



STRENGTHENING KIDS & COMMUNITY
THROUGH ANIMAL INTERACTION

TRAK

Volunteer Handbook

General Ranch Rules

1. Everyone on property must have a signed Liability Release in the office. All riders and volunteers must also provide proof of health insurance.
2. Please READ THE POSTED LIABILITY SIGN. If you do not understand it, please ask.
3. **TRAK is a “Bully Free Zone.”** - Bullying/Drama/Gossiping will simply not be tolerated and may lead to dismissal from the program.
4. All gates must remain closed at all times.
5. Riders under 18 **MUST** wear a helmet. *NO EXCEPTIONS.*
6. PLEASE use water responsibly to help in our conservation efforts.
7. There is **NO SMOKING** anywhere on property. Nor any use of alcohol or drugs.
8. **NO GUNS** allowed on property.
9. For safety reasons, all children under 12 years old must be accompanied and supervised by a parent or guardian.
10. Hitting or kicking our animals is **NEVER** allowed, and will result in dismissal from the program. Unsafe, combative, or disruptive behavior toward staff, volunteers, or horses/animals by students, guardians, or visitors will be dealt with on an individual basis.
11. Respect *ALL* Clients, Staff, Volunteers, Parents and Guests. Disrespect will not be tolerated. Please leave bad attitudes at home.
12. Visitors wishing to tour the facility or grounds must be escorted by TRAK staff or trained volunteers.
13. Please respect any posted off-limit areas, including the main house located on the northeast corner of the property.
14. Please respect this property. Place trash in designated receptacles.
15. **NO outside dogs. NO EXCEPTIONS!** The animals at TRAK live in harmony with one another. Introduction of a new animal is handled very carefully. Visiting pets will upset this harmony and can be very disruptive. *Please leave your pet(s) at home.*

Volunteers

1. In case you missed **#1 in General Rules**, no one can go through gates without a signed release.
2. All volunteers must complete a volunteer orientation prior to beginning work.
3. All volunteers must sign in and out each time before going through gates and upon leaving after shifts. (In addition to logging volunteer hours, we need to know who is on property in case of

emergency). When you reach 40 hours, you may reach us to schedule your free trail ride or lesson.

4. Follow through and complete assigned tasks. You should be willing to help with any chore you are asked to do, no cherry picking!
5. Keep staff updated on progress, concerns, and problems you encounter or observe while doing your tasks. More information is better for us, always. Check in with the shift leader before you leave to make sure everything is done.
6. Respect your designated shift time. Strive to be on time unless you have discussed alternate scheduling with us. Volunteers also must leave at the end of their shift unless they have been asked to stay and help.
7. Always represent TRAK with professionalism, dignity and pride. Be responsible for conducting yourself with courtesy and appropriate behavior.
8. Always respect the privacy of persons served by TRAK and hold in confidence sensitive private and personal information.
9. Avoid conduct, both on and off duty, which could jeopardize our program.
10. Dress Code: Refrain from wearing clothes that are too tight, too short and/or revealing- No spaghetti straps, no revealing tank tops, bra tops, etc. Pants should be pulled up to the waist with no boxers/underwear showing.
11. Children under the age of 12 must have a parent or legal guardian with them and that parent must be willing to help out and supervise that child or children. We will make exceptions for children who have proven they can be unsupervised on a case by case basis.
12. Staff members ONLY may drive the TRAK equipment.
13. Please respect this property. Place trash in designated receptacles. If you walk by some trash on the ground, please pick it up and throw it away. TRAK belongs to all of us. Please take care of it.

The Ranch Gates will be locked at the end of shift (or special event) and will re-open at the beginning of AM shift daily.

*Rules are subject to change as deemed necessary.

Auto/Driving Rules

- Park in designated areas only (on Edith Blvd, please do not use Green Things parking)
- Please be aware of your surroundings. Children, dogs, and horses are always around!

For everyone that comes on property....

As with everything at TRAK—

If you are unsure, please ask. No question is a silly question when it comes to the health and safety of our animals and people.

Scheduling

- We ask that all volunteers commit to a once weekly animal care shift for at least 4 months due to the time it takes to train volunteers.
- We can be flexible with changing your schedule as time goes on; we understand that schedules change with the school year, other commitments, etc.
- If you know you are going to be out, please email the volunteer coordinator (office@traktucson.org) or call and leave a message in the office (520-298-9808). We also communicate using the remind app and once you have been entered in our system, you will get an invite to that text program.
- If for any reason you have to stop volunteering, please let us know, don't just disappear! It's important for us to know what shifts need more help as we schedule volunteers!

