

HAM SOLUTIONS LLC
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We are located in the Bitterroot Valley of Southwestern Montana, approximately one hour South of Missoula which is the closest major airport. Participants will need to arrive on Sunday and depart on Saturday as we will begin the training program Monday morning and Friday is a full day in the mountains. We can offer customizable instruction if there is an interest or need to move more specialized loads with livestock, or any other specific training objectives. For the purposes of this course, prior horse riding experience is required. Below is our basic course overview.

DAY 1 - Horsemanship, Mulemanship & Packing 101

Class Discussion

- Animal behavior and psychology & the differences between horses and mules
- Safety considerations for horses/mules and humans
- Getting along with mules and horses
- Basic riding skills refresher, DOs and DON'Ts for safety
- Demonstration of building loads and the most common/useful knots & hitches for cargoing your loads
- The use of panniers vs. mantled loads
- Building balanced loads

Hands on Packing & Riding instruction at the hitch rail & in the arena

- Proper fitting of riding and pack saddles
- Saddling riding stock and riding refresher in the round pen/arena
- Packing/loading your stock using a variety of knots & hitches
- Tying stock together for safe travel through varied terrain
- Practice leading individual animals and strings of multiple pack stock from the ground and in the saddle

DAY 2 - Review & Practice Day 1 Skills

Class Discussion

- Riding in the mountains and navigating obstacles
- Horse/mule care including but not limited to feeding/nutrition, first aid, stock containment & management in the backcountry

After lunch, the classroom moves to the mountains with gear and livestock for an afternoon of hands-on packing and riding skills practice while leading pack stock on a mountain trail. Upon return from the day ride we will prep for the pack trip.

DAY 3 - Load trailers with gear and livestock and head to the mountains for 3 days and 2 nights of full immersion packing & riding instruction in the Bitterroot mountains.

Upon arrival at the trailhead we will saddle the horses and mules, load the pack stock and ride to our first camp spot, navigating packing challenges along the way as they present themselves.

DAY 4 - Break camp, load up and ride to second camp. After setting camp we might explore the area if time and weather allows.

DAY 5 - Break camp, load up and ride back to trailhead, followed by basic recovery upon return the facility.