



Australian Stock Horse
SOCIETY

THE AUSTRALIAN STOCK HORSE SOCIETY LIMITED

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OFFICIAL HORSE BUYER'S GUIDE

ABOUT THE SOCIETY - The Australian Stock Horse Society was established in Scone, NSW in 1971 and is today the largest organisation of recreation/work horses in the country. It has 9,500 members and more than 170,000 registered horses. The Society's mission is to maintain the heritage and to promote the bloodlines and high performances of the Australian Stock Horse among equestrian activities and the public.

BUYING A HORSE - People of all ages can enjoy horse ownership and often find it a very rewarding experience, being able to participate in a wide variety of activities, including: shows, campdrafts, pleasure rides, polocrosse, etc. With the purchase of your first horse is the commencement of a new experience. Your purchase creates a lifetime of horseback experiences, which requires equal amounts of education and dedication.

- **Why do I want a horse?**
- **Categorise your riding skills.**
- **What maintenance and equipment is needed?**
- **Where to find a horse for purchase.**
- **What to look for when inspecting a horse.**
- **Questions to ask the vendor.**
- **What price should I pay?**
- **When closing the deal.**



WHY DO I WANT A HORSE?

This section will give you a guide and help you define a goal for your horse experience. Your goal will set the framework for your buying decision. Different activities, rider skills and experience require different types of horses. Your overall goal is the foundation for your buying decision.

What activities would I like to participate in with a horse?

Showing, leisure riding, campdrafting, polocrosse, etc.

How much can I afford to spend on the purchase of a horse (including stabling, equipment, feed, training, floating, veterinarian, etc)?

Set yourself a budget for each aspect in relation to the horse and its needs.

How much do I know about horses and riding?

Am I a beginner and do I need extra instruction or assistance from knowledgeable horse people?

Will I ride the horse every day?

Can I devote time for riding, feeding and general horse care?

To obtain a perspective on Stock Horse activities, visit an Australian Stock Horse event in your area. After watching the competition, try to determine the type and ability of the horse you desire. Talk to other members of the Society to gain contacts of breeders, trainers, farriers, etc. Be realistic when evaluating your goals.

CATEGORISE YOUR RIDING SKILLS

Beginner, Intermediate or Experienced, your skill level will indicate the kind of horse that best suits your needs, ie:

Beginner (inexperienced or basic riding skills) or rider under 13 years.

- A mature aged gentle gelding is usually best suited to an inexperienced or recreational rider.
- The horse may have mastered a chosen discipline and would suit a rider with basic riding skills.
- The horse should be relaxed and not show signs of nervousness – anxiety, agitation, jumpy, buck, paw, bite, kick or refuse to comply.
- A beginner's horse should be at least 10 years old with 3 years' solid experience in the chosen discipline.

Intermediate (medium level riding skills with a few years' experience) or rider under 17 years.

- These equestrians have more freedom of choice, but the rider should feel competent to continue the horse's education.

- The horse may not necessarily have had years of experience but should be suitable for the desired discipline and show potential. The horse should have the basic skills, ie, walk, trot, canter on both leads, change leads and stop easily.
- The horse may show some signs of tension when taken to initial outings – anxiety, jumpy, pawing, whinnying, etc. The horse should not buck, bite, kick or refuse to comply.
- An intermediate's horse should be at least 5 years old with some experience in the chosen discipline



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Experienced (advanced riding skills with several years' experience).

- These equestrians must have many years of experience and have the time to work and train a horse every day.
- These riders should be competent to control the horse in any circumstances and have the knowledge to educate the horse for a chosen discipline.
- The horse may show signs of nervousness.
- The horse may be of any age and may lack the basic skills.

WHAT MAINTENANCE AND EQUIPMENT IS NEEDED?

- A place for the horse to be paddocked or stabled and a dry, clean room to keep feed and tack.
- Regular exercise in a place safe for riding.
- Helmet, Saddle, Bridle, Rugs, Brushes, Halters, Leads, etc.
- Farrier - horse shod approximately every 5 weeks.
- Veterinarian - when needed.
- Transport of horse to events or activities.
- Trainer.
- Horse feed merchant.
- Membership to appropriate organisations - horse breed or event membership.
- Friends with similar interests to assist with feed and care of horse.

WHERE TO FIND A HORSE FOR PURCHASE

Always remember that the purchase of any item, including a horse, is usually buyer beware. Always seek assistance from an experienced horse person if not sure.

