



HORSESAURUS

IMPRESS YOUR PACK WITH THE LINGO OF THE TRACK

Across the Board: If you can't make up your mind, place a bet on a single horse to win, place and show. Also known as "covering your assets."

Age of Your Horse: Every race horse celebrates a birthday on New Year's Day. The horse could be born on December 31, but the next day it's a one-year old.

Backstretch: See way over on the other side of the track from where you're sitting? That straightaway out there is the backstretch.

Box: Asking for a box will allow your runners in Exactas, Trifectas and Superfectas to finish in any order. Boxing costs more because you receive more ways to win on your ticket.

Boxed In: If your horse is racing along the rail, and has other horses in front, on the outside and behind it, your horse is boxed in. Good luck!

Break: Your horse might lose the natural rhythm of trotting or pacing and break into a gallop.

Broodmare: A female used for breeding.

Brush: When your horse turns on the turbo-speed, especially near the end of the race.

Card: Today's racing program is "the card."

Catch driver: This driver doesn't train horses, but is hired by other trainers and owners to drive theirs.

Chalk: The race's favorite.

Colors: In harness racing, the drivers have their own colorful jackets and wear them no matter what horse they're racing. In thoroughbred racing, the jockeys wear the colors of the horse they're riding.

Colt: A male horse between the ages of two and four.

Coupled: Two or more entries in the same race by the same trainer or owner.

Dam: Your horse's mother.

Dead Heat: Pretty much a tie, when the judges can't tell which horse has won at the outcome of a race.

Distanced: When your horse has finished more than 25 lengths ahead of everyone else. Way to go!

Doubles: Pick the winners of two consecutive, designated races.

Exacta: Bet the horses to finish first and second in that exact order.

Filly: A female three years of age or less. Best not to call your date a filly.

First Over: The first horse to travel towards the lead on the outside of the track is the “first over.” Not an easy thing to do.

Foal: A newborn. It also refers to the act of giving birth.

Free Legged: A pacer that races without hobbles. See “hobbles” below.

Gelding: A castrated male. (Ouch.)

Groom: This person cares for the horses, but doesn’t train them.

Handle: The total amount bet on a race, or on a daily card, or for the entire racing season.

Harness: Attaches the horse to the sulky, and carries the hobbles that allow the driver to steer the horse.

Hobbles: Straps connecting a pacer’s front and rear legs (on the same side), which the driver uses for steering purposes.

Homestretch: Remember the backstretch – that long straightway on the far side of the track? This is the front straightaway, from the last turn to the finish line.

Layoff: This is when a horse kicks back and chills out. But beware: most horses lose their competitive edge during layoffs, and need to re-train to get back in shape. Just like you.

Length: The measure of a horse from the tip of his nose to the tail.

Maiden: A horse that has not won a race.

Mare: A female horse that is at least five years old. Best not to call your date a mare, either.

Pacer: A horse running with a gait in which both legs on one side of its body move in the same direction at the same time. Now you try it.

Paddock: This is where the horses hang out before post time. Pay a visit to the paddock to check out your favorites.

Pari-mutuel: This is the way we bet at the track. It means the money wagered is divided among those holding the winning tickets.

Parked Out: If your horse is on the outside, with at least one horse between it and perimeter of the track, he's "parked out."

Place: You win if your horse finishes first or second.

Pocket: Probably the best place to be in the early goings is in "the pocket," which is directly behind the leader on the inside perimeter of the track.

Post Parade: This is when the horses show off in front of the stands about 10 minutes before the race. One of the more majestic spectacles in all of sports.

Post Position: Your horse's position behind the starting gate.

Post Time: The starting time for each race, or for the card itself.

Purse: The cash prize won by the winning owners. Usually the first five finishers take home some dough: 50% to the winner, 25% for second place, 12% for third, 8% for fourth and 5% for fifth.

Race Bike: The sulky that a pacer or trotter pulls during the race.

Quinella: Bet the first and second horses to cross the wire. They can finish in any order.

Scratch: A horse withdraws from a race and is "scratched."

Show: You win if your horse finishes first, second or third.

Sloppy Track: There's standing water on the track.

Sophomore: A three-year old horse in its second racing season.

Stewards: As the umpire is to baseball, so is the steward to horseracing.

Sulky: Also known as the race bike, or cart. Inside the sulky is the driver, and everything's attached to the horse by the harness.

Tote Board: It's the scoreboard of racing. On the infield, facing the stands, the tote board lists all the odds and results.

Trifecta: Bet the first, second and third horses to cross the wire in that exact order.

Trotter: A horse with a gait in which the front leg on one side of his body moves in the same direction as the hind leg on the opposite side. This is a diagonal stride, and if you think it's easy, just try it.

Win: You bet on a horse to finish the race first.

Yearling: A one-year old horse. And remember, every race horse celebrates its birthday on January 1st.