

## LIABILITY STATUTES:

Connecticut provides good liability protection for horse owners allowing others to use their horses, and for landowners allowing equine activity on their property. Like many states, CT laws make horse users are accountable for the risk they take in riding and driving. Unlike many states, CT does not require warning signs for dangers on properties allowing public access for an equine activity (or other recreational uses). Property owners are generally not liable for injuries on their land (so long as they do not profit from allowing access, or give a license to others to profit from allowing access). Only if they have created an obviously dangerous situation, they might be liable (such as digging a trench across a riding trail without warning). Horse owners and stables are not liable for accidents involving their horses when used by others, so long as there was no obvious potentially dangerous situation that they should have addressed as part of routine sound management of their horses (such as providing unsafe tack or a horse with known potential to act dangerously, or tying a horse in an unfenced public area where a passing individual could be kicked or bitten.)

**CT, Chapter 925, Sec. 52-557f. Landowner liability for recreational use of land. Definitions.**

As used in sections 52-557f to 52-557l, inclusive:

- (1) "Charge" means the admission price or fee asked in return for invitation or permission to enter or go upon land;
- (2) "Land" means land, roads, water, watercourses, private ways and buildings, structures, and machinery or equipment when attached to the realty;
- (3) "Owner" means the possessor of a fee interest, a tenant, lessee, occupant or person in control of the premises;
- (4) "Recreational purpose" includes, but is not limited to, any of the following, or any combination thereof: Hunting, fishing, swimming, boating, camping, picnicking, hiking, pleasure driving, nature study, water skiing, snow skiing, ice skating, sledding, hang gliding, sport parachuting, hot air ballooning and viewing or enjoying historical, archaeological, scenic, or scientific sites.

**CT, Chapter 925, Sec. 52-557g. Liability of owner of land available to public for recreation; exceptions.**

(a) Except as provided in section 52-55h, an owner of land who makes all or any part of the land available to the public without charge, rent, fee or other commercial service for recreational purposes owes no duty of care to keep the land, or the part thereof to made available, safe for entry or use by others for recreational purposes, or to give any warning of a dangerous condition, use, structure or activity on the land to persons entering for recreational purposes.

(b) Except as provided in section 52-557h, an owner of land who, either directly or indirectly, invites or permits without charge, rent, fee or other commercial service any person to use the land, or part thereof, for recreational purposes does not thereby: (1) make any representation that the premises are safe for any purpose; (2) confer upon the person who enters

**RIGHT TO FARM STATUTES:**

CT protects horse owners and stables from being harassed over normal odors, dusts, noises, etc., related to their farming activities.

**CT, Sec. 1-1(q). Definition of Agriculture.**

Except as otherwise specifically defined, the words "agriculture" and "farming" shall include cultivation of the soil, dairying, forestry, raising or harvesting any agricultural or horticultural commodity, including the raising, shearing, feeding, caring for, training and management of livestock, including horses...; the operation, management, conservation, improvement or maintenance of a farm and its buildings, tools and equipment... including the construction, operation or maintenance of ditches, canals, reservoirs or waterways used exclusively for farming purposes;... The term "farm" includes farm buildings, and accessory buildings thereto, nurseries, orchards, ranges, greenhouses, hop houses and other temporary structures or other structures used primarily for the raising and, as an incident to ordinary farming operations, the sale of agricultural or horticultural commodities... Nothing herein shall restrict the power of a local zoning authority under chapter 124.

**CT, Vol. 6 - Sec. 19a-341. Right to Farm.**

Agricultural or farming operation not deemed a nuisance. Exceptions.

(a) Notwithstanding any general statute or municipal ordinance or regulation pertaining to nuisances to the contrary, no agricultural or farming operation, place, establishment or facility, or any of its appurtenances, or the operation thereof, shall be deemed to constitute a nuisance, either public or private, due to alleged objectionable (1) odor from livestock, manure, fertilizer or feed, (2) noise from livestock or farm equipment used in normal, generally acceptable farming procedures, (3) dust created during plowing or cultivation operations, (4) use of chemicals, provided such chemicals and the method of their application conform to practices approved by the commissioner of environmental protection or, where applicable, the commissioner of public health and addiction services, or (5) water pollution from livestock or crop production activities, except the pollution of public or private drinking water supplies, provided such activities conform to acceptable management practices for pollution control approved by the commissioner of environmental protection, provided such agricultural farming operation, place, establishment or facility has been operation for more than one year or more and has not been substantially changed, and such operation follows generally accepted agricultural practices. Inspection and approval of the agricultural or farming operation, place, establishment or facility by the commissioner of agriculture or his designee shall be prima facie evidence that such operation follows generally accepted agricultural practices.