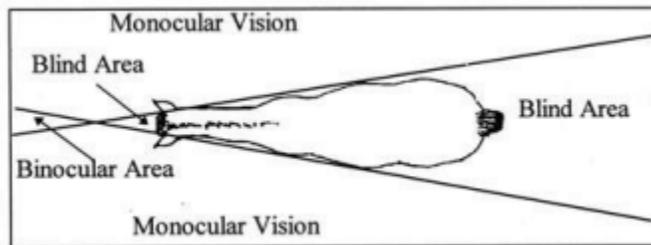
Examples of Volunteer Jobs

- **AM and PM Ranch Shifts**
 - Daily animal care tasks include filling waters, feeding, mucking stalls, cleaning up around the ranch, and more.
 - Those who have gone through our Horse Handler orientation can help with horse specific tasks like: walking horses to and from turn-out and entering stalls with horses in them.
- **Ranch Programing**
 - Little Buckaroos - Horse Handlers can help with leading horses for our youngest riders in weekend lessons and during seasonal camps.
 - Birthday Parties - Set up and take down of the birthday party area. Helping birthday participants safely interact with our small animals. Horse Handlers can grab horses and get them ready for birthday rides as well as lead them during the party.
 - Tiny Trailblazers - Assist with animal interactions with our big and small animals in the "Caregiver and Me" type classes.
- **Special Events**
 - Traveling Petting Zoos - Travel to various locations and supervise animal interactions.
 - Animal Friends - Travel to elementary schools with a different animal each week and help teach kids about the animals that live at our ranch.
 - Ranch Camp - Assistant counselors help with horse lessons, crafts, animal lessons, and supervision during our seasonal ranch camps.

TRAK Horse Safety Guide

Nature of the Horse

First thing to keep in mind when interacting with horses: we are predators, and horses are prey animals. If faced with a threatening situation horses will rather run than fight. Horses may be trained, but they are still animals with minds of their own. It is absolutely crucial to be aware of what horses are communicating to you. Their ears are direct reflections of how they are feeling. When trying to access a horse it is important to observe ears, head carriage, leg posture, and overall posture of a horse. (See article attached). Anything that does not move, sound, smell, or look natural (i.e. plastic bag, tarp) may cause a horse to spook. They have eyes on the sides of their head that allow for excellent peripheral vision. You need to be aware of main blind spots in horse vision: directly in front, behind, and underneath any body part. Just like driving, it's not a good idea to move into a horse's blind spot.



Approaching a horse

The best way to approach a loose horse is towards their left shoulder. Never approach a horse from directly behind. Always walk. Running will not only scare horses, but it will also rile them up and make it more difficult for you to catch them. As you approach you should talk in a calm, confident manner in order to communicate where you are. Yelling and making other loud noises will cause horses to be riled as well as running.

Haltering a horse

1. Enter the turn out with the halter ready, untied or unbuckled, and the lead rope untangled.
2. Do not walk into a group of horses. Try to get them to disperse so you are not forced to put yourself in any compromising places.
3. Once able to safely walk towards your horse, approach the horse at the left shoulder while talking.
4. Once at the horse's shoulder put the lead rope over its neck. If necessary, use rope to move the horse to a safer place (e.g. if the horse is standing in mud, move the horse to a dry spot).
5. Holding the buckle or loop end of the halter in your left hand and the long strap of the halter in your right, slip the halter over the horse's nose.
6. Bring the long strap from the right side over the horse's head and behind its ears.
7. Adjust halter so that the nose band is halfway between the horse's nostrils and eyes.
8. Buckle or tie halter to secure it.

Leading a horse

1. After haltering the horse, hold the lead rope below the clip in your right hand. Ideally allow for about an arms length of rope between your right hand and the horses head, but you should adjust as is necessary.
2. Fold the remaining rope in your left hand so it does not touch the ground. NEVER wrap any part of a rope around any part of your body.
3. Standing on the left side of the horse, begin walking; try to remain in between the horses head and shoulder.
4. If you need to turn a horse, you always need to have a clear path in mind. You can turn either direction and some adjustment to the length of rope between your right hand and their head may be necessary.

Tying a horse

1. Find a spot that is not crowded, not in the way of traffic, and stable to tie your horse.
2. Allow for about an arm's length of rope between the fence and the halter.
3. Wrap the remaining leadrope at LEAST three times around the fence/hitching post. Do not tie to the lowest rail. Tie to the eye level of the horse so that the horse is less likely to get his head caught under the lead rope and spook itself.
4. Make sure to push the wraps together and ensure their tightness. Depending on the lead rope you may need to wrap more times if it is stiffer.
 - If graining horses make sure to allow enough slack so that they can reach the grain bucket on the ground.
 - When tying multiple horses in the same area, make sure that there is at least one full fence panel in between tie points so that horses don't intrude on each other's space.

Moving around a horse

1. It's your job to keep your feet out from under a horse's hoof. Be aware of where your feet are at all times and don't let them get too close to the horse's hooves.
2. Be aware of your surroundings. Sounds, movement, smells, or even shadows can cause problems. It is imperative to be prepared for anything.
3. Walking behind a horse
 - Option 1: Walk AT LEAST 10 feet away around the back of the horse, constantly talking and being aware.
 - Option 2: Stand next to the horse, pet the horse on the back to start. While talking to the horse, pet and walk your way around to the other side. Do not hesitate or pause at any point until you safely make it to the other side of the horse