

Types of Blankets, Sheets, Coolers, and Accessories

There are many different types of horse apparel and at times it can become confusing on what they are and when to use them. Below we will cover the basics of different horse apparel and their uses, as well as different terms you will find when discussing these items.

Let's start with a basic glossary of terms:

- **Sheets** – Sheets are lightweight and typically do not have any fill (also known as grams).

Types of Sheets:

- **Stable sheets/blankets** are not waterproof and are meant to be worn when your horse is inside. They are designed to keep the coat clean and will have 0-grams of fill. However, there are some with fill, these are known as Stable Blankets (more on blankets and fill later). They are usually made from cotton, poly/cotton, nylon or canvas.
- **Turnout sheets/blankets** are waterproof (waterproofing and guarantee vary by manufacturer and how well you care for the blanket - see "Blanket Care"). Sheets will have 0-grams of fill, which is great for cool raining days. Turnout blankets will have various levels of fill for warmth. Turnout sheets/blankets are designed to be worn when your horse is outside. Materials range from polyester, polypropylene, or nylon and are designed to be more durable than a stable sheet. More information below on turnout blankets, gram levels, and materials.
- **Blankets** – Blankets are designed to keep your horse dry and provide a level of warmth depending on the amount of fill. As mentioned above there are Stable Blankets, which are meant to be used while inside, like a stable sheet, but contain fill for warmth. Here we will focus on **Turnout Blankets**.

Turnout blankets are waterproof and designed to be worn when your horse is outside. They come in a range of fill, from 0-grams up to 450-grams. The exterior material has a waterproof coating and a breathable membrane to keep your horse warm and dry through the worst winter weather.

Some horse blankets are made to add “Liners.” These liners are typically made of nylon or polyester. They provide warmth and breathability. For example, a liner can be added to a compatible 0-gram blanket to increase the warmth without buying a heavier blanket. Liners come in a variety of gram fill levels, from 50-grams to 300-grams. The ability to add a liner varies on manufacturer.

More information on gram-level fill and denier number of material is below.

- **Rain Sheets** – Rain sheets, sometimes referred to as 0-gram blankets, offer waterproof protection for your horse and your tack. Some will refer to a 0-gram blanket as a rain sheet. However, traditional rain sheets cover the horse from the poll to the top of the tail, however they’re not very secure and therefore not recommended for use in turnout.
- **Show Scrim** – Scrim is extremely lightweight, open-weave sheet designed to keep your horse clean ringside at shows. Usually made from poly/cotton or nylon fabric.
- **Anti-Sweat Sheet** – Similar to scrim, anti-sweat sheets have an open-weave that increases breathability and reduces sweat build-up. They are usually made from 100% cotton or a poly/cotton blend to help wick away moisture. Anti-sweat sheets are a great option after summer rides when you want to keep your horse clean while he cools out.
- **Fly Sheet** – Fly sheets protect your horse from pesky bugs, thus typically used during the warmer months. They are lightweight, breathable, and durable enough to withstand turnout. Some fly sheets offer UV protection, while others may be treated with insect repellants for extra bug-blocking power.
- **Dress Sheet/Cooler/Quarter Sheet** – Dress sheets are finely crafted fleece, wool, or wool blend sheets that offer both style and functionality. They keep your horse cozy on chilly horse show mornings, wick away moisture when he’s cooling out, used after bathing on chilly days, and can be used as blanket liners for extra warmth in particularly cold weather. Today, you will find the term ‘cooler’ also used to describe a ‘dress sheet.’ A traditional ‘cooler’ is oversized and loose, draping over your horse from the poll to the top of the tail and hanging just below the belly.

Quarter Sheets are made of fleece or wool and designed to cover your horse's hindquarters and wrap up under the saddle flaps or over your legs when you're riding. Many riders prefer to use quarter sheets just for the warmup, while others keep them on for the entire ride, especially during long, cool-weather trail rides.

There are many parts and accessories to your horse's wardrobe. Some of these terms are explained below.



Standard Neck: the blanket/sheet will lay at the traditional spot on the horse's neck.



High Neck/WUG – This style of turnout blanket is cut significantly higher up on the horse's neck, offering extended protection from the elements.



Neck Rug/Neck Cover – These separate pieces are made from the same material as turnout blankets and are designed to attach to the turnout blanket for more complete coverage. Many owners use neck rugs to adjust their horse's level of protection and warmth as the temperature fluctuates.

