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## Information on Selling a Horse

The information below is a guide for people looking to sell their horse or pony.

The decision to sell a horse is not usually taken lightly. There are often various reasons- the horse may be unsuitable, outgrown, rider given up, financial reasons and such like.

One option to owners in the short term is to loan out the horse or pony for a period of time, retaining ownership until a suitable time as when they can take the horse back on. However this may not be suitable for all and many owners look to sell their horse or pony in order to fund a newer, more suitable horse so the following information should be of help to you.

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### Advertising a Horse or Pony

- **Where to Advertise** A good place to start is to spread the word around your local horsey friends, contact local riding clubs or tell your instructor. Personal recommendations are always a preferred method of buying a horse, particularly if the vendor of the horse is known personally to you or an associate.

If you are advertising a particular type or level of horse or pony you may need to advertise further afield. Many equine websites offer free advertising and many national equestrian magazine and websites offer advertising online and in print for reasonable advertisement fees. Keep your advertising to a minimum initially and keep a budget in mind with regards to your advertising costs. Try to find the best priced advertisements for maximum exposure.

- **Pricing the Horse** The pricing of the horse can be a tricky element of selling. If you are in no rush to sell then you can try for a higher price as you can bide your time to find a buyer prepared to pay it. If you need to sell your horse quickly you will be better to put a lower price so as to find a seller quickly. Always price your horse a little higher than the amount you would like to take to allow for negotiation.

Decide what will be included with the sale of the horse and factor this into your price. There is no point selling your horse for £1000 and then accompanying it with a handmade saddle that cost you the same. It is better to have two prices in mind for your horse- one with tack and rugs and one without. Alternatively offer the horse only and negotiations can be made at a later date for any tack and equipment

- **The Advert** Take your time compiling your adverts. Try to keep wording to a minimum and at the same time give as much necessary information as possible about the horse. This could include:
  - Age or year of birth,
  - Breed, registration and parentage details if known,

- Size or potential size,
- Brief details of competition, ability and past successes,
- Brief details as to the nature of the horse- i.e good to handle, good to shoe, hacks alone, lives out etc,
- Reason for sale,
- Contact details

Include at least one good quality picture if possible. Many adverts have head shots which may look pretty but give away little about the horses build, confirmation or ability. Often a picture of the horse 'in action' is the most successful and many potential purchasers would contact for further photos should they wish to see more.

- **Be Honest** It is likely that you will get a lot of responses from potential purchasers asking for further information about the horse. Before you go into too much detail it would be worth trying to find out from them what they are looking for and what their experience is as to determine if you feel your horse would be suitable for them. There is no point in misleading potential purchasers as to the horses ability and experience. Be honest about the horse, its vices, behaviour and quirks. If you mislead potential purchasers you may well end up selling your horse to a home which is unsuitable
- **Use of the Horse** Ensure that in your adverts, and upon contacting potential purchasers that you are clear as to what the horse is suitable for. There is no point in you selling a fit and affiliated sports horse to a lady looking for a quiet cob for hacking, or selling a top class show pony as a first pony. Find out from the potential purchasers as to what they are wanting to use the horse for assess if this meets your horses needs.
- **Choosing the Right Home** Ensure that you do not rush into making a decision to sell. Ensure that you feel the home you sell to is the right home for the horse. Make sure the potential purchasers ride the horse at least two or three times in various situations, such as on the road, in open countryside and so on. Make sure they handle the horse as much as possible on the ground, in the stable and around the yard. You may have a high offer from the wrong buyer or a lower offer from the right buyer- it is up to you to choose where you want your horse to go but do consider the future it would have in the chosen home.

### Viewing of the Horse or Pony

- **The First Meeting** When showing the horse to potential purchasers for the first time it is a good idea for you to leave the horse in the field so they can see it being brought in, rather than standing in the stables all groomed and pretty. They will want to see the horse in a normal daily routine.
- **Observe** Let the potential purchaser watch you handling and grooming the horse and tacking up- get them involved if you can. Watch to see if they are nervous or comfortable with the horse and how the horse reacts to them. Offer to walk and trot the horse in hand so that the potential purchaser can see how the horse moves.
- **Answer Questions** Be prepared to answer a lot of questions, as silly or minor as they may seem. It is important to the potential purchaser to find out as much about the horse as they can. Try to have information to hand about vaccinations and worming and ensure that you take along the passport for them to see.

- **Ride the Horse** Before potential purchasers try a horse they will often ask for the vendor to ride beforehand. Ride the horse at all speeds on both paces, over poles and over a jump- it would be advisable to set the school up beforehand to save time during the viewing. If the potential purchaser feels confident encourage them to ride the horse themselves. Get them to ride the horse at all paces and over a fence if they wish. Do remember that it is the first time they have ridden the horse, and the first time the horse has been ridden by them so you should give some advice and guidance if required as to the horse's normal riding regime.

