

# Foxhunting: Yesterday and Today

Fox-hunting is an ancient sport in which hunters on horseback track and chase a fox. Trained hounds are used to track the quarry through the countryside with trained hounds until the fox is either lost, goes to ground, or, occasionally, is killed. Hunting on horseback began in the Middle Ages; however, during the 16th Century the British developed fox-hunting into the aristocratic sport that it is today.



Foxhunting came to America in the  
1600s.

\*This educational packet is intended for middle school students,  
and may be completed alone or in small groups.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Foxhunting Basics

**Foxhunting is a very organized sport. There is a strict chain of command that anyone who participates in the hunt must observe and respect so that everyone can stay safe and have fun.**

## The Hunt Staff

The **Master** is responsible for the hunt club and makes all preparations and decisions. A day of hunting revolves around the **huntsman**. The huntsman trains the hounds and hunts them during the foxhunt using a hunting horn and various calls to direct the hounds and alert the **field**. A **Field Master's** job is to keep riders at an appropriate distance- close enough to enjoy the hounds in action, yet out of the way of the huntsman. As a member of the field, a rider should pay attention to all members of the hunt staff.

## The Hunting Horse

Horses of all sizes and breeds can make great hunting companions. However, choosing the right horse is the key to enjoying a safe hunt. A good hunting horse is fit, well trained and well mannered, and willing to take jumps. It is important to keep a safe distance between horses in the field, especially at jumps, where a horse may refuse or a rider might fall. Horses that kick out at hounds or other horses are not welcome in the hunting field.

*This rider and his horse are ready for a day on the hunt!*



**Image Title:** Rider and Hounds  
**ID#:** 992.07.0967



# Clothing and Gear

## Foxhunting Attire



Come and see these objects and more in the Foxhunting Exhibit at the International Museum of the Horse!

## Clothing

There is a strict dress code in the sport of foxhunting, and over the centuries, little has changed in the hunting attire. The hunt staff and officials wear red coats, called **Pinks**, and members of the field are expected to wear a dark blue or a black hunting coat.

Everyone wears tall boots, thick breeches, and gloves for protection as well as a white tie, called a stock tie. All members also wear some sort of protective head covering. Traditionally, only masters and hunt staff are allowed to wear the black velvet hunting caps; however, recently many clubs have relaxed this rule and allow anyone to wear a hunting cap.



**Title:** Morning, Going to Cover  
**ID#:** 2010.029.020

## Tack

Foxhunting, like many **equestrian** sports, has a tradition of etiquette and dress code. Older rules of foxhunting are more rigid, yet the basics stay the same. Your horse and his **tack** must be clean and neat and in good condition. The tack should be made out of plain brown leather, but any extra gear needed for the safety or health of your horse is always acceptable.





## Women and Foxhunting

Women have long been a part of foxhunting and over the past few hundred years more and more women have become involved in the sport. As mentioned on the previous page, at hunt women usually wear dark coats and breeches. However, not long ago women wore long skirts, called riding habits, and rode side-saddle. How do you ride a horse in a dress? With breeches on underneath the habit!

In the picture below, Alicia from the Kentucky Horse Park's Breeds of the World Show demonstrates how to sit in a side-saddle. This saddle has two padded horns, called a leaping horn, which allows a rider to jump side-saddle.

In 1914 women began riding astride rather than sidesaddle. Then, by 1932 half of women riders were riding astride. Why the change? The answer is convenience. Riding cross-saddle was cheaper and less trouble than riding side-saddle. Also, even the best side-saddle riders had difficulty getting their horse to jump fences straight without one leg on each side of the horse.

Come to the KHP to see shows featuring many breeds of horses, like Mennold the Friesian!



# Compare and Contrast



**Title:** In For a Brush  
**ID#:** 2010.029.019



Image from Rolex Three Day Event, 2013  
Photo by: Jim Shambhu

What sporting equipment remains the same in these two images?	What differences in sporting equipment (for horse <i>and</i> rider) do you see in these images?

Can you think of any more reasons for these changes, other than the ones discussed in this packet? \_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary

- **Hounds**- In foxhunting, the dogs in the hunt pack are always called hounds, and they are usually bred specifically for foxhunting.
- **Quarry**- an animal that is chased by a hunter and hounds
- **Going to Ground**- when a fox has gone into a foxhole in the earth
- **Aristocratic**- socially exclusive
- **Master**- The final authority at the hunt
- **Huntsman**- a member of the hunt that cares for and directs the hounds, the hunt centers around the huntsman
- **Field**- the riders that are following the hunt on horseback
- **Field Master**- a hunt member who keeps the field in order
- **Equestrian**- adj. relating to horse riding
- **Tack**- Equipment used in horse riding
- **Pinks**- men's red foxhunting coats were named for the tailor Mr. Pink of Jermyn Street, London, England.

## Vocabulary Word Search

*Directions: Find all the vocabulary words that are listed above.*

H A Q M H D R B I X V V R E F  
V G P B L P I N K S V A D Q R  
E W Y E F E E H U Y X N M U E  
D G I I L Z X Y C Q U D V E T  
X F F G O B A O B O Q E Q S S  
J A R I S T O C R A T I C T A  
Y I P F E K A G D Y I F W R M  
B R L T W L O P H I N F Z I C  
O G R R A T D U U K D T K A A  
Z M Q A G C N M P X D S H N D  
L A C N U T K U A S D N U O H  
S S I R S Q K X L S A C F S R  
S O P M E Y M Z E P T Q D V N  
G P A N A Z C O X V Q E A J E  
N N T D A Q S U S T A E R U C

Word Search created by

[www.puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com](http://www.puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com)





## Writing Prompt: Reflection

Use the knowledge you have gained from the information and images in this packet to write a letter about your experiences to a friend or family member that has never been foxhunting. Imagine that you have recently been on your first foxhunt. What did you see and learn? What do you think about the sport of foxhunting? Use at least two complex and two compound sentences in your letter.