(b) The provisions of this section shall not apply whenever a nuisance results from negligence or willful or reckless misconduct in the operation of any such agricultural or farming operation, place, establishment or facility, or any of its appurtenances.

**Roxbury zoning rules:**

Sec. 3.5 No boundary wall or fence shall be over six feet in height.

<http://home.netcom.com/~scointre/CTlaws.htm>

Fencing for pastures or grazing areas of horses or other animals can be located on the property line, or within 18 inches if routine maintenance is required on the exterior side of the property. Any kind of fencing is allowed and no zoning permit is required for such fencing. Fencing is allowed in wetlands.

Sec. 3.7 No structure shall be built on a wetland or streambelt unless the necessary permit has been issued by the Inland-Wetlands Commission. Pole barns or sheds for horses do not require a zoning permit. However, a building permit is required. The building inspector and or wetlands might require a breakaway construction at the base to allow floodwaters to pass through unrestricted.

Sec. 3.9.2 No stable, ...or other structure used for the housing of animals shall be located within fifty feet of any pond, lake, river or watercourse.

Sec. 3.9.3 No building for the housing of animals other than small domestic animals such as dogs or cats shall be located within 100 feet of any street line or side boundary line of an adjoining lot.

Sec. 3.9.4 No fenced yard for livestock shall be located closer than 100 feet of any street line or 100 feet of the side boundary line of an adjoining lot. A fenced yard for livestock is an enclosure or fenced area designed to contain or confine animals. Said yard or enclosure may be commonly referred to as a barnyard, paddock, pen, etc., and is not to be confused with a fenced pasture used for grazing or hay production.

Sec. 3.9.7. No indoor riding arena shall be located closer than fifty feet of any street line or side boundary. The arena may only be used for the purpose of riding and may not be used for the housing of animals.

Sec. 3.9.8 Manure shall be stored not less than 100 feet from street and property lines. According to the building inspector, collected manure and associated bedding must be managed at least 100 feet from any perimeter boundary of the property, even if it is being composted or otherwise treated.

Sec. 3.9.9 Manure shall be removed at intervals sufficiently frequent to maintain a sanitary, fly-free condition. According to the building inspector, composted manure that has no fly nuisance does not require removal.

Sec. 3.9.10 Manure drainage shall not run into a wetland or onto other property.

Sec. 3.10.1 A nonconforming use, building or lot is one which existed lawfully, either by variance or otherwise, on the effective date of these regulations.

Sec. 3.10.2 Any nonconforming building, lot, or use of land or building may be continued in the form and to the extent existing on that date (i.e., the effective date of the zoning regulations).

**Roxbury wetland rules:**

The following operations and uses shall be permitted in inland wetlands and watercourses, as of right:

a. grazing, farming, nurseries, gardening, and harvesting of crops and farm ponds of three acres or less...

The following operations and uses shall be permitted as nonregulated use in inland wetlands and water courses, provided they do not disturb the natural and indigenous character of the land. "Disturbing the natural and indigenous character of the land" means that the activity will significantly disturb the inland wetland or water course by reason of removal or deposition of material, will cause the alteration or obstruction of water flow, or will result in the pollution of the wetland or water course....

b. outdoor recreation including....horseback riding....

