

Should I blanket my horse? Consider these factors:

Hair Coat – natural growth vs. clipping, body clip vs. trace clip, “show coat” “thin skinned”

Living Situation – stabled/permanent shelter available, outside living (unable to escape the elements)

Age – older horses have a harder time maintaining core temperature

Body Condition – Easy keeper vs. hard keeper

Geography – how their LCT is affected. (Lowest critical temperature) – the lowest temp at which a horse can maintain core temperatures without additional energy – a Florida horse in Michigan, a Michigan horse to Florida

Types of blankets available:

Waterproof with fill – Turnout Blankets

Waterproof without fill – Turnout Sheets

Not waterproof with fill – Stable Blankets

Not waterproof without fill – Stable Sheets

Levels of fill and when to use: remember to take into account the 5 factors above!

Light: 0 – 100 grams Clipped: 40-50° Unclipped: 30-40°

Medium: 150 – 250 grams Clipped: 30-40° Unclipped: 20-30°

Heavy: 300+ fill Clipped: 20-30° Unclipped: 10-20°

Combination Blankets – the use of liners and stable blankets under turnouts. Allows you to use one top sheet and add all levels of warmth instead of using 3 separate blankets.

Features:

Fabric – a very important option – depends on horse and situation

Denier: the measure of the nylon fiber density and used to rate strength (600 vs. 1200)

Ballistic nylon: strongest option

Rip stop: checkerboard pattern to limit rips from spreading

Cotton, poly/cotton, nylon, etc.

Lining – cotton or poly/cotton are absorbent, nylon polish the coat, mesh allows for air flow

Closures – Buckle, surcingle, clips, Velcro, disc front, v-front, closed

Surcingles – 1, 2 or 3 – more surcingles = more secure fit

Padded withers

Gussets vs. leg arches

*Equafit for
withers & on
chest*

Leg straps vs. tail cords – prevents shifting, leg straps should not hang loose

Tail Cover – cover should reach middle to end of tail bone

Neck cover/ Hoods

Fit:

Shoulders – gussets, broader cut, cut back, V-front closures

The top of the front closure should line up with the point of their shoulder and the neckline should lie smoothly without pulling

Withers – Wug or high neck options, V-front closures

You should be able to slide a hand in easily between your horse and the blanket

Length & Drop – pony cuts

Should cover entire body, ending just below elbow and stifle

Measuring:

Start at the center of the chest running the tape along their side to the point of the buttocks where the “cheek” meets the tail. This should include the widest part of the shoulder, keeping the tape taut.

The # of inches equates to your horse’s blanket size: 78” or 81”

*some brands run large, some small – so it may take a couple try ons to confirm best fit. (Horseware says to take 4” off of this measurement when sizing their blankets)

*also consider the “drop” as some blankets offer a pony cut that is shorter top to bottom to reduce excess length over knees.

Cleaning & Storing:

Use blanket bars, racks and stall-front bags to keep blankets off ground and ready for use

Use specific blanket detergent, especially on waterproof blankets as these detergents prevent stripping of the waterproofing, help to remove smell and are safe for all blanket fabrics.

If you notice that water stops “beading” up and rolling off your turnouts, or the blankets start to saturate, you may need to re-waterproof the blanket. Worse case, you may need to invest in a new one.

Additional clothing options:

Dress sheets & Coolers

Quarter Sheet

Rain sheets

Irish Knit Anti-Sweat & Scrims

Fly Sheet