

## **ESTABLISHING TRUST BETWEEN A HORSE AND A HUMAN**

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**Abstract.** *The article represents a future research project which concerns building trust between a horse and a human that have not been working together before. Research is based on horse behavior differences depending on gender. The final product of the study will be a methodology of building horse trust.*

**Keywords:** *horse-human relationship, horse trust, horse training, gender differences, methodology.*

Research on the topic of establishing trust between a horse and a human is very relevant today, because during the past century the role of the horse has completely changed. It became mostly companion-based previously having been more work oriented. Consequently, this change has influenced the horse-human relationships making them more informal. Optimizing horse-human relationships can promote positive experiences and advance the welfare and safety of both dyad members. Attachment and bonding are key components in such relationships, and horses are good candidate subjects for studying bonding processes due to their sociable nature and dependence on human care in a domestic context.

Currently there are not many studies concerning modern horse-human relationships and accordingly there are no studies on the topic of a horse trust based on the gender differences.

In my future research, the following materials are expected to be analyzed and considered:

Studies on the topic and their results available online globally;

Previous studies conducted at the Horse Breeding Department of Russian State Agrarian University – Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy (RSAU-MTAA);

Behaviour of Young horses up to 3 years old kept at Kartsevo stables (Moscow region);

Own developed methodology on building horse-human trust.

Methods of the research will include literature analysis and an experiment, which will consist of three parts – observation, data collection and data analysis.

According to the theme of establishing trust between a horse and a human, the main steps of my experiment are:

Formulating hypotheses;  
Designing preliminary methodology of building a horse's trust and confidence in a human including numeric scores for each horse's response;  
Forming groups of horses depending on their gender;  
Testing methodology on each of the horse groups;  
Making adjustments to the initial methodology according to the results of the experiment taking into account gender differences.

It needs to be specified that the groups of horses will be formed according to their gender. There will be 3 groups consisting of mares, stallions and geldings, 10 horses in each one respectively. A provisional hypothesis is that the experiment results will differ from one group to another based on the horse gender. However, the exact find outs will be obtained during the experiment.

As a result of the study, a methodology is expected to be developed for building the horse trust to a human based on horse gender differences. Assigning points to each reaction of horses to human actions will simplify the task of creating a convenient system for classifying and comparing reactions between the studied animals and whole groups, for further optimization of the methodology. The stage of optimization is the most crucial one, since it is long daily exercise, which leads to obtaining knowledge on the best training practices. The methodology will include the most optimal ordered list of activities and exercises performed with horses for the fastest adaptation of horses to humans. This methodology will be ready to use by people working with horses. The research results are expected to be published in certain online journals about horse industry.

In conclusion, it is necessary to emphasize that the final research outcome is of great relevance in the field of modern horse ownership. The methodology of establishing the horse-human trust will be useful for: horse owners, who are just establishing relationships with their new horse; horse trainers, whose next step is to train a horse to ride; researchers, who are interested in horses' behavior differences based on their gender.

### **References**

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