If the potential purchaser likes the horse do encourage them to return within a reasonable period if time- to ride it as many times as possible in different situations, differing weathers, different surroundings- such as hacking out alone and in company- invite them to view it competing if possible and so on so that they can see the horse's reaction to as many different circumstances and situations as possible.

- **The Passport** All horses should be sold with a passport- it is illegal for it not to be so ensure your horse has an up to date passport with the correct ownership details before advertising for sale.
- **Sale Inclusions** Agree with the purchaser what would be included in the sale. Often this may depend upon the agreed price but usually horses will be accompanied by basic tack and rugs, or you may wish to sell with nothing at all.

### The Vetting

- **Vetting/ Pre-Purchase Check** The potential purchaser may wish to get an impartial veterinary surgeon to carry out at least a basic health check on the horse. For the more cautious owner they may wish to undertake a full 'five star' vetting. Many insurance companies will require this to be carried out if you wish to insure the horse for more than £5000.

The pre-purchase vetting/ check is a series of tests undertaken by the vet to determine the current soundness and health of the horse, and to identify any factors which may affect this in the future. It is important to advise the vet of your intentions for the animal so that he can advise whether he feels the horse would be fit for purpose. The responsibility for the payment of the vetting lies solely with the potential purchaser.

Elements that may be checked by the vet would typically include the following:

- Listening to the horse's heart, lungs and gut sounds,
- Examination of the horse's eyes and dentition,
- Examination of legs and joints,
- A survey of the horse's general conformation and condition,
- Viewing the horse walked and trotted in hand to determine how well the horse tracks up, any unsoundness or conformational defaults,
- Application of pressure onto the hooves to test for sensitivity and any signs of disease such as laminitis or navicular,
- Flexion tests to determine if any limbs or joints may require further investigations with x-ray or other investigative measures,
- Diagnostic x-rays of the front and rear fetlocks, front feet and hocks,

- Bloodwork to determine the presence of metabolic disease, thyroid problems or use of masking drugs,

It is important to get a vetting carried out sooner rather than later, particularly if you have other interested parties. If your horse fails a vetting for one reason or another it is likely that the potential purchaser should want to consider their options. The seriousness and any implications of any highlighted issues must be discussed with the vet as some reasons for failure may not affect the horse's suitability for the potential purchaser's requirements (i.e. a slight lameness or arthritis could be accepted in a broodmare or companion but not in a competition horse).

The role of the vet is not to simply pass or fail the horse, but to advise the potential purchaser about any abnormalities or concerns which would need to be taken into account should the horse be purchased. However you would need to bear in mind that if your horse fails one vetting it is likely to fail other so you should advise any further potential purchasers about this should they suggest a vetting.

You may find a purchaser willing to overlook a failed vetting but would expect for them to want to negotiate a substantial negotiation on the price.

### **Making Arrangements**

- **Take a Deposit** Once a potential purchaser has agreed that they would like to buy the horse and a price has been negotiated it is always recommended to take a small deposit. This will cover you in the eventuality that the purchaser pulls out of the sale. Be prepared to provide a receipt for any deposit that may be paid.
- **Have a Trial Period** If you are willing, agree to a short trial period before purchase. Some potential purchasers may want a trial period of full loan with a view to buy at their own yard but others may be happy to purchase as seen. However it may be possible to arrange a trial period of a week or so with the horse in situ at its current yard. Do agree with the potential purchaser as to whether or not the horse will remain to be advertised and viewed during this period.
- **Viewing a New Home** Once purchased you may have some interest in where the horse will be moving to. Some owners do like to visit the horse's new home before they are moved but many will simply allow the horse to be moved once the purchase has taken place.
- **Horse Details** Make sure that upon handover you give the purchaser clear information regarding the horse's normal care and routine. They should have access to information on feeds, hay requirements, supplements, medication and so on. They may also need to know certain information in order to pass this to their new yard- worming routine, vaccinations, farrier, vet and so on so ensure that you can provide this information if required.
- **Get the Passport** Once you have been paid in full for the horse, ensure that you hand over the passport on the day of collection or delivery.
- **Arrange Transportation** Arrange a mutually convenient time for you and the purchaser for the horse to be collected or delivered and try to keep the process as calm as possible for the horse.

## The Purchase

- **Sold as Seen** Many vendors will be happy to provide a receipt for the horse and it is not uncommon for them to sign a receipt as 'sold as seen'. This is basically the vendors way of indemnifying themselves against any comebacks with regards to the horse. Ensure you get and keep the purchasers full name and contact details.
- **Getting Paperwork in Order** As soon as the payment is made the horse is the purchasers. Ensure that as soon as possible they send off the passport to have the ownership details updated. You must also ensure that you give suitable notice on your livery and cancel any insurance policies in place.
- **Keep in Touch** Many horse owners like to keep in touch with their old horses and like to hear from their new owners as to how they are settling in.

### **IMPORTANT**

**This information as provided above is intended to provide guidance and areas for consideration for those intending to enter into such arrangements. Anyone proposing to enter into such a written agreement should take consideration and their own legal advice as to their particular circumstances.**

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