete ring of white braiding tape placed over the Velcro closure. This way, even if the horse accidentally brushes his legs, the Velcro will not come open.



Repeat the process on your horse's other legs.

Wrapping your horse's legs will protect him from brushing his legs together or overreaching and injuring himself.

Remember to put polo wraps on just before and then remove polo wraps right after work. Wraps left on too long can bow a tendon!

Wrapping your horses legs with polo wraps for the first time may seem daunting, but with repetition and practice you will learn where to start the wrap, how long a wrap to purchase for each size horses cannon bone length, how much pressure to apply to keep the wrap smooth and the spirals the same size, how to make the V in front, and just wrap to the ergot on the back. After one season of practice, your wrapping will seem so much easier! With continual practice, you will wrap like a professional!