

# GROOMING EQUIPMENT

A grooming kit is not a random mixture of brushes; it is a collection of specific grooming tools. Each one is designed to do its job without hurting the horse's often sensitive skin. If you use the wrong piece of equipment at any stage you could hurt the horse, and if a brush does not do its job properly you will tire yourself unnecessarily. A grooming kit should be kept clean, because any dirt from an implement may be brushed into tiny cuts in the skin and subsequently cause infection.



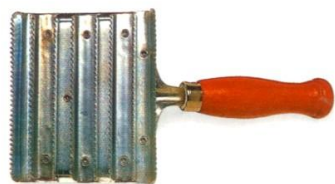
**Individual kits**  
Each horse should have its own, labeled grooming kit. This prevents the spread of diseases such as ringworm from horse to horse. There are a variety of commercial boxes in which you can keep grooming kits.

*Many household plastic trays will hold everything you need.*



*Stiff synthetic bristles*

*Soft fiber bristles*



**Metal curry comb**

This curry comb should never be used on the horse. It is used only for cleaning the body brush (see p. 59). Keep it free of hair to maintain its effectiveness.

**Body brushes**

These brushes are used to remove dust and scurf from a stabled horse's coat. They have short, closely spaced bristles. Body brushes vary in stiffness. The finer the horse's coat, the softer the brush should be. A thick winter coat may need a harder brush than a summer coat, even on the same horse.

**Curry combs**

Plastic and rubber curry combs are used for removing dirt, especially dried mud. They can be used directly on horses that can tolerate them, although care should be taken when using them on horses with a thin coat or sensitive skin.



Plastic curry comb



Rubber curry comb



**Cactus cloth**

This can be used dry or damp to remove dried mud or sweat. Soak it before you first use it, to soften it.



**Dandy brush**

This is the first brush to use on a dirty coat. The bristles are long and well spaced compared to the body brush. Do not use a dandy brush on sensitive or clipped areas of the body.



**Water brush**

This can be used to train a mane and tail (see p. 61). It is also useful for removing difficult stains from a pale colored coat. Use it slightly damp, not soaking wet.



**Hoof pick**

A hoof pick should have a blunt end. If the point is sharp, it could cut the sole of the foot, or puncture the sole if the horse steps on it. A hoof pick is a vital grooming tool. Keep it where you will find it.



**Sponges**

You need two soft, good-quality sponges – one for the eyes, nose, and mouth, and one for the dock area under the tail. Do not use a deteriorating sponge, which might result in getting bits of sponge into the horse's eyes.



**Massage pad**

This is used on a clean, working horse, to help develop the muscles and stimulate the blood supply to the skin, thus promoting a healthy coat.



**Grooming cloth**

Usually made of linen, a grooming cloth can be used to give the coat a final polish. It should be washed regularly.