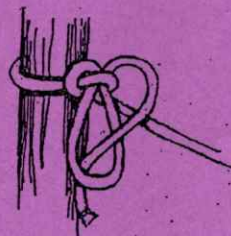
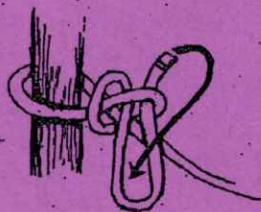
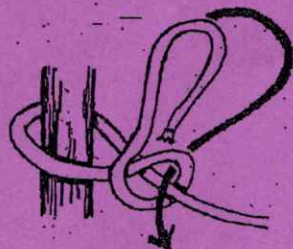
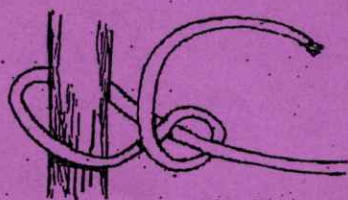
The wetlands regulations are particularly concerned with "significant impact or major effect", which means: any activity involving a deposition of material which will have a substantial adverse effect on the regulated area or another part of the inland wetland or water courses system, or ...any activity which substantially diminishes the natural capacity of an inland wetland or water course to support desirable biological life, prevent flooding, supply water, assimilate waste, facilitate drainage and/or provide recreation and open space. For horse owners this means that collected manure and associated bedding must be managed so that its drainage does not discharge directly to any surface water or wetland and create substantial pollution,, or be so significant a deposition that water movement and flood storage are adversely affected.

# Tying a horse

**K**now and use the proper knots when tying a horse. Two basic knots every horse person should know are quick release and bowline knots.

**Quick release knots** should be used whenever you tie a horse with a halter and lead rope. There are several types of quick release knots that can be used safely with horses.

How to tie a quick release knot.



Type A

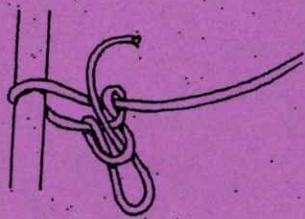
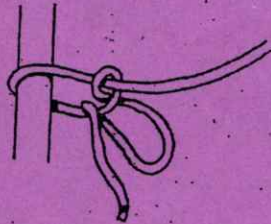
To release the knot, pull the free end.

The free end can be tucked down through the loop, to prevent the horse from untying himself.

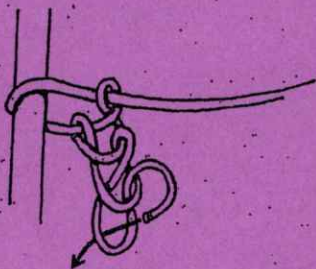


Another quick release knot (chain loop knot).

Type B



This is a good way to handle a long rope end.



To release the knot, pull the free end.

**Note:** **Type A** is a relatively easy knot to use; however, it may not release easily in an emergency. If the horse pulls strongly against it, the knot may tighten. To help prevent tightening of **Type A**, wrap the rope two times around the post before tying. **Type B** should release quickly even if the horse pulls back hard.

Practice both knots with an experienced person until you can correctly and safely tie a horse. If you have difficulty tying quick release knots, quick release hardware snaps (or "panic snaps") may also be used to safely secure a horse.



## Why Do Riders Fall?

### 1. *Leg position.*

Improper leg position may be the key to the beginning of a fall. Proper leg position provides the anchor for the upper body. Without the anchor, then all that needs to be added is either the loss of the center of gravity or a sudden stop or change in movement...and the rider may fall.

Correct alignment — ear, shoulder, hip and back of heel should be in line perpendicular to the horizon.

Exercise: Begin this exercise at a standstill. Have the rider stand up in the stirrups. If the rider must move their legs to do this, they are in the wrong position. The rider should be able to sit and stand easily, at any time, and when advanced, at any gait.

### 2. *Center of gravity.*

The rider's center of gravity should be as close as possible to the horse. If the weight is low and solidly in the seat, the rider is more secure.

Watch for pinching of the knees, which raises the center of gravity, and "squeezes" the rider out of the saddle.

Exercise: Begin this exercise at a standstill. Make sure the rider can do exercise #1 for leg position first. Have the rider stand up in the stirrups, then sit. Have them think about where their weight is. Have them stand and raise up on their toes...then sit and sink down into their heels...and notice where their weight is. Have the rider pinch (slightly) with their knees; then thighs, and notice where their weight is.

### 3. *Stiffness.*

Stiffness, especially a stiff spine, is often the cause of a rider getting launched into space. Help the rider relax their upper body and increase flexibility and softness in their spine and seat. They might think of their heels, hips and lower back as "shock absorbers," which relax and open and close slightly in rhythm with the horse.

