



IS HORSE OWNERSHIP RIGHT FOR ME?

Did You Know? There is an estimated 2 million horse owners in the United States and a total of 7.1 million Americans are involved in the industry as owners, service providers, employees and volunteers. (American Horse Council 2017 Economic Impact Study.)

You might be questioning - is horse ownership right for me? Here are some topics to consider before purchasing or adopting an Equine.

Why do I want to own a horse?

There is no right answer, but understanding your true motivations for owning a horse will help you determine if there might be better options available. Do you want a horse for recreation or showing? Do you want one because your friends have one or because you've dreamed of owning a horse as a kid? Are you trying to earn money by breeding or racing? Do you want to save a horse in need? Should you consider leasing, lessons, 4H, fostering, or volunteering first?

How long do I plan to own my horse?

Many horses live for 20 years and some live more than 30. If you cannot make a 20-year commitment to a horse, you should know all the options and have a plan in place should you no longer be able to take care for your horse.

Will I need to relocate for any reason?

Moving with a dog or cat usually isn't too difficult, but moving an animal that weighs 1,000 pounds can be. If your lifestyle requires multiple relocations, be prepared for the expense and logistics of moving a horse.

Is the horse for my child?

If yes, what will I do with the horse when my child leaves home? What will happen if my child outgrows the horse? Consider what will happen to the horse when your child leaves for college or moves out of the house. Will the horse be left at home? Will there be someone to take care of it? If your child is close to an age that he or she may leave home soon or his or her interests might change, leasing is a good option.

Do I have the knowledge and skills needed to care for all the horse's needs?

Despite the countless books, magazines, and websites available with tips and ideas for managing your horse, there is a set of knowledge and skills that you must have to care for a horse on your own property. In fact, many rescues and breeders will require that first-time horse owners board the horse at a site with knowledgeable staff. Seeking professional help from your veterinarian, farrier, and trainer is always in the best interest of the horse.

What will I do if the horse becomes sick or injured?

Illness and injury are more common with horses than most people realize. Some illnesses and injuries can be remedied with simple steps, and some can be career or life-ending. Few owners are equipped to handle a sick or injured horse on their own, and the best course of action is to contact your veterinarian. Be prepared to provide sometimes lengthy follow-up treatments or pay a knowledgeable horse person (e.g. barn manager) to help you. It is also important to have money set aside in the event of a medical emergency as veterinary emergencies can be costly depending on the situation.

Do I understand all the costs associated with Horse Ownership?

See "What is the Cost of Horse Ownership?" in this booklet to learn about the common and hidden costs of ownership. You'll be better prepared to make an educated decision.



THE TRUE COST OF HORSE OWNERSHIP:

The initial cost of purchasing or adopting a horse is only a small portion of what goes into the financial responsibility of Horse Ownership.

Results of a horse ownership survey through the University of Maine found that the average annual cost of owning 1 horse is \$3,876, while the median cost is \$2,419. Meaning that the monthly expense of owning a horse is approximately \$200-\$354. This number does not include the cost of boarding at a facility if the horse cannot be kept on your property.

Feed Costs:	Quantity:	Units:	Cost Per Unit:	Median Cost:	Total:
Hay or Hay Pellets	7300 Lbs.	146 Bales	\$4-\$18	\$8	\$1168.00
Grain or Pellets	700 Lbs.	14 Bags	\$4-\$16	\$10	\$140.00
Minerals and Salts	30 Lbs.	4lb. Block	\$2.75	\$2.75	\$20.00

Maintenance:	Quantity:	Units:	Cost Per Unit:	Median Cost:	Total:
Bedding	15 Yds.	Bulk	Less expensive in bulk	\$142.50	\$142.50
Farrier Service	8.6 times/yr.	-	\$ 45 to \$100+	\$75	\$645.00
Worming	4 times/yr.	-	\$5 to \$15	\$12.00	\$48.00
Vaccines (minimum)	2 times/yr.	-	Varies	\$15.00	\$30.00
Vet and Medicine	Varies	-	Varies	Varies	\$375.00
Horse Care Products	Varies	-	Varies	Varies	\$100.00
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	\$50.00
Private Riding and /or Horsemanship Lessons	2 times/mo	-	\$30 to \$75 per lesson	\$40.00	\$960.00
Books/Magazines/Info	-	-	-	-	\$50.00

Boarding Costs:	Quantity:	Price Range:	Average Cost:	Total:
Board	12mos.	\$150-1,200	\$700.00	\$8,400

(The above information was taken in part from www.horsedirectory.com.)