

## Introduction

It excites me that mules are capable of excelling at all riding disciplines; they have proven to be outstanding as show, work or trail animals. Mules that perform and surpass at higher levels in their show career are due to their background and the appropriate amount of training they have received. Watching well trained animals is proof that their owners, trainers and handlers are committed to delivering a quality training program for their performance mules. Truly, professionally trained mules leave a lasting impression on an audience.



Unfortunately, not all mules receive the correct and appropriate training program that meets his individual needs. Trail and recreational mules are often overlooked in the level of schooling that they actually do receive. Novice trainers and riders do not recognize a problem until the animal bolts, or bucks out of fear. Then a particular problem is addressed, yet the mule's lack of confidence is still not dealt with.

It takes quality time and patience to develop a confident animal that is able to calmly ride through trail challenges. Some training techniques that are used by novice trainers, are harsh simply because they think it is fitting to the mule's training. Some trainers resort to "wearing down" a mule prior to working with the animal as a sure way to achieve results. This is not mule training. Lunging a mule into exhaustion in hopes to wearing down his spirit, to have him complete certain tasks and exercises is not proper schooling or humane training. It should be noted that riding, schooling, showing, competing and working a mule under saddle is to be viewed as an accomplishment and not as something to be conquered.

Not every horse trainer is suitable for the job of training mules simply because of the time restraints and patience that is required. It is also difficult to train for a client that uses the 30-60-90 day schooling time table as a reference point, as this doesn't necessarily work for mules.

This book was written with the trainer, handler and mule rider in mind. It should clear up misrepresentations about the mule's reputation and will enable you to have a realistic and approachable relationship with your mule.

I enjoy assisting each and everyone of you to reach your riding and training goals, and welcome you to contact me through my web site, [WWW.EVERYCOWGIRLSDREAM.COM](http://WWW.EVERYCOWGIRLSDREAM.COM).

I look forward to hearing from you. -Cindy K. Roberts

