

AMERICA'S  
HORSE

*the* TYING  
MECATE



*How to get a bosal out of the tack trunk and into use.*

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**By Patrick Hooks**

*From the America's Horse library*

FOR THE MOST PART, THE BOSAL HAS BEEN A VERY GOOD TOOL left to gather dust in the tack room, chest or trunk. That's usually because the instructions to tie the mecate line onto the bosal weren't in the Webster's dictionary, or because a fellow might have made the mistake of untying it while trying to adjust it to a different horse.

Let me take a shot at sharing the way I was taught to tie a mecate line onto a bosal, making what is called a true hackamore, known in Spanish as jaquima. But first, let me tell you a little story just in case someone might think I was born under a chuckwagon with an abundant knowledge of knot-tying skills.

One time, some newlyweds had purchased a country ham to have for the Christmas season. They had given high dollar for the ham, and the husband was really looking forward to sharing his family's way of making red-eye gravy. Likewise, the young wife was very anxious to share her family's recipe for cooking a championship breakfast. As the wife was preparing the ham to go into the cooker, she pulled out a butcher knife and began to hack away at the end of the ham.

The husband in despair asked "What in the @&%#\* are you doing to my ham?" She replied, "Well for goodness sakes, don't you know that you always cut off the end of the ham before you cook it?"

The husband continued to protest and asked why. So the wife called her mom and asked, "Why do we cut off the end of the ham?" Mom answered, "I don't know; I have been doing it that way for years."

Then Mom called Grandma, and finally, Grandma phoned Great-Grandma and asked, "Mother, why did you always cut off the end of the ham before you cooked it?"

Granny replied, "Well, there's no need to. The only reason I ever did was because my pan was too small!"

So just like these generations of cooks were on the wrong track, I was, too, when it came to tying a hackamore. Fortunately, I had someone share with me how to tie a hackamore the correct way. He was around 90 years old when he taught me, and I bet he was right on.

## Step 1

Begin by turning your bosal just as though you were looking up at your horse. The hanger will be turned down, and the hanger tie will be to your right.



## Step 2

Place the tail of your mecate up through the cheeks of the bosal and leave a short tail hanging just over the heel knot of the bosal.



## Step 3

From your left, bring the mecate line behind the left cheek piece of the bosal and place it over the tail to your right.



## Step 4

Continue now with counter-clockwise wraps onto your bosal (approximately four to five) and pull a loop of mecate line back through the bosal toward the hanger.



## Step 5

Make your loop larger by taking the slack from your mecate line until it is about an arm's length. These are your reins, known in Spanish as brazanda.



## Step 6

Lay your mecate line over and to the left of the set of reins you have formed.

## Step 7

Push the formed reins back slightly toward yourself, forming a set of rabbit ears and run the tail of your mecate line under the first ear then over and through the ear to the right.



## Step 8

Work your knot down tight and pretty, being careful not to have kinks in your reins.

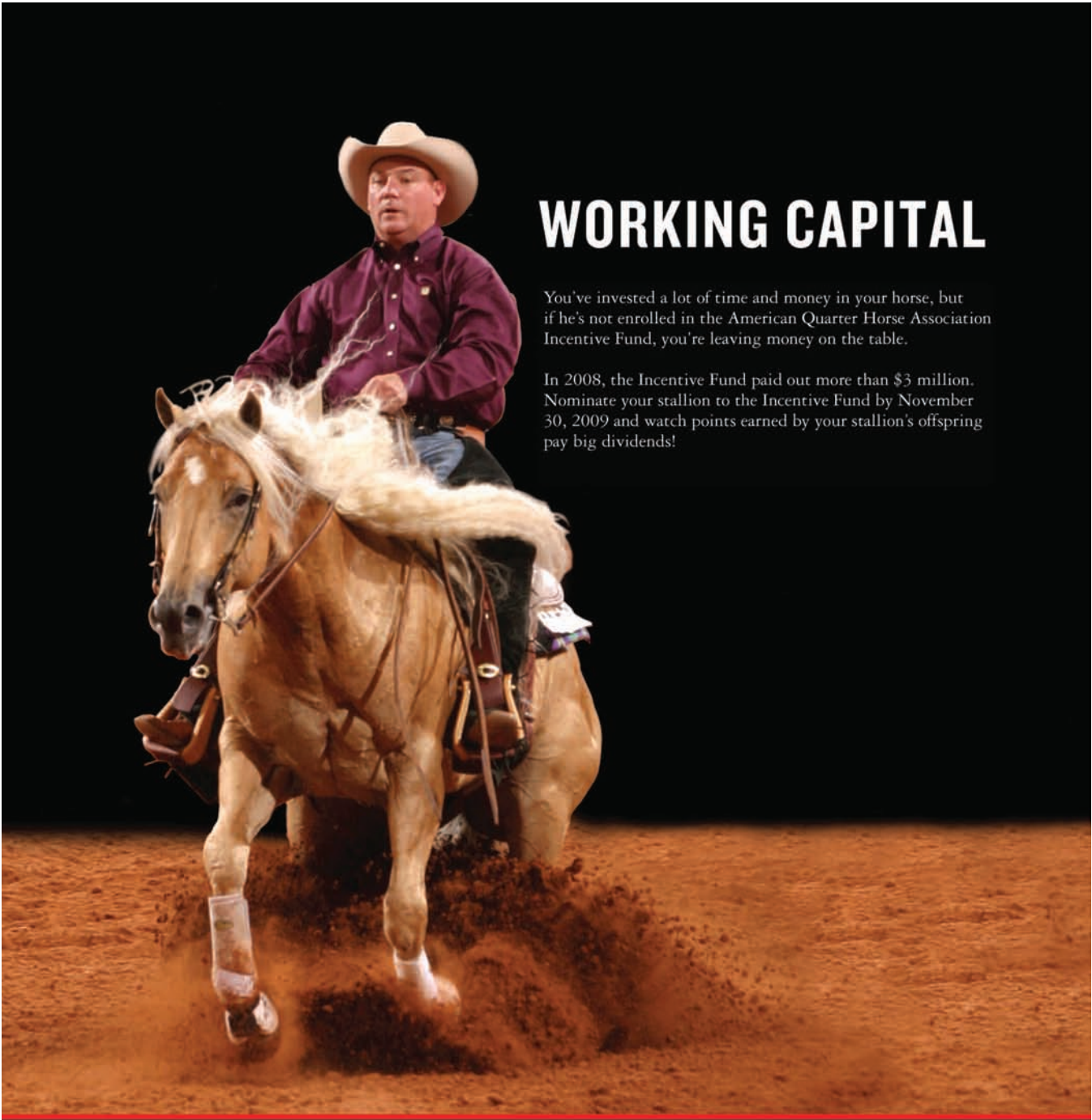


## Step 9

You now have a tied hackamore or jaquima with a mecate and lead-line tie. Tradition says to tie the coiled mecate line to the off side of the saddle fork or a loop pushed up through your belt on your left side, with the remaining slack placed over your saddle horn. To continue your knowledge, look up the term "jaquima to freno" online. You might find a hidden tidbit about training the bridle horse, which starts with the bosal. Or visit (the ask an expert page) to learn more about bridle-horse training. 📖



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