

BASIC TECHNIQUE



1 The first layer of the bandage is rolled cotton, "chased" with a thin gauze bandage so it won't slip down the leg. Unroll the two simultaneously, moving from the forearm down to the top of the hoof and keeping the wrap just tight enough to hold the materials up. Finish by wrapping the extra gauze back up the leg.



2 The next layer is more rolled cotton, paired with self-sticking veterinary wrap to compress the padding slightly.



Note: At this point, you may think the leg is stabilized, but even a bandage this thick still allows the horse's knee to bend slightly.

3 Now apply a single, tight layer of veterinary wrap to strongly compress the bandage. When this wrap is tight enough, it will take on a shiny appearance, and the bandager's hands, arms and shoulders may feel sore.



7 Once the pillows are covered, add yet another layer of veterinary wrap. (Here we ran out of white and switched to blue on the lower half of the leg.) Notice that the foot is also covered; this helps to immobilize the entire leg. By now our bandage is about 10 inches in diameter and sounds like a ripe melon when thumped. But we aren't finished yet.



8 Splints are a critical element in the Robert Jones bandage. Here we have selected two lengths of wood from a pile of scraps, making sure that the one for the inside of the leg is slightly shorter, so it won't poke into Rococo's chest. You may need to cut your splints to the appropriate size.



9 To anchor each splint in place, wrap elastic tape around the upper end of the stick and continue taping once around the leg. Trim the end of the tape and tuck it under the stick so the splint can't slide up, down or sideways. Secure the lower end of the splint the same way. Attach inner and outer splints separately for extra support.



4 Pillows make a perfect next layer for the bandage. Easily compressed into a firm padding, they dramatically restrict the movement of the leg. Place two pillows around the top of the leg, and secure them with just enough elastic tape to hold them in place.



5 Now add two more pillows to the bottom of the leg, again holding them in place with elastic tape. It's important to overlap the two sets of pillows (see arrow). Any gap in the padding will give the leg a place to bend.



6 Cover the pillow layer with several plain Ace bandages pulled very tight. At this point, it takes a lot of pulling to add the required tension to the bandage.



10 Next, cover both splints—first with a regular shipping bandage wrapped over the elastic tape, then with more elastic tape applied over the full length of the leg.



11 The final layer is veterinary wrap, pulled as tight as possible over the entire bandage. This last layer keeps everything together and increases the holding power of the splints.



12 Once the leg is stabilized, the horse can be carefully moved a short distance. Most horses will walk willingly—albeit awkwardly—in the makeshift cast. Ideally, you will need to take only a few steps to load the horse onto a trailer for the trip to an emergency clinic. The veterinarian at the clinic will slice off the bandage with a razor before treating the injury. ■