

As a horse owner, it's important to be able to make informed decisions for your horse. For example, how do you know if blanketing your horse is something you should consider? Blanketing a horse is a personal preference..a healthy horse doesn't need a blanket to survive in cold weather. Over time they have evolved and developed a perfect process to maintain their body heat, allowing them to live comfortably in cold weather.

Most of the time, owners blanket their horses simply for peace of mind or convenience when it comes to grooming. When you choose to blanket your horse priorities are important. The crucial choices aren't color and style of your blanket, but the daily decisions about how much protection your horse needs from the weather.

If you clip your horse in the winter it's important to blanket them because they no longer have their long coat to protect them from the cold. Under certain circumstances, other horses may need to be blanketed as well, such as old and sick horses, and horses that are moving north during the winter time. Once you choose to blanket you must keep up with it throughout the cold season to ensure your horse is protected.

A fluffy coat is just your horse's way of creating insulation. The hairs lift up to trap the warm air against their skin. Even the short hairs on a clipped horse will lift up in the cold. If you blanket your horse you'll discover that the hair will lie flat which eliminates the insulating properties.

Regular grooming is vital to ensure no growth of nasty fungus or bacteria underneath the blanket. Not only should your horse be regularly groomed, but your blanket as well. Cleaning ranges from a simple hose down to taking the blanket to be professionally cleaned. Either way, the most important thing to remember is that the blanket must be completely dry before putting it back on your horse. Hang your blanket up or drape it over a railing somewhere warm where it's not in danger of freezing. You might need to flip it over a few times in order to be sure it's completely dry on both sides.

There are times when blankets are extremely valuable. If your horse is worked frequently during the winter, blanketing can keep the horse's hair a little shorter, which makes work time more comfortable for the horse. If your horse fails to grow a healthy winter coat, then the blanket may make the difference between freezing and staying healthy. If you switch your horse to an environment that is colder than they are prepared for, a blanket can help balance out the temperature change. The point is, blankets have some very real drawbacks. Don't put a blanket on your horse just because you think it's cold out. It's important to evaluate your horse's behavior and comfort. If your horse is

uncomfortable, then take steps to solve the problem. But don't assume that just because you think it's cold outside, your horse must think so too.