- ❖ **Breeders** - Breeders normally have a large selection of horses on hand and are one of the best sources for purchasing a horse. You will have an opportunity to view a number of horses representing an array of ages, levels of training and dispositions. Additionally, Breeders offer the chance to discuss pedigrees and performance. The Breeders' Directory in the Australian Stock Horse Journal is a great place to locate breeders.
- ❖ **Owners** - Most owners will allow prospective buyers to "try" a horse, giving you the opportunity to see if the horse is suitable for your level of riding and the chosen discipline. Be wary if an owner will not agree to this. The owner can also provide the horse's performance history and some helpful information regarding training and habits.
- ❖ **Sales** - Many breeders, owners and trainers can be met at sales and it is an ideal opportunity to gain contacts and information on horses for sale. Sales are geographically widespread and offer horses of different ages, training levels and prices. A variety of horses may be offered, including young horses, mares, geldings and stallions. Sales are an excellent opportunity to compare prices and buy a suitable horse. It is a good idea to arrive prior to the sale to talk to the owner, as there is little time to view a horse being sold at auction. Prices at sales depend on market demand for certain bloodlines and the potential of the horse being offered. Horses are usually available from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines.
- ❖ **Horse Trainers** - Prospective buyers can contact professionals like trainers, instructors, coaches and horse breakers to serve as an agent when purchasing a horse, in addition to training a horse and instructing the client. The trainer may help locate a horse that best fits your goals by discussing your needs and your skills. They will evaluate your skills as a rider and give you information on your chosen discipline and help you locate and negotiate a prospective purchase. Professionals may charge a commission for helping you find a horse. You should always check the Professional's references before entering into an agreement and discuss how much you can afford for purchasing a horse, training, feed, agistment, veterinary care, etc.
- ❖ **Other locations** - Horses may be advertised in the Classified section of the Australian Stock Horse Journal, the local newspaper or a horse magazine. Horses "For Sale" advertisements are often found at the local veterinary clinic or saddlery store. By attending your chosen horse sport, you may seek the opportunity to talk to other horse owners - they can often refer you to the owner of a horse for sale that may suit your needs.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN INSPECTING A HORSE

A horse's conformation, or its physical appearance, is one of the most important points in selecting a horse. The reason? Horses with less-than-perfect conformation may encounter health problems as they mature or when stressed through competition. It is often assumed that horses with several year's seasoning and past performance have acceptable conformation, but your objective with selection should always be to find the best conformed horse possible, regardless of past performance. Balance, structural

correctness, degree of muscling, and breed/sex characteristics are the four main traits to evaluate with rating conformation. Balance is the single most important factor, influenced almost entirely by skeletal structure.

- ❖ **Balance** - A horse that lacks structural correctness and fundamental soundness is often poorly balanced. Slope of the shoulder is the most critical point in relation to balance. When the shoulder becomes more vertically sloping (straighter), other structural angles become straight, resulting in a horse with a straight stifle and pasterns. A horse with a shoulder that slopes too much usually has weak, sloping pasterns that allow the fetlocks to hit the ground as the horse moves.
- ❖ **Temperament** - The correct frame of mind is probably the most important evaluation, which allows both you and the horse to realise your true potential. Although most Australian Stock Horses have been selectively bred for generations you must still place temperament on the selection criteria. Most Australian Stock Horses have a good temperament, and more often than not have inherited a gentle nature. Beginners should ride horses that are co-operative so the rider does not lose confidence. Observe the horse being caught, handled, groomed, saddled, etc. Any signs of nervousness, anxiety, agitation, jumpy, bucking, pawing, biting, kicking or refusal to comply should be considered as faults on the part of the horse.
- ❖ **Movement** - The next step is evaluating the horse's movement. When selecting a horse for performance events, movement is an important evaluation. A horse should follow the rider's commands: walk, trot, canter and accept both leads. The horse should stop easily and back up when pressure is applied to the bit as well as yield to leg aids.
 - The walk must be alert with a stride of reasonable length in keeping with the horse's size.
 - The trot should be square, balanced and with straight, forward movement of the hooves.
 - The canter should be a natural, three-beat stride and appear relaxed and smooth.

You may evaluate the horse while being demonstrated by the owner. The horse's temperament during riding is largely dependent upon the rider's skills. The horse with little or no resistance from the bit should perform all requirements willingly. Once the owner has completed the demonstration to your approval, ask if you may perform these tasks yourself.

If a horse meets your approval through the evaluation process and seems like a good prospect, you may want to arrange a pre-purchase Veterinarian examination or seek a second opinion from a qualified horse person. You are not only buying a horse, but a relationship with the horse. All horses have different personalities, and it is important to find a horse that best complements your personality.

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE VENDOR

- How often has the horse been ridden during the past year?
- What training has the horse received and in what areas?
- Has the horse been ridden by a beginner, intermediate or experienced rider?
- When the horse has not been ridden regularly or turned out, how easy is the horse to handle?
- What kind of tack has been used on the horse?
- What type of feed and roughage does the horse eat and what is its feeding schedule?
- When was the horse last wormed and how often has the horse been shod?
- Is the horse quiet to shoe or clip?
- Does the horse have any vices or habits? (ie, windsucking, cribbing, biting, float loading)
- During the past year, has the horse needed any veterinarian treatment?
- Has the horse ever had colic or lameness?
- How does the horse behave in different surroundings or in traffic.
- How often has the horse been taken away from home and what was its behaviour like?
- Why is the horse for sale?
- How much experience do you have in the horse industry and in your chosen discipline?

WHAT PRICE SHOULD I PAY?

