

Tellington TTouch® Training for Horses

TTouch Wand

A four-foot stiff whip with a hard plastic button on the end. It is used as an extension of the arm to stroke all over the horse and to give him a sense of his body. It also teaches him to respond to light signals. A white wand is preferable so the horse can see it easily and doesn't associate it with whips that he might have been punished with in the past.

LEAD chain.

TTouch uses a six-foot soft nylon lead with a thirty inch chain and swivel sewn on. This type of lead allows you to give clear signals in clear, precise and soft ways, without force. It also encourages a horse to lower his head out of the flight stance. Besides the advantages of the TTouch use, the neurological horse will receive auditory and vibrational input and sensory feel from the chain, and also have a connection from one side of his head, across his face and up the other side of his head.

How to fasten the lead onto the halter: From the outside, thread the chain in and down through the left-side halter ring, across and over the noseband, from the inside out through the right halter ring, and up the right cheek piece to snap to the top ring. See the illustrations on p. 30.

The chain goes over the noseband, so the direct pressure does not cause discomfort on the horse's nose. Make sure the halter fits with the nosepiece 2-3 fingers below the cheek bone. You should be able to get two fingers, held sideways, between the jawbone and the nosepiece. Too loose or too tight a halter lessens the effectiveness of the signals and control.

Do not tie your horse with a chain lead line! If he pulls back he could injure his nose. When you lead your horse, only use short tug-and-release signals. The chain lead line is a wonderful tool when used properly. Use it in combination with the wand, voice commands and body language. Don't use it to punish your horse! Keep your finger out of the metal triangle on the chain or the halter ring. Practice holding the end of the nylon lead in loops like "rabbit ears" (as you would hold a lunge line) until it becomes second nature; then you won't accidentally wrap it around your hand.

If you feel unsure about using a chain, or have a young or very sensitive horse, you can use a lead line with a soft rope in place of the chain. This lead is attached to the halter in the same way as the chain. We call it the Zephyr (a soft breeze) lead. Foals should always be led with a Zephyr lead because a chain is too heavy and can be severe in its effect. Remember, the chain and the wand are training tools. And we have found that the sensory input of the chain is important to this rehabilitative effort. Make a point of using the chain at various times.

To properly adjust the chain shank for TTouch work, first run a 30 inch chain down through the left halter ring (from the outside, in).

The chain goes over the noseband, so the direct pressure does not cause discomfort to the horse's nose. Make sure the halter fits so that 2-3 fingers, held sideways, can fit between the jawbone and the nosepiece. Too loose or too tight a halter lessens the effectiveness of the signals and the control.

On a small horse the chain may be too long. You can shorten it by taking the end through the highest ring of the halter and attaching it back to itself. Doubling the chain on one side will shorten it on the other side.

The lead shank then goes through the right halter ring (from the inside) and snaps onto the top ring. Make sure that the snap faces outward so it doesn't rub the horse's head.



The Zephyr (soft) Lead

Another great lead created for TTouch, with a 28" soft marine rope handwoven onto a nylon lead in red, green, blue, black, or brown. Ideal for foals, sensitive horses, and llama.

With TTouch we teach horses to lead from both sides. This improves the coordination of both horse and human. You can help your horse to bend equally well to both sides by leading him through the ground exercises from the right side also.