

Behavior Terms, Horse

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



behavior TERMS

There is a wealth of jargon used throughout the horse world. This is especially true when discussing equine behaviors. Learning this vocabulary allows you to better understand articles, event language, and what trainers, farriers, veterinarians, and other horse owners are saying. The following list of terms, while in no way comprehensive, contains some of the terms used to discuss horse behavior.

Barn Sour: Horse that objects to being ridden away from the barn. Also herd bound horses that object to leaving their pasture mates.

Behind the Bit: An evasion where the horse holds his head behind the vertical, thereby decreasing the rider's control. See also *Overbent*.

Crib-Biting/Cribbing: A stable vice in which the horse hooks his teeth onto something solid, such as the door of his stable, and sucks air through his open mouth. Said to be addictive behavior, cribbing straps and collars have varying degrees of effectiveness at discouraging the behavior. Horses which suck air, without latching their teeth onto something are said to be *wind sucking*.

Ground Manners: Term used to describe the behavior of a horse while being handled on the ground, being groomed, saddled, in the stable etc.

Head Shy: Applied to a horse that is sensitive about the head; jerks away when touched.

Herd Bound: A horse who refuses to leave a group of other horses.

Hot: A horse that becomes overly excited is said to be "hot." Easily excitable horses are also called "hot."

Mellow Hide: Soft, pliable, and easy to handle.

Outlaw: A horse that cannot be broken.

Overbent: An evasion where the horse tucks his head close in to his chest, reducing the rider's control. The horse is said to be *behind the bit*.

Shy, To: Where a horse jumps suddenly to one side, having been startled by a real or imaginary object.

Vice: An acquired habit that is annoying, or may interfere with the horse's usefulness, such as cribbing.

Wind Sucking: Stable vice in which the horse arches his neck and sucks air in through his open mouth. When the horse latches his teeth onto a solid surface in order to suck air, he is called a cribber or a crib-biter.