Blankets that come with necks are typically referred to a "Plus"

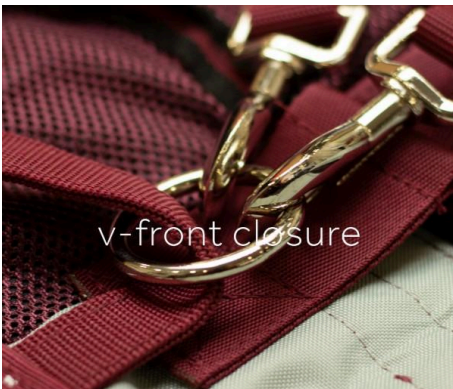
Front Closures – There are many types to choose from, but these are the most common:



Buckle-Front – Just like a regular belt buckle, usually nylon straps with a metal buckle. Offers a lot of adjustability. Will typically have clips as well for quick open/closure.



Surcingle – Also known as “T-locks,” surcingle closures on the front of the blanket will function just like the belly surcingles, with two metal pieces that interlock to keep the blanket closed.



V-Front –Typically fasten lower on the chest, eliminating pressure when the horse has his head down.



Quick-Clip – Any metal snap or clip fastener that you can open and close with one hand.



Shoulder Gussets – Gusseted blankets have an extra piece of fabric sewn in at the shoulder, to allow for great range of Motion.



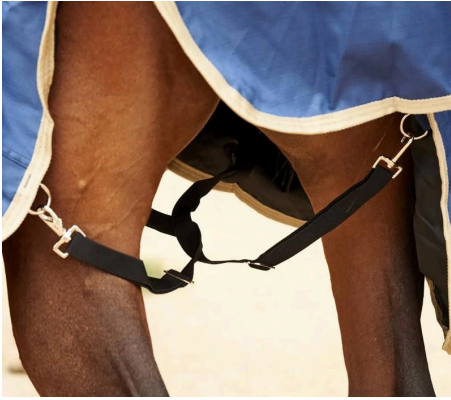
Padded Withers – Fleece or foam padding at the withers can reduce rubbing.



Leg Arches™ – With Horseware Ireland's patented Leg Arches™, the edge of the blanket is cut back around the legs to allow for movement without interference or rubs from the blanket.



Surcingle – The belly straps that are primarily responsible for keeping the blanket in place. Sheets and blankets can have anywhere from one to three surcingles, with two being the most common. The more surcingles on the blanket, the more likely it is to stay in place.



Leg Straps – These straps criss-cross between the horse’s back legs, providing stability, preventing the blanket from riding up or shifting out of place.

Leg straps are attached as follows: pass the left strap through the horse’s hind legs and clip it to the d-ring on the left side of the blanket. Cross the right leg strap through the left leg strap and clip it to the d-ring on the right side.



Tail Flap/Tail Cover – An extra swatch of fabric that covers the tail area, usually to the bottom of the tailbone, to help seal out cold winds.

Tail Cord – This cord ties the back ends of the blanket together and rests under the tail, helping to keep the blanket in place.

A blanket/sheet will either have leg straps or a tail cord.

Blanket Fill and Denier Numbers

Horse sheets are thin and lightweight, while horse blankets provide increased warmth based on the level of fill they contain. The amount of fill a blanket contains is measured in grams. The higher the fill level the warmer the blanket.

- 0 grams of fill – Sheets (also sometimes called “Light Weight Blankets)
- 50-100 grams of fill - Light-Medium Weight Blankets
- 150-250 grams of fill – Medium Weight Blankets
- 300+ grams of fill – Heavy Weight Blankets

Another factor in sheets/blankets is the denier number. The denier number describes the thickness and strength of the blanket’s outer material as well as its level of water resistance. The higher the denier number, the stronger, more durable, and better water-resistant the blanket will be. It will also feel heavier. Choosing the right denier blanket for your horse depends on their activity, type of turnout, their roughness on blankets, and pasture mates.

Common Denier Numbers:

- **600D: Lightweight and less durable, best for stable blankets and horses kept indoors.**
- **1200D: Medium durability, suitable for moderate turnout, balancing comfort and protection.**
- **1680D: Heavy-duty, designed for horses in turnout prone to rough play or facing harsh winter weather.**

The type of material the blanket is made of plays a role in the durability and effectiveness of the blanket/sheet. Materials used tend to be polyester, polypropylene, and nylon ballistic, with the later being the strongest.

Rip-Stop nylon features a checkerboard weave that helps prevent small rips from spreading, so you can patch a small hole instead of replacing the entire blanket.

Ballistic nylon was originally developed for use in bulletproof vests. Ballistic nylon turnout blankets won't stop bullets, but they will put up with a lot of abuse.