

Basic Horse Terminology

by Clay Cavinder, Ph.D., adapted for use in ANSC 201: Introduction to Equine Care course

Mare – mature female horse, usually over age three

Stallion – mature male horse, usually over age two

Gelding – castrated male horse of any age

Foal – young horse still nursing, usually less than six months of age

Weanling – young horse weaned from its dam, less than one year of age

Yearling – young horse between one and two years of age

Filly – young female horse

Colt – young intact male horse; sometimes used as a term to describe young horses in general

Walk – basic, four beat lateral gait

Trot – two beat diagonal gait

Jog – Western term for a slower, more relaxed trot

Canter – three beat gait in which the first and third beats are made by two legs striking the ground independently and the second beat by a diagonal pair striking the ground together

Lope – Western term for a slower form of the canter