



Grooming Your Horse Before and During Competition with ShowSheen®

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Heading out to a competition or clinic or simply trail riding where other people may see your horse, you want them to look their best. While folks you'll meet on the way will certainly admire a clean, shiny steed, a gleaming horse means even more to other horse people—especially judges. "A clean shiny coat, and especially a clean, shiny, thick lustrous tail, is a sign that a horse is well cared for and highly valued—and that it has been for some time—because you can't transform a tail overnight," says horsemanship guru Julie Goodnight.



While you might think of [ShowSheen® Original Hair Polish & Detangler](#) for a pre-showring spritz, that's just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the product's power. It's the fastest, easiest and cleanest way to detangle tails and manes. Using it throughout the season as part of your regular grooming routine protects hair. It's clinically proven to reduce hair breakage by 40%.



Just like using ShowSheen® Original Hair Polish & Detangler Spray, using the full lineup of ShowSheen® grooming products regularly as part of your everyday grooming routine enhances your horse's coat health. Each is a powerful tool for a specific purpose, but they were formulated to work together, using them throughout the season as a complete grooming system unleashes a sparkling synergy that helps them shine every day—and especially on days where you won't be the only one admiring them.

So how do you get your beloved mud-encrusted mount ready for the showring—or the trailhead parking lot? Follow these tips for unleashing the shining synergy of the ShowSheen® system:

What to do a day or two before your outing

Bathe your horse as close to your departure as possible, right? Nope. Giving your horse a bath the morning of an outing can remove some of the most important components of a healthy, gleaming coat: its natural oil. Bathe a day or two prior to your event to preserve as much of that natural magic as possible. "Avoid harsh shampoos that strip the oil from the hair and skin, leaving it dry and frizzy," says Goodnight. "Those can actually make your horse duller for a day or so until that oil builds back up and you'll have to put a lot of elbow grease into the coat to bring the oil up out of the skin, back onto the hair, for the shine."

Goodnight uses [ShowSheen® 2-in-1 Shampoo and Conditioner](#) on her horses for a deep, sulfate and paraben-free clean that does not rob the coat of oil. It does the opposite, nourishing coat and skin with vitamins.





After rinsing and sweat scraping, spray on ShowSheen® Original Hair Polisher and Detangler. Avoid the area where the saddle fits. Don't forget to spray a bit on a towel to apply to your horse's face.

Why use ShowSheen® for horses so far ahead of an actual public appearance? It not only nourishes the coat and strengthens manes and tails with vitamins and proteins and helps protect hair from breakage, it actually helps keep horses clean by repelling dust and preventing stains.

"We use it all the time to keep horses clean, especially for any event that's going to be held over multiple days," says Goodnight.

What to do the day before you go

Give your horse a good curry and brushing to help remove hair loosened by the bath and any new dirt. If you clip, today is a good time to touch up your horse's bridle path, legs and ears rather than testing their patience by doing it the day you bathe. "Use ShowSheen® before you clip to help the blade glide through the hair," says Goodnight.

Tips for the day of your event

Will your horse have slept in the dirtiest corner of their pen or stall the night before you head somewhere?

Absolutely.

It's not a problem—or a time-suck—if you have ShowSheen® Stain Remover and Whitener on hand. Spray it directly on the stain and wait five minutes before rinsing. This bleach-free, non-irritating formula uses oxygen molecules to lift dirt. Don't forget to spray the area with ShowSheen to repel dirt once it's clean.





Before loading up, spray your horse's body with ShowSheen. Because, even if they step into the trailer bright and shiny, they may emerge completely covered in fine road dust. ShowSheen® makes it easy to quickly rub it off.

Tip: Keep a pair of microfleece gloves set aside for rubbing off trailering dust. "Just wipe off the dust and there's the shiny ShowSheen coat underneath," says Goodnight.

Pick or shake out any shavings or hay that found their way into the mane and tail. Then, spray with ShowSheen Detangler and finger comb or use a wide-tooth comb. It's the fastest, easiest way to detangle manes and tails—and won't leave your fingers sticky.

What to do right before mounting

Time for touch-up grooming. At events or trailheads where water is limited or weather or time prevent wetting your horse, a "bath in a bottle" is priceless: [ShowSheen® Miracle Groom](#) waterless shampoo. Spray it on, rub it in, rub it out and it lifts dirt, removes stains and brightens color.

Tip: For a bit of glamour, rub a few drops of baby oil onto your horse's eyes and nostrils to highlight their features.



Tip: A bit of baby powder sprinkled and rubbed into white socks or stockings can help them pop. (Unfortunately, this does not seem to work for coffee-stained white breeches).

No matter how much your horse resembles the gleaming steed ridden by the half-dressed hero on the cover of a romance novel, if he or she is miserably swishing, shaking or twitching with flies, it doesn't matter. Keep them happy and comfortable with [UltraShield®](#) fly spray.





An easy way to keep coats cleaner and healthier

"Beyond competitions, if you love your horse and you're proud of it, you want it look great," says Goodnight. "And that doesn't happen overnight. The more you use products like ShowSheen Original Hair Polish & Detangler, the more protected that hair is over time and the cleaner the horse stays. It really does keep them from getting dirty."

For more in-depth instructions on grooming for competitions, watch our [7-part video series](#) and, check out Julie Goodnight's "How to Make Your Horse Look Like a Supermodel."

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