- The price of a horse depends on bloodlines, age, experience, type, conformation, etc.
- Australian Stock Horses regularly sell between \$1,500 and \$80,000. A small percentage of horses have been known to be sold for higher amounts.
- Approved Sales indicate that the majority of Australian Stock Horses sell between \$2,500 and \$30,000.
- Always check the horse's temperament, ability and training before considering a price.

WHEN CLOSING THE DEAL

- Agree on a purchase price with the Vendor.
- Discuss delivery.
- Check that the horse's registration papers match the horse in question.
- Refrain from ongoing agreements with the Vendor, ie first foal, competition rights.
- Pay by Bank Cheque or Cash.
- Have the Vendor sign the Transfer Application and return it to the Society with the Certificate of Registration.
- Contact The Australian Stock Horse Society Limited regarding membership and transfer of ownership to enable you to be eligible to compete in ASH events.



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PURCHASER NOTICE

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- The information contained on the registration is based on details provided to The Australian Stock Horse Society Limited by Members for the purpose of the Society's record keeping. Whilst exercising due care, the Society is unable to guarantee the accuracy or authenticity of such information and cannot accept any responsibility. Registration does not constitute proof of legal or beneficial ownership of any horse.
- The Australian Stock Horse Society, its Members, Branches or related corporations, officers, agents and employees, for themselves and for those for whom they act, while exercising due care, have provided all information without responsibility and give no guarantee whatsoever as to its accuracy.
- The Society is unable to provide any guarantees as to the suitability of any horse and purchasers must rely on their own enquiries in this regard. Persons making enquiries in relation to suitability should include: health, soundness, temperament, performance, ability, fertility and the like.
- Horses may be offered for sale with all faults, if any, including addiction to windsucking; symptoms of being a wobbler or roarer; cryptorchids, visible deformity of the genitalia and the like. Horses or their progeny which, in the opinion of the Board, are rigs or objectionable horses, and have already been accepted for registration or recording, may be deregistered by the Board.
- The purchaser is responsible for inspection of any horse prior to sale and such inspection should include advice by any qualified person, if deemed necessary.
- Any person, at his or her own expense, may arrange a veterinary inspection (including drug testing) with the vendor prior to the horse being purchased. The purchaser and vendor should agree on conditions of sale prior to a veterinary inspection being conducted. The conditions of sale may include: first offer, price, delivery, veterinary or test results that render sale null and void, payment deadline and the like.
- The vendor has the right to allow or decline any request to ride or handle any horse prior to the sale. Any person who rides or handles a horse at the sale does so entirely at their own risk and the Society, its Members or Branches do not assume or accept any responsibility or liability for any accident, damage, injury to horses, riders or handlers, beasts, ground, spectators, or any other person or property whatsoever. Any person requesting to ride or handle any horse must be suitably attired for riding a horse.
- Comments of the vendor relating to horses for sale are based on the vendor's information. The Australian Stock Horse Society Limited is unable to establish the accuracy or authenticity of such comments and any purchaser should rely on their own enquiries in this regard.
- Further advice on purchasing an Australian Stock Horse is available on the Society's website www.ashs.com.au - Horses for Sale page, Buyer's Guide.
- The Society recommends any persons wishing to purchase an Australian Stock Horse avail themselves of the information provided and seek advice from qualified persons if deemed necessary.
- Any dispute in relation to any statements, guarantees or warranties offered by the vendor shall be against the vendor only. Any dispute of this nature will be for the vendor and purchaser to resolve and is not the responsibility of The Australian Stock Horse Society.
- The purchaser should investigate with any past or present owner whether semen or embryos has been collected, commercial or private use, how many retained and conditions for sale or use. These conditions are between the parties involved and are not for the Society's involvement or consideration.
- NOTE: Any disputes of a contractual or financial nature in relation to the breeding or ownership of a horse are not for the Society's consideration. Members in such situations are advised to seek legal advice if unable to resolve the issues.

WARNING - HORSE IDENTIFICATION VERIFICATION

- The Society recommends that members view the horse's Certificate of Registration prior to sale and verify the horse's identity - colour, markings, brands, microchip and identifying marks with the horse being sold. Horses may be REJECTED from events (including Approved Sales) if the Society Inspectors responsible for checking the identity of the horse has detected any of the following:
- The white markings described on the horse's registration papers are not visible for the specified body part on the horse presented for inspection.
- The horse has white markings that are not indicated on the horse's registration papers for the specific body part.
- None of the brands described on the horse's registration papers are clearly visible on the horse presented, horse must be microchipped.
- The visible brand on the horse presented is not identical to the brand described on the horse's registration papers.
- The Society Inspectors must REJECT a horse from an ASH event (including an Approved ASH Sale) if the identity of the horse is not acceptable under the Brands, Microchip and Markings Policies. The Brands, Microchip and Markings Policies stipulate the Society's requirements and situations whereby a horse would be REJECTED from an ASH event.

GENETIC DISORDER TESTING (OLWS, HYPP, HERDA, PSSM1, MH, GBED)

- All Sire Registered stallions must be tested for Genetic Disorders by 1st August 2019 or will be suspended. Results are noted on the horse's registration.

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Complete ASH Rules & Regulations are available on the Society's Website