

## Respect All Users

*Trail users include many different kinds of enthusiasts. All combinations of users will enjoy their activities if they display a little extra knowledge, respect and courtesy. Trail etiquette protects users and the land over which they travel.*

- *Stay on the trail*
- *Carry out more than you carry in*
- *Leave no trace*
- *Report ATV's and dumping*
- *Greet other users*
- *Pass to the right*



Nassau Suffolk Horsemen's Association is a publicly supported federally tax exempt organization formed under the New York State not for profit law. Contributions are tax deductible as provided by law.

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# SHARING TRAILS WITH HORSES

**Nassau Suffolk  
Horsemen's  
Association**

*PROTOCOL FOR  
HORSEBACK RIDERS,  
BICYCLISTS AND  
HIKERS*



# Horse Sense

- The average horse stands over 7 feet, weighs more than 900 pounds and can run 30 miles per hour.
- Nature has designated the horse as the prey-animal, the animal that others have for dinner. His only defense is to be exceptionally alert and attentive to his surroundings so as to be ready for instantaneous escape. Unfamiliar objects, such as a backpack or a child on a bicycle can be perceived as a predator by a horse. To make matters more difficult, the horse has poor depth perception and sees little color. In this flat, colorless panorama, he is particularly sensitive to motion which can set off his alarm.
- The horse does not take time to reason; he reacts by instinct. Nature designed his alarm system to move him instantly to safety.
- Calm, pleasant conversation reassures the horse that all is safe. Slower, fluid movement tells the horse you are not a threat. Please be considerate.



## Hiker Meets Horse

- **Call out a friendly hello!**

With their poor vision, your hello reassures them that you are a human and not a hungry mountain lion. Wait for a signal from the horseperson; he/she will know whether to just keep moving, to ask you to step aside or whether it is wiser for them to step aside. Some horses do fine with hikers but become hysterical when a runner, especially a silent one, comes relentlessly towards them or up behind them.

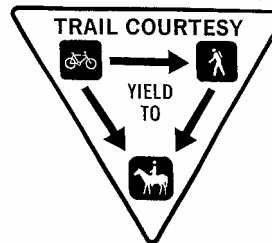
The horse rider should greet you and let you know the preferable way of passing. Some riders are eager to stop and talk if you are. All should be friendly, but if a rider chooses to breeze on by without stopping, he may have decided that is the best way to control the horse. He is not being discourteous.

## Bike Rider Meets Horse

- **Speak up!**

A bicycle is generally quiet and is not heard by the horse or the rider. Say hello a distance from the horse. If he is ahead of you, ask to pass if you want to do that and then wait for the rider to tell you what to do. Most will find a wider part in the trail and then step aside so you can pass, turning the horse so he can see you. Keep responding so he knows you are not a cougar.

When coming towards a horse, please pull over and dismount. Speak to the rider and she will let you know the best way to continue. Usually, the horse passes by, everybody verbally admires the weather and you can get back on your way.



## The Horseback Rider's Job

- **Be friendly and use common sense.**

Not every trail user knows about horses and how they react to perceived danger. We need to educate and to thank others for their courtesy so that horses continue to be welcome on trails.

Stay on the trail, slow to a walk when passing, wear a helmet and take your cell phone. Clean up after your horse, especially at trail heads. And talk to people, make friends for all of us who love to ride.

Riding ATV's on ANY public land in Suffolk or Nassau County is against the law. Report them and dumping to  
1-877-BARRENS

## General Advice for All

- Be prepared for the unexpected. Slow down at curves and intersections or at any time the sightline is disturbed.
- Glass, tin cans or other debris on the trail can puncture bike tires or seriously injure a horse; please pick it up and carry it out with you.
- Horse manure is totally biodegradable and spreads no disease to humans or animals. Beverage cans, water bottles, plastic bags do not biodegrade.