

KDCTA HOOFBEATS

SURVEY SAYS: Do you blanket your horses in winter?

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Responses:

- I do blanket my horses as I do not want to deal with the mud.
- Yes, I blanket some of my thin skin horses, but not the fuzzy ones!
- I do not blanket my "teddy bear" fuzzy pony. I don't clip her either since I don't ride as much in the winter. She is boarded so I am not on hand to add or remove blankets as needed.
- I absolutely do blanket my horse in the winter. As soon as temperatures hit the 40-degree mark, I add a lightweight blanket. When temperatures start hitting the 30-degree mark, I add a midweight. I do not have a heavy weight blanket because I don't think my guy needs it. It's a bit of a trick figuring out blanket weight and when to add or take away layers.
- Nope, I don't blanket my 3 horses in the winter. One of my horses is 32 years old and he is doing fine but I do keep a close eye on him and will blanket him if he needs it. It is important that I keep extra watch on my horses when the weather is at its worst. If I see shivering, I will get a blanket on right away. This hasn't happened in this winter of 2021 -22 and actually I can't remember a time when it has happened at all in a winter. I have more times when my horse shivers if he cools down too fast on a chilly early fall day when he has his summer coat. When we have low temperatures and freezing rain, I prefer to bring them into shelter rather than blanket. My horses have a well-protected run-in, but they don't always use it when I think they should, so I will close them in. All my horses grow really heavy winter coats. I still ride through the winter, and they may get sweaty so I will put a cooler on until they dry off. Hay is the fuel I use to keep my horses' furnaces going. During the coldest days, they get extra. I know my horses are hardy and can do well with these strategies to keep them from chilling down in winter's worst weather. I wouldn't recommend it for all horses, especially if they are new to your care.
- I do not blanket as a rule of thumb. I have a 33-year-old Quarter Horse who can't eat hay to stay warm, so I do blanket him.
- I blanket if the temperature is below 10 degrees F or 15 degrees F and windy.
- I have blanketed if the temperature is in the single digits or below but this year, I have relied strictly on ensuring they have hay in front of them at all times and they are doing great. If it were single digits with wind, I would blanket. I have found fully stuffed hay nets do the trick without wasting any hay. They all hate wearing blankets and try to rub them off on trees when I have used them in the past! No worries about the day getting warmer and having them get too warm. Nature knows best (most of the time).
- At Blue Barn Farm, we do blanket our horses. Several are older and need some extra warmth, but the main reason is to help keep them clean. Makes grooming a much easier chore without the mud that we are usually presented with, even with a blanket on! We do change blankets from sheets to medium to heavy weights depending on the temperatures. If anyone would be interested in blanket cleaning and repair contact Stephanie Dobiss. Almost any destruction of a blanket can be fixed, so don't throw it away! 10% off washing for 3+ blankets.
- All of my horses live outside in paddocks 24x7 with 3 sided shelters and access to hay at all times. I do not blanket my minis because they are very fat and furry. I do blanket my elderly horses and hard keepers to help them maintain weight over the winter. I clip the horses that get sweaty when I ride, so they also get blanketed. I keep lightweight blankets or sheets on them even when it gets warmer because it cuts down on my grooming time. I have to say all my horses seem to fully enjoy wearing their blankets and don't generally damage them. This article pretty well sums up my way of thinking about blanketing:
<https://www.facebook.com/michelle.schultz.336/posts/10160131274458420>.