

*Full of advice
on caring for
your pet*

Your guide to
**Horses &
Ponies**



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best for you and your pets*



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Are you ready?

Buying a horse or pony is a huge commitment. They will become your sole responsibility 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and will depend on you for everything from food and water to their health and safety.



Horses can live up to 35 years old

Horses can live anywhere up to 25 – 35 years old depending on the horse's health and the care they receive throughout their life. They are a huge commitment and will require a lot of time and money throughout their long life, so once you are certain you can provide a long life to your new horse/pony then you must consider all the factors carefully.

Before buying your Horse/Pony

Veterinary examination - A pre purchase veterinary examination is essential before purchasing your horse. It will highlight any health related problems and risks and reduce nasty surprises down the line. A certificate will be provided if the horse passes the examination, which is used for insuring your horse at a later stage.

Vendor certificate - A vendors certificate may be provided. This is not a veterinary examination and you should ensure to carry out a reliable veterinary examination before purchase.



Horse insurance

Insurance for your horse is absolutely essential to cover all veterinary care and loss of a horse. Veterinary fees can soon add up so it is advisable to get cover up to at least £5,000. Thoroughly research the most appropriate insurance option that provides the greatest cover to your new horse.

Housing your Horse/Pony in stables

Horses can be either housed in a stable or in fields providing they are supplied with a constant water supply, shelter and appropriate fencing.

Stables - Stabling in loose boxes is the most common form of housing. Your horse will need at least enough room to lie down, stand up and move around the box quite freely. The minimum stable size for horses should be at least 12ft x 12ft and for ponies 10ft x 10ft.

Bedding - Bedding should consist of straw and wood shavings. It should always be dry and free of dust and mould.

Bedding will provide warmth and protection against cold weather and injuries.

Hygiene - Remove wet bedding at least twice a day to keep a dry and tidy stable for your horse. Any loose hay and feed should also be cleaned away.



Housing your Horse/Pony in fields

If you are planning to house your horse out in the fields then appropriate fencing is necessary. Never over crowd horses that live out as this can result in competition for food, water and space. During the winter and dry months in the summer, supplementary feed will be required due to the reduced grass levels. Always keep a watchful eye on the grass and water supply; it is advisable to check your horses twice a day.

Water supply - Horses will need a constant supply of fresh water everyday through self-filling water troughs, buckets or other watertight containers. Water troughs will need to be cleaned regularly to reduce the build up of algae. During the winter ensure to check the water supply daily as they can often freeze over.

Shelter - Horses that live out throughout the year will need appropriate shelter from the weather. Trees and bushes can provide sufficient shelter. If the field offers no natural shelter then a man made shelter will have to be provided.

Health

Worming - You will need to start a worming programme as soon as possible; It is essential and will keep your horse free from diseases, which are commonly caused by internal parasites. Your vet will be able to advise on an appropriate worming programme.

Vaccinations - Your horse will need to be vaccinated against tetanus, equine influenza and equine herpes virus. Contact your local vet to ensure your horse's vaccinations are up to date.

Hoof care - Your horse's shoes should be trimmed or re-shoed every 4-6 weeks by a registered farrier. If you neglect to do this then it can cause cracked heels, which in some cases can lead to lameness.

Dental care - Just like humans, horses require regular dental care. It is important to have dental checks once a year to reduce the risk of sharp edged teeth developing.

Diet

Water - Provide clean water to your horse on a daily basis. The daily requirement of a horse weighing approximately 500kg is 20-40 litres of water per day.

*Horses
can sleep whilst
standing up*



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Feed? Horses require lots of fibre to maintain a healthy gut and reduce abnormal behaviours. Sufficient fibre is found in grass, hay and high fibre compound feeds.

How often should I feed my Horse?

For horses that are in light work then two feeds a day is sufficient. For those in heavy work 3-4 times a day is necessary. It is better to feed small amounts frequently than large amounts. Keep an eye on your horses weight for sudden losses or gain in weight. It is advisable to feed your horses at the same time on a daily basis.

Your horse will need a shelter or barn.

When can I ride my Horse after feeding?

Always allow at least 2 hours before working your horse after feeding.

Security

It is important that you take the necessary security measures to ensure the safety of your horse should they be lost or stolen.

Microchipping? Will help to identify your horse if lost.

It is a permanent chip that cannot be seen externally.

Seek advice from your local vet for further information.



Freeze – marked? It is advisable to get your horse or pony freeze marked with a unique number to your horse branded on their neck or back. You can also get your farrier to brand it on your horse's hooves, although this will grow out.

Please note that this is a basic beginners guide to looking after your horse. Alternatives to buying your own horse are horse shares and loans, which will help you gain invaluable experience and knowledge before you take on the sole responsibility.



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Shopping Checklist

We recommend the following items for your new horse/pony.

Horses & Ponies Checklist

- Pre-purchase veterinary examination of your Horse/Pony
- Horse insurance
- Vaccinations and a worming programme
- Suitable stables or field to live in
- Bedding: straw and wood shavings
- Water trough, bucket or water container
- Appropriate dental and hoof care
- Horse feed and hay
- Appropriate horse tack
- Security: microchipping & freeze marking

It is now time to enjoy your new horse/pony and watch them grow into a very important member of your family.

For further information contact:

Jollyes Petfood Superstores
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