

# Haile Equestrian Helmet & Boot Guide



## **BOOTS**

Horse riding boots are protective footgear designed for horseback riding. Most horse related injuries are a result of falling from a horse and being kicked. This can happen if your foot gets caught in the stirrup, which can be caused by inappropriate footwear. Therefore, choosing the right boots is very important. Appropriate footwear will help you feel more comfortable in the saddle and improve your position.

### *Important criteria when selecting boots:*

- The boot must have the proper heel height to prevent the foot from sliding through the stirrup. The heel is the most important element of horseback riding boots. The ideal heel is one to two inches high. Do not use boot with heel that is more than two inches, as this will alter the natural position of your foot in the stirrup and your riding position will be affected.
- The ideal boot has a sole that is smooth or lightly textured to avoid being caught on the tread of the stirrup in the event of a fall. Choose a boot with a plain leather or rubber sole that is relatively flat. Do not buy boots with thick treads, as this can increase the risk of your foot becoming stuck in the stirrup (such as a hiking boot or rain boot).
- A good pair of horseback riding boots should have a good heel and proper tread. You do not have to have a custom designed boots or purchase anything fancy. For safe riding, your boots only have to meet the two criteria.

## **HELMETS**

The majority of serious injuries related to horses involve head injuries. Wearing an ASTM /SEI approved riding helmet is the most important way to practice safe horseback riding, and is required at all times while riding independently at Haile Equestrian. Horseback riding helmets are available for your use at Haile Equestrian, but are often the first purchase made by students preparing to enter a horseback riding program. A bicycle helmet is not an appropriate substitute for a horseback riding helmet. A horseback riding helmet covers more of a person's head than does a bicycle helmet, fitting lower on the head, particularly at the back of the skull, and has protection distributed evenly around the head rather than concentrated in the front and back. In addition, good ventilation and comfort are important features of a riding helmet.

### *Important criteria when fitting helmets:*

- The helmet should feel snug around the entire head without pressure points.
- The helmet should sit level on the head and the forehead should be covered by the helmet within two fingers width of the eyebrows.
- Open your mouth in a big yawn. The helmet should pull down on the head. If not, tighten the chin strap.
- If your helmet rocks back more than two fingers above the eyebrows, shorten the front strap and retest.
- If your helmet rocks forward into your eyes, tighten the back strap and retest.

### *Important criteria when purchasing a helmet:*

- When shopping for helmets, you will find they are sold in both numerical sizes and S/M/L/XL. To measure for a helmet, measure the circumference of the rider's head with a clothing measuring tape. The tape should circle around the forehead and above the top of the ears. Look up the measurement with the corresponding helmet sizes. These numbers are still helpful when the choices are small, medium, large and extra large.
- We are fortunate to live a short drive from numerous great tack stores. Even if you plan to order online, you may want to visit a local tack store to try at least a few helmets on in person to determine the right fit for your head.
- Most manufacturers recommend replacement after five years or so, or whenever the helmet takes a hard fall. Some manufacturers offer low-cost replacement helmets if your helmet is involved in a hard fall.

If you have any questions regarding helmets or boots, please contact Haile Equestrian. We are happy to assist you in locating a helmet or pair of boots, or to be sure the equipment you have purchased fits well.

Closest Tack Store: Bits N Spurs Tack, 19903 W Newberry Rd Suite B, Newberry, FL 32669

Ocala Tack Stores: Tack Shack of Ocala, Winning Edge Saddlery, Good Apple Equine Consignments.