Exercise: Begin at the walk. Show the rider that the horse never moves both of its hind feet at the same time, but one, then the other. Ask them to relax their hips and think about pedaling a bicycle with their hips, in

time with the motion of the horse's back legs. Watch for the opening and closing of the rider's hip in rhythm with the horse's movement. Watch for hips moving laterally with the left and right sides dropping in rhythm with the horse's movement. Ask each rider to tell you when the horse's (right or left) hind leg hits the ground. Have the rider answer for at least five steps, "Now...now...now..."

4. *Upper body position.*

The rider's upper body position should move independent of the correctly placed leg. The rider should not move the leg to compensate for an out-of-position body. With the leg out of place, the rider is at risk for a fall.

Exercise: Begin this exercise at a standstill, then as the rider advances, at a walk. Use the familiar "stretching" exercises to help the rider move the upper body around the correctly placed leg. Riders should maintain leg position while touching the horse's poll and tail head with each hand. As the rider advances, they should be able to touch each of their toes with each hand. Remind the rider that they must shift their weight to the opposite seat bone and stirrup before leaning over.



**Sec. 52-557p. Assumption of risk by person engaged in recreational equestrian activities, when.** Each person engaged in recreational equestrian activities shall assume the risk and legal responsibility for any injury to his person or property arising out of the hazards inherent in equestrian sports, unless the injury was proximately caused by the negligence of the person providing the horse or horses to the individual engaged in recreational equestrian activities or the failure to guard or warn against a dangerous condition, use, structure or activity by the person providing the horse or horses to his agents or employees.

(P.A. 93-286, S. 1.)

Sec. 52-577p transferred to Sec. 52-557p in 1997.

**Safety Scenario: List 6 things wrong with how this horse is tied.**

A. \_\_\_\_\_

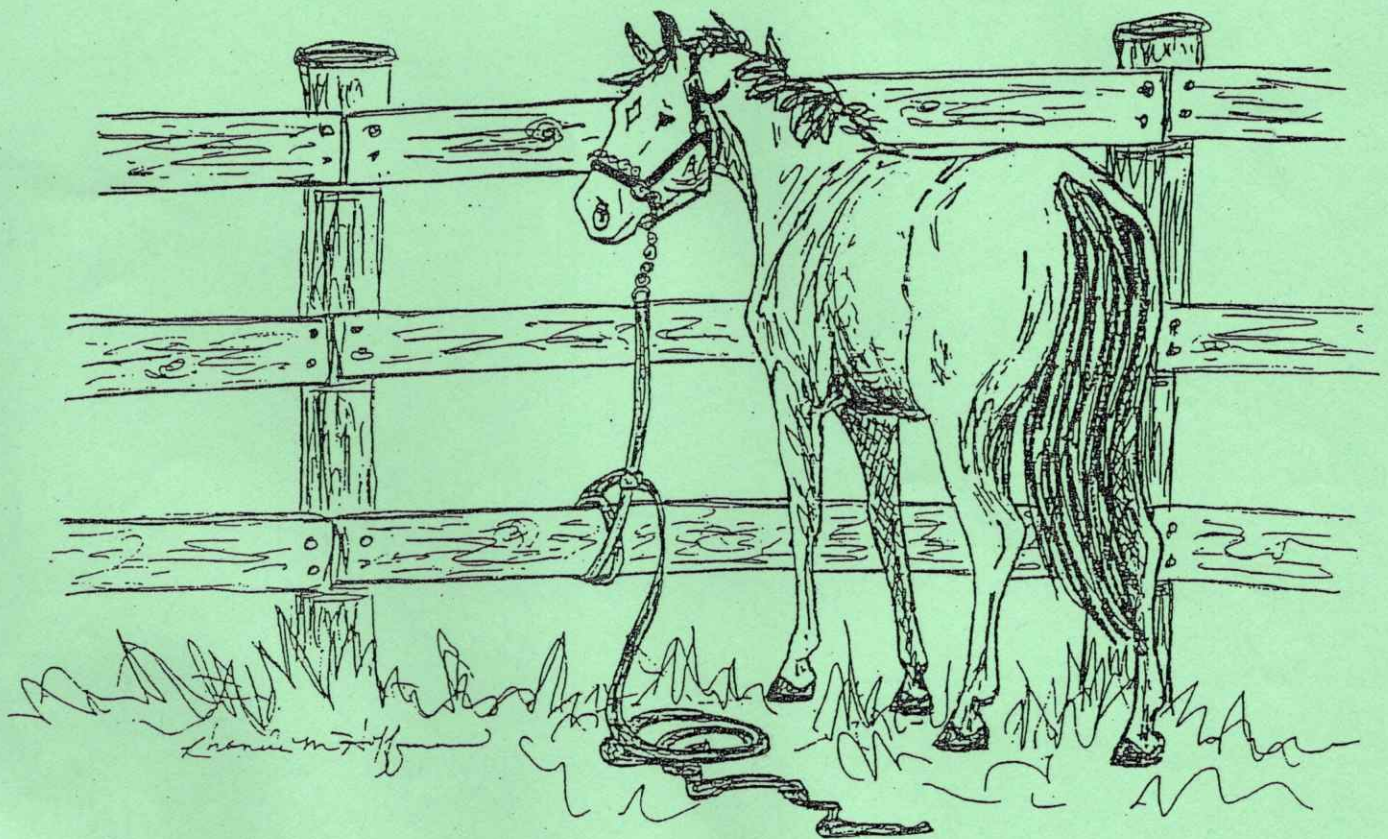
B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

