

READING HIS EARS

The horse's ears and actions are the key to his emotions. He can tell you what he is paying attention to and how he feels by the way he uses his ears and the way he acts. These are some tips on his emotions.

Ears forward but relaxed	Interested in what's in front of him.
Ears turned back but relaxed	Listening to his rider or what is behind him.
Ears pointed stiffly forward	Alarmed or nervous about what is ahead. Looking for danger.
Ears pointed left and right relaxed	Paying attention to the scenery on both sides.
Ears stiffly back	Annoyed or worried about what's behind him. Might kick if annoyed.
Droopy ears	Calm and resting. Horse may be dozing.
Ears flattened against neck	Violently angry, in a fighting mood. May fight, bite, or kick.

Other signs you should notice are:

Tucking tail down tightly	Danger to the rear. Horse may bolt, buck, or kick. Watch out if ears are flattened too.
Switching the tail	Annoyance and irritation. Biting flies, stinging insects, or tickling/bothersome actions of a rider or another horse.
Droopy ears and resting hind leg	Calm and resting. Horse may be dozing – don't wake him by startling him.
Wrinkling up face and swinging head	Threatening gesture of an angry or bossy horse. Watch out for biting or kicking.