

Dune and Shoreline Horseback Riding Tips

Bring:

- **Water** for you and your horses and a water bucket. There will be no water on site available.
- **Manure fork and muck bucket to pick up your hay and manure in the Silver Lake State Park ORV parking area.** (There will be a manure collection trailer available.)
- Extra clothes/boots if you get wet.
- Dress for current weather conditions. Layers of clothes. It is often 10 degrees colder and windy by the Lake Michigan shoreline.
- Helmet or if you wear a hat, be sure it has a stampede string due to possible windy shoreline conditions.

Tips to prepare for the ride...

- Practice new experiences with your horse and build trust to have good control of your horse before exposing them to the shoreline.
- Condition your horse to be ready for a 10-mile ride. If possible, condition your horse in sand.
- Consider practicing walking through water on trails before shoreline riding.

Tips for ride day...

- Consider keeping a halter and lead rope on your horse.
- Consider riding with another seasoned shoreline rider.
- Walking or “shuffling” is best when climbing up the dunes. Try to avoid loping or cantering uphill as these gaits can cause your horse to dig deeper in the sand and be more strenuous. Take breaks to let your horse catch their breath as needed.
- Consider riding parallel along the shoreline and not directly into the water. There is enough beach depth that you do not need to go into the water.
- Horses prefer solid ground. Swirling sands and crashing waves can be challenging for them.
- Be prepared your horse may make startling movements or pivot when they are near the water.
- Some horses really like the water, and they may start to paw at it. If so, encourage them to move on so they do not roll.

Enjoy your Michigan Great Lakes Shoreline Horseback Riding experience!