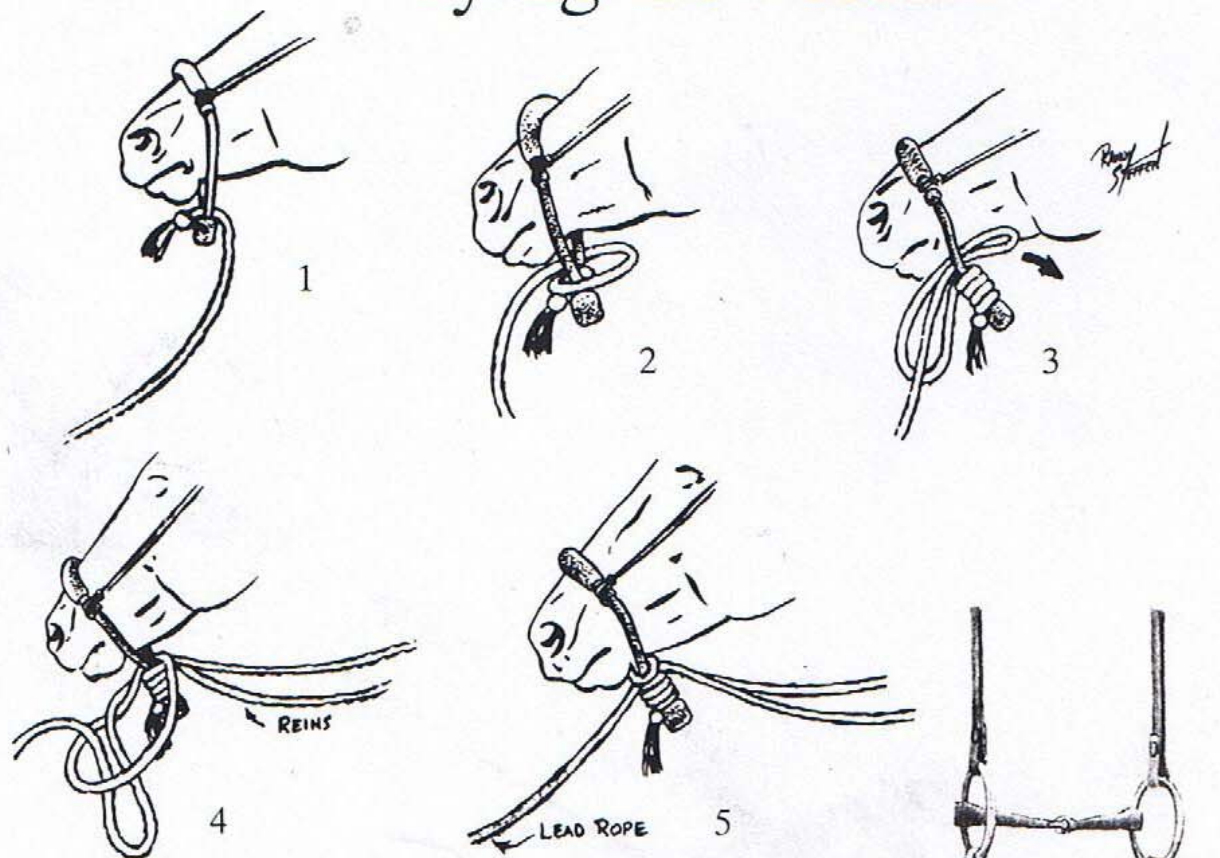


Tying the Mecate



ONE OF the questions we are most frequently asked is, "How do I tie the mecate to a bosal?" Years ago, Randy Steffen illustrated how to do this in a Handy Hint, and we have since mailed out probably a thousand or more photocopies of it. So we have decided to reprint it, especially since Randy's instructions are so easy to follow.

In his original copy, Randy gave credit to Ed Connell, author of *Hackamore Reinsman*, for showing him how to do it. (Connell's book is still being sold by J.M. Capriola Co., 500 Commercial St., Elko, NV 89801; 702-738-5816.)

To tie the mecate, you'll need a hair rope (or other flexible rope about $\frac{5}{8}$ inch in diameter) from 22 to 24 feet long. One end should have a Turk's-head knot and tassel. Follow these drawings step by step . . . adjusting your reins for proper length when you hit step 3 . . . and you'll wind up with a workable set

of reins and lead rope combined. Make as many wraps around the bosal as needed to make it fit correctly, but be careful not to make it too tight. The bosal should be loose enough to drop away from the jaws, giving relief from pressure, when the reins are slacked off.

You can tuck the loose end of the lead rope under your belt so you can grab it if you have the misfortune of being bucked off. That way, your horse can't run off, leaving you afoot. Or, you can coil the lead rope and tie it on the near fork of your saddle until you need it.

Many horsemen like to ride with a mecate and snaffle bit, using slobber straps to attach the mecate to the bit. Here's another illustration showing how to do that.

—WH Editorial Staff

