

## "Just Like a Sponge or Tape Recorder"

One of the most exciting and fun things about owning Horses, is the time spent working and playing with new born foals. The way they play and learn things is vital to just what type of a Horse they will be in a year or two. Very afraid and shy, or friendly like having a big puppy following you around the pasture. Either one is very easy to happen or just as easy to avoid. New phrases and terminology have come along in the last 20 years on this type of Horse training. "Imprinting" & "Foal starting" & "Foundation learning", these and many more phrases and terms are out there in the world of Horses.

Yet the terminology may be new and fancy. The procedures and techniques for working with very young Horses are as old as man himself! Constant contact with love and affection. Gently working to show this new born Horse what is good and bad behavior. Training this cute young animal to stand tied and walk with a halter and lead rope, lift up their feet. Be gentle and respectful of people. The learning of new and hopefully long lasting behavior. All of these training methods and procedures are not new, or some special type of "magic Horse tricks", this is just good old fashion Horsemanship!

What is important to realize and understand that these new Horses are like a sponge or tape recorder? They are out for any information they can absorb. A sponge that is dry is seeking out any and all moisture it can find to retain. A tape recorder is ready to hear and record anything that it can pick up. This is the way of the new foal as well. Good or bad information, along with danger or love. Everything is retained and used to teach and train this young Horse to understand and react to its new life and world. They learn things from their mother along with other Horses; this is their most important and most natural way of gaining intelligence and experiences. If you have no contact or the contact is of a negative nature. Such as violent or mean, the foal learns to mistrust and be afraid of people. If the foal learns people are fun and friendly, the foal learns to trust and gladly except people as a lifelong friend and partner. The choice is yours!! Do nothing, gain nothing. Do wrong, you will get wrong. Do right and you will be rewarded with right. Not the best grammar yet you get the point.

Despite your personal schedule or daily routines, young Horses are learning 24/7. You will gain more ground with training and learning if you spend 15 to 20 minutes everyday. Than if you work once a week for a few hours. The day to day constant stream of information and experiences is what teaches a Horse to learn quickly and very effectively. This applies to any age of Horses, just so much more profound in young growing and learning Horses. Giving a Horse a treat or snack on a regular basis teaches the Horse in very short time to always expect this from you. Young Horses as they grow learn to bite and invade a person's space looking for their treat that they get use to. It is easy to control a new foal that weighs less than 300 pounds and wobbles when they walk. Yet train them and teach them poor behavior when young. Think about trying to control an 800 pound yearling who still thinks like a foal, expecting to push you and eat out of your hand. I have made so much money over the years off of well meaning owners who taught young Horses bad habits out of love. Which now are terrible habits in a larger animal.

Keep this little phrase in mind when dealing with new born foals, also when dealing with any Horse at any age for that matter. "HORSES ARE ALWAYS LEARNING, GOOD OR BAD HABITS, THEY SEEK OUT AND RETAIN INFORMATION 24 / 7 365 DAYS A YEAR"!! Whether it is good and helpful to you and your time spent with a Horse. Or makes you're your Horse hard to handle and a danger to your personal safety is your choice to make. Remember that a few minutes every day teaches faster and brings so much quicker

results. Than letting things go until you have the time! A Horse's brain along with the ability to retain and comprehend information and life stimulus is less complicated and works at a more fundamental level than our own thought and retention level. We give Horses more credit than they are due out of love for the animal. Yet most cases this just brings about poor training practices and bad Horse behavior. A sponge or a tape recorder does not retain just clean water and nice sounds. Both just soak up and record any and all things that are present. You as the Horse owner must be the filter and keep all good and positive.

**By BJ Rickard – The World OF Horses – Stall13.com**  
**View, Print or Save this page, close window when done.**