



Kentucky Derby

VOCABULARY

BACKSIDE: area away from the grandstand side of the track, usually where the stables are located. It often includes sleeping rooms, a kitchen and recreation areas for stable employees.

BIT: a bar that goes in the horse's mouth that allows the jockey or rider to have control over the horse, usually made of stainless steel, rubber or aluminum.

BLINKERS: a cup-shaped piece of equipment that limits the horse's vision, especially to the sides. It fits over the horse's head.

BRIDLE: a piece of equipment that fits on a horse's head, the bit and the reins are attached.

COLORS: a Thoroughbred is one of these colors (it may also have white markings): bay (yellow-tan to a bright auburn, with black mane, tail and lower portion of the legs); black; chestnut (red-yellow to golden-yellow); dark bay or brown (brown with areas of tan to a dark brown, with black mane, tail and lower parts of the legs); gray (mix of black and white hairs); roan (mix of red and white or brown and white hairs; or white (all hairs are white, very rare, but not albino).

COLT: male horse under the age of five.

DAM: the female parent of a foal.

DEAD HEAT: the name for a tie in a horse race.

DERBY: a stakes race for three-year-old colts, fillies or geldings; the Kentucky Derby for example.

EXERCISE RIDER: the person who rides the horse during the morning workouts.

FARRIER: the person who puts horseshoes on the horse and trims the hooves.

FILLY: female horse under the age of five.

FOAL: a horse in its first year of life.

FURLONG: an eighth of a mile on the racetrack.

GAIT: the four natural ways a horse moves: walk, trot, canter and gallop.

GELDING: a male horse of any age that has been neutered (not able to reproduce).

GRANDSTAND: area of the racetrack where people sit to watch the races.

GROOM: the person who cares for a horse in a stable; or, to clean and brush a horse.

HALTER: like a bridle, but without a bit attached; used to lead the horse around.

HAND: the unit of measure for the height of a horse; a hand is four inches.

HORSE: a male stallion over the age of five.

HOOF: the name for the horse's foot.

HOT WALKER: person who walks the horse until it is cooled off after its morning workout.

JOCKEY: the person who rides the horse during a race.

LEAD SHANK: a rope or strap attached to the halter or bridle by which a horse is led.

MARE: a female horse over the age of five.

MORNING WORKOUTS: training time for horses to practice being around and running on the race track, usually done early in the morning.

NOMINATION: a payment that is made to the racetrack by the owner of a horse to make a horse eligible to be entered in a stakes race; also called a "subscription".

OAKS: a stakes race for three-year-old fillies; the Kentucky Oaks for example.

PADDOCK: area of the racetrack where the horses are saddled before the race; where the jockey mounts the horse.

POST POSITION: the place in the starting gate from which a horse starts the race.

PURSE: the total money that can be won in a race.

REINS: long straps that are connected to the bit, allowing the jockey to control the horse.

SCHOOLING: introducing young horses to the race track, starting gate and paddock area; teaching them how to behave there, normally done during the morning workouts.

SHADOW ROLL: a piece of equipment worn on the nose that prevents the horse from seeing shadows or anything else on the race surface that might distract it from racing.

SILKS: the jacket and cap worn by a jockey in a race, they indicate who owns the horse.

SIRE: the male parent of a horse.

STAKES: a category of race where the purse is partially made up from nomination and entry fees paid by the owners of the starting horses; the highest level of race.

STALLION: a male horse used for breeding.

STEWARDS: the name for the judges at the racetrack, there are usually three.

STIRRUPS: metal D-shaped rings that hang from the saddle, into which a jockey or rider places his or her feet.

STRIDE: the distance of ground covered by the horse during one complete cycle of steps.

TACK: the rider's racing equipment. The tack room is where the equipment is kept.

THOROUGHBRED: a breed of horse created in England in the early to mid-1700s, the only one bred solely for speed.

TRACK CONDITION: what the racing surface is like because of weather: fast, slow, sloppy, muddy, heavy, or frozen. Horses will often run differently depending on the track condition.

TRAINER: the person who is responsible for preparing the horse to run the best that it can, he or she plans what the horse will do each day in the morning workouts.

TRIPLE CROWN: a series of three races for three year old colts and fillies: the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness Stakes and the Belmont Stakes; run each year during May and June.

TURF: a racetrack that is grass instead of dirt or sand. Some horses run better on turf.

YEARLING: a horse in its second calendar year (all Thoroughbreds turn a year older on January 1).

