

Picket Lines by David Smith

One thing about a picket line is that you need your horse to be trained to be tied. Otherwise the horse will pull on the line. The line should be at least a 5/8 inch diameter and be long enough to be tied between 2 trees. I use a 50-foot 5/8 inch rope. Tree savers are used around the tree to keep the horse from damaging the tree. Tree savers are a must, you can order them from equine supply catalogs such as Horse.com, or you can use an old girth or I use seat belt material made long enough to go around a tree. Knot eliminators are very useful in keeping your horse away from the trees and separating 2 horses on the same line. I recommend learning how to tie a bowline knot for securing the rope to the tree saver. (Google or check You Tube for how to tie the bowline knot.) You can use a Come-A-Long or a ratchet strap to tighten the rope or you can use a hay knot to pull the rope tight. The tie line should be as high as you can reach and be high enough that your horse can easily walk under it. It helps if you are short to bring a step ladder or stool to get your picket line up high enough. The lead rope that you tie your horse to the tie line should be at least 12 inches off the ground when you pull down on the lead when it is tied to the tie line. Make sure that you tighten the rope morning and evening because it will stretch. Do not saddle your horse or leave him tied to the tie line while saddled. Keep everything high and tight.