

## Hands on Horses- Junior

Horses are a common sight in Tennessee. Earning this badge will give you the opportunity to explore the basics of horsemanship while learning about what styles of riding are popular in Tennessee.



Steps:

- 1) Safety First
- 2) Starts With A "G"
- 3) Saddle Up
- 4) Riding High
- 5) Hit the Trail

### Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I will know the basics of how to ride, be familiar with different types of riding equipment common in Tennessee, and understand what good trail manners are at Camp Sycamore Hills.

### Step 1 – Safety First

Like anything that weighs 1000lbs or more, horses can be dangerous if you don't know and learn the safety procedures to keep yourself and your horse safe from harm. In this step, you will learn and practice the procedures designed to keep you safe while working with and handling horses.

- A. Learn six safety rules for being in the barn or around horses. Be able to give reasons why these rules are important and in place. Give examples of what problems could happen, if these rules are not followed.

**OR**

- B. Learn, explain and demonstrate how to approach a horse safely in a stall or tied to a fence.

### Step 2 – Starts With A "G"

While riding is definitely fun, a Girl Scout should be able to properly care for her horse as well. 'Starts with a "G"' includes Grooming and Ground lessons. In this step, you will learn how to keep your horse clean by grooming, and learn how to lead and tie your horse safely the Camp Sycamore Hills' way.

- A. Examine and learn the tools to groom a horse. Discover the purpose of each tool. Demonstrate proper use of each tool, while grooming your horse. Learn why grooming is important to horses at Camp Sycamore Hills, and what problems proper grooming can prevent.

**AND**

- B. Show off your ground skills by learning how to put a halter on a horse, hold and use a lead rope and safely lead your horse. Learn the correct way to tie a horse by learning and demonstrating the 'quick-release' knot and why it is used.

### Step 3 – Saddle Up

There are several different styles of riding, but the most common types are English and Western. In Tennessee many people enjoy riding gaited horses like the Tennessee Walking horse using a saddle seat. In this step, you will learn the differences between English and Western saddles and bridles, other equipment used to ride a horse and how to care for your tack.

- A. Learn the parts of a saddle and bridle. Find at least three differences between an English saddle and a Western saddle. Discover the reasons for the differences. The famous Tennessee Walking horses are often ridden with a special saddle. Compare the *saddle seat* saddle to the all-purpose English. How is it different?

**OR**

- B. Time to get dirty! Learn how to keep your tack clean by saddle-soaping a saddle, bridle or girth or cleaning saddle pads and cinches. Learn how to detect worn spots or damage to your tack.

#### **Step 4 – Riding High**

It's time to ride! In this step, you will learn how to safely mount and dismount from your horse, how to steer your horse and commands to start and stop your horse.

- A. Watch a demonstration of the Camp Sycamore Hills' way of mounting, steering and dismounting. Discover problems that could occur, if these tasks are done differently.

**AND**

- B. Learn and demonstrate the basics of ring riding: Mount your horse, correctly hold your reins, ride at a walk, and guide your horse effectively, learn the basics of and try a trot (under supervision) and dismount safely.

#### **Step 5 – Hit the Trail**

Now that you have the skills to safely ride your horse in the arena, it's time to hit the trails! In this step, you will learn how to ride your horse over different terrain and learn good trail manners at Camp Sycamore Hills.

- A. Good manners are something every Girl Scout has. Find out what kind of trail manners are needed when riding in a group of people on a trail ride. Learn some hazards you might encounter on a trail ride at Camp Sycamore Hills, such as overhanging branches, wild turkey or other wildlife.

**AND**

- B. If weather permits, go on a trail ride. Demonstrate good trail manners and spacing during your ride. Be aware of possible hazards during your ride. *\*If weather is inclement, the trail ride can be modified to a 'trail-like' obstacle course to fulfill this step\**

**Congratulations!** You have earned the *Hands on Horses* badge! You can add this badge to your Journeys.

You might collect ideas for a Take Action project involving horses, or talk to one of the riding instructors about their role with the horses and then add them to your casting-call log!

#### **Service:**

Now that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Becoming a *Vaquera* at Camp Sycamore Hills and assisting with horse programs.
- Becoming an assistant to a Girl Scout Brownie troop and help them with earning the *Loving and Grooming* or *Pony Ready Try-It*.
- With permission and supervision, finding a volunteer group that uses horses or local equine rescue, and volunteering my time to groom the horses or help with barn chores.