



EQUINE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM: INDUCTION MANUAL

Hello and welcome to Dassenberg Rescue Centre! We hope you're as excited as we are to have you on board with us. We're looking forward to having lots of fun and sharing many special moments with you. Firstly, however, we need to cover some ground rules. Safety is our first priority – for the sake of both you *and* the horses.

OUR HISTORY

Dassenberg began in the year 2000 with a call to action. Mayanna Muter, our founder, came across Death Hill – a place where owners dumped horses that they could no longer afford to keep, many of whom were already dead or dying. She knew she had to do something – and thus our rescue centre was born.

It was born out of a love for animals, something which we truly value, as well as the belief that any animal deserves a second chance. A belief that kindness can change lives, and that with a little bit of patience, you can work wonders. At Dassenberg, we practice natural horsemanship. You won't see any of our horses kept up in stables because they live as they're supposed to – out in a huge paddock with all of their friends. We let our horses just *be horses*. And it's the best therapy we could ever provide.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- > Return what you use! We do have grooming kits and training equipment on hand especially for volunteers to use. However, we understand that stuff happens and sometimes things break and get lost – please kindly report it if something does happen so we can make sure we have all the equipment we need.
- > We have spare helmets in our tack room – we ask you kindly to wear one when you are working with the horses.
- > Never approach a horse – especially one you don't know – from behind! You may give them a fright and accidentally get kicked.
- > Always groom a horse over and check for injuries and anything that could be bothering them *before* working them.
- > If you are using tack, ensure that it is correctly fitted. Ill-fitting tack can cause the horse pain and is easily avoidable. If you are unsure, rather get a second opinion.
- > Lastly – if you open a gate, close it! We do not want horses getting out and wandering around, inevitably getting into harm's way.

MOVING AROUND A HORSE

If you're new to horses or natural horsemanship, there are a couple of things to take note of when it comes to working with horses.

- > When around a horse, move slowly – sudden movements can give them a fright. It is a good idea to run your hand along your horse while grooming etc so he is aware of where you are. Avoid standing directly behind the horse in the “kick zone”.
- > When approaching a horse, put your hand out in front of you so they can sniff you out or gently approach their shoulder rather than their face. Avoid making direct eye contact with them.
- > When leading a horse – always allow for some slack or “smile” in your line. It's important to give the horse the choice to follow you and not to desensitize them to the pulling of a leadrope.



DASSENBERG

RESCUE CENTRE

YOUR DUTIES

Please skip ahead to your relevant job description to get a run down of your expected duties.

Groomers: Your job is to help groom, detick and give as much TLC to our horses as possible. Please ensure any borrowed grooming kits and/or halters are returned as you found them.

Assistant Trainers: You are your trainer's right-hand man. Your job is to shadow your trainer, learn as much as you can and help out with whatever your trainer needs you to do.

Trainers: You will be responsible for facilitating both the training of your designated horse/horses as well as your designated assistant.

ORIENTATION

Please skip over to your relevant section to get an understanding of the skills/activities that you can expect to go over during your orientation.

Groomers: You should cover the basics of grooming, picking out hooves and deticking. You should also cover the basics of haltering, catching and leading a horse as well as how to hand feed treats.

Assistant Trainers: You will participate in a crash course of basic training skills. These may vary, depending on who is hosting the orientation, but may include the basics of positive reinforcement training, desensitizing/sensitizing a horse, free lunging and relaxation techniques.

Trainers: You are expected to be of a level where you do not need to training to take on a horse's training. We will, however, be provided an introduction and tour to Dassenberg. You will be assigned a horse/horses to work based off your area of expertise.

CONCLUDING NOTE

If you have any more queries, don't feel shy to ask. We are here to help you in any way that you need.