D. \_\_\_\_\_

E. \_\_\_\_\_

F. \_\_\_\_\_



## Safety Checklist for Horse, Rider and Tack

<b>Horse</b>		
Good attitude		
All shoes		
No visible wounds		
Not DO NOT USE		
Boots or wraps on and properly secured		
<b>Rider</b>		
ASTM/SEI approved helmet		
Appropriate footwear with at least ½ inch heel		
Long pants		
No dangling jewelry		
<b>Bridle</b>		
Cavesson under cheekpieces (English)		
Throatlatch attached, 5 finger spaces		
Bit in proper position		
Browband not jammed up against ears		
Buckle not resting on horse's TMJ		
Curb strap properly attached (Western)		
Leather in keepers		
Reins properly attached		
Reins securely buckled both ends (bit and rider end)		
Chicago screw secure (Western bridle)		
Flash noseband secure and in proper position		
<b>Saddle</b>		
Billets not tearing (English)		
Cinch not wearing (Western)		
Saddle in proper position		
Correct pad used		
Pad in appropriate position		
Stirrup leather not ripping or tearing		
Stirrups at appropriate level for rider		
Girth secure		
Western cinch removed, not tight and not so loose a hoof gets caught		
<b>Breastcollar/breastplate</b>		
In proper position, not drooping down		
Secure		
<b>Martingale (not used on trail)</b>		
In proper position		
Securely attached on both ends		

### Safety Checklist for Horse, Rider and Tack - Trail

<b>Horse</b>		
Good attitude		
All shoes		
No visible wounds		
Not DO NOT USE		
Boots or wraps on and properly secured		
Fly bonnet on		
Fly spray applied		
<b>Rider</b>		
ASTM/SEI approved helmet		
Appropriate footwear with at least ½ inch heel		
Long pants		
No dangling jewelry		
<b>Bridle</b>		
Cavesson under cheekpieces (English)		
Throatlatch attached, 5 finger spaces		
Bit in proper position		
Browband not jammed up against ears		
Buckle not resting on horse's TMJ		
Curb strap properly attached (Western)		
Leather in keepers		
Reins properly attached		
Reins securely buckled both ends (bit and rider end)		
Chicago screw secure (Western bridle)		
Flash noseband secure and in proper position		
<b>Saddle</b>		
Billets not tearing (English)		
Cinch not wearing (Western)		
Saddle in proper position		
Correct pad used		
Pad in appropriate position		
Stirrup leather not ripping or tearing		
Stirrups at appropriate level for rider		
Girth secure		
Western cinch removed, not tight and not so loose a hoof gets caught		
<b>Breastcollar/breastplate</b>		
In proper position, not drooping down		
Secure		
<b>Martingale (not used on trail)</b>		