

WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

It takes a village to look after a pony. But who would you call in his time of need?

2 You notice your pony's been quidding (dropping food out of his mouth) for a few days. Who do you call?

- A. The saddle fitter
- B. The nutritionist
- C. The equine dental technician

Quidding is often a sign that there's something up with your pony's teeth. Your EDT would be a logical first port of call, or your vet if that's who you use for your pony's dentistry.

3 You notice your saddle keeps slipping to the right when you're riding, and your pony seems agitated. Whose help do you need?

- A. The vet
- B. The equine behaviourist
- C. The saddle fitter

Chances are your pony's due a check-up with the saddle fitter. You should book an appointment with them twice a year, but if your pony's growing or changing in muscle tone due to changing workload, he may need his saddle adjusted more often.

4 Your pony seems to be piling on the pounds, even though you ride him regularly. Who'd be the best person to help you make a plan to slim him down?

- A. The physio
- B. The nutritionist
- C. The bit specialist

A nutritionist is the perfect person to help you formulate a plan to get your pony at optimum weight. You can either invite them to your yard, where they can body condition score him and weigh him on a portable weighbridge, or have a phone call to chat about what might be the best solution.

1 Your pony comes in from the field lame on one leg. He was shod before he was turned out this morning. Who's your first port of call?

- A. The vet
- B. The farrier
- C. The physio

The clue is that he was shod earlier that day. It's probably likely that he has a bit of sole pressure, or a new shoe is making him a bit uncomfortable. The best thing to do is ask the farrier to return as soon as possible then monitor the lameness for the next few days. If it still doesn't go away, call your vet to investigate.

5 Lately, your pony's been displaying some tricky ridden behaviour, such as bucking and napping when you get on. Who do you consult? (Tick all that apply)

- A. The vet
- B. The saddle fitter
- C. Your riding instructor
- D. The physio

If your pony's displaying behaviour under saddle that isn't like him, the first thing you should do is get him checked over to make sure pain or discomfort isn't the cause. Your vet, saddle fitter and physio should work in conjunction to make sure there are no problems on their end. Then, if your pony's given the all-clear, you can work with your instructor to tackle the issue as a behavioural one.

7 You're beginning to have problems loading your pony into the trailer. Who might be able to help?

- A. The vet
- B. The saddle fitter
- C. The equine behaviourist

Loading issues are often psychological, and there are a variety of ways to retrain your pony calmly and kindly to load. A behaviourist is a great person to ask, as they'll have many techniques they can try, and understand all about how your pony thinks.

8 You notice a new lump on your pony's cheek. He doesn't seem bothered by it but you're not sure what to do. Who do you ask for help?

- A. The vet
- B. Your yard manager
- C. The osteopath

As long as your pony doesn't seem in pain or uncomfortable, a lump could just be a bug bite or grass gland. Your yard manager or an experienced horse person should be able to help advise you on how to manage it short term, but keep an eye on how it progresses and, if it gets worse over the next few days, consult your vet.

6 One evening, you get a call from your yard manager who says that your pony's displaying signs of colic. Who do you phone?

- A. The farrier
- B. The vet
- C. The nutritionist

If your horse starts to display any signs of colic, such as rolling, sweating, a high temperature or kicking his stomach, you should call your vet immediately and ask for an emergency call out.

WELL DONE!

0-3 BOTTOM OF THE PILE

Oh dear, you need to brush up on your pony expert knowledge by reading more issues of PONY mag! Be sure to ask your yard manager or instructor for advice before making any decisions to do with your pony's health while you're still learning.

4-7 MIDDLE OF THE PACK

You're slowly getting to grips with your pony care know-how. Just do a little more detailed research on the experts your pony needs and why, then you'll be top of the class soon!

8-10 TOP OF THE CLASS

Wow – fab work pony care pro! Your pony's so lucky to have an amazing and knowledgeable owner like you who knows exactly which expert to call and when! Well done!

I SCORED... /10

