

Horses

Starter Guide.



Overview:

Preparing for and showing horse can be an extremely rewarding and educational experience for youth. The lessons learned in showing and raising horses are invaluable. However, it can feel very intimidating to begin. This guide is a broad overview at how to prepare for showing horses. All exhibitors are encouraged to ask questions as they grow through the program. <https://co4h.colostate.edu/projects/pages/Horse-PT.pdf>



Requirements: <https://co4h.colostate.edu/projects/erecords/Horse-erecord.pdf>

Basic Requirements of the 4-H Horse Program

The member must:

- Own or lease one or more horses (light horse, pony, draft donkey or mule); see lease agreement details in the Colorado 4-H Rule Book. Horses must be identified with the State 4-H Horse Identification Sheet by May 1st of the current year.
- Feed, care for, groom, exercise and assume the responsibilities for your horse when possible.
- Keep accurate records and note project progress in the 4-H Horse Project Record Books for horses that you have identified with a horse project ID form.
- Exhibit or participate with your 4-H Horse Project horses during the 4-H year.
- It is recommended that you give a Demonstration or Speech, or participate in Horse Judging, Horse Bowl, Hippology or other 4-H activities (at least at the club level). These activities are NOT limited to members owning horses or members enrolled in the horse project any 4-H member may participate.

**These rules do not apply to the Horseless Horse Project.*



Purchasing your animal:

Healthy, sound horse is important when purchasing a horse. Owning a horse is expensive, requires lots of time, lots of responsibility.

Things to keep in mind:

Rider's experience and knowledge
 Rider's age
 Facilities available
 Affordability

Steps for choosing a horse:

To buy or lease
 reputable buyer
 Purpose for horse
 Experience
 Consult with Veterinarian
 Budget
 Sale or Lease agreement



Feeding your animal:

There are many feeds available for horses based on age and needs. You can do your research to determine which you feel most confident about. You can ask your breeder and other horse exhibitors for advice on what to feed.

Concentrates: Are cereal grains such as corn, oats and barley. They are high in energy and low in fiber. Grain based can be dangerous if solely fed alone in high quantities. Can cause obesity, colic and laminitis.

Roughage/Forage: Grass and/or hay should take up the bulk of your horses diet. Horses should consume 1.5-3 % of their body weight in roughage.

Forage can be solely grass hay or a combination of grass hay and alfalfa is extra protein is needed.

Water is also extremely important. Water is directly related to feed intake. The water source needs to be clean, fresh and abundant.



Handling Your Horse

Safety is always important when handling animals. It's important to understand horse behavior. Always approach a horse from the angle and avoid their kicking range. Be calm and confident. Hold lead ropes correctly to prevent injuries.



Before Showing:

Make sure your horse is sound. In good health, no nasal discharge, alert, good condition. Make sure your equipment is in good working condition. Always wear a helmet.



Preparing for Showmanship

Before showmanship, you will want to be knowledgeable about basic horse anatomy, common health concerns, and the breed of your horse. You are more so showing off your gain in knowledge and your comfort with your horse! This is why it is important to build trust with your animals for weeks beforehand

Materials for Show Preparation

- Hoof Polish
- Scraper
- Clippers
- Brushes
- Hoof Pick

Before the show, it is important to have your horse clean and presentable. Bath horses with shampoo. Once done scrape excess water off with a scraper. Clean feet with a hoof pick and polish. Keep your horse brushed and trim hairs around muzzle, bridle path and leg hair.



Common Health Concerns

- Colic-common term for “belly ache”. Horses act restless, pawing and kicking at belly, swelling. Can be caused by parasites, overeating, twisted intestines, digestion of sand, etc. Seek veterinary care immediately.
- Heaves-similar to human asthma. Allergic reactions to dust and mold. Allow access to outside and feed hay with little dust.
- Equine Herpes Virus-virus that affects the respiratory tract. Important to vaccinate for EHV-4
- Laminitis-Over eating, abrupt changes in feed, lush green grass can cause inflammation of the white line that breaks down the structure of the hoof and causes pain in return causes the horse to walk without putting pressure on the toes,



What will my Project Cost?

Horse projects can really add up in cost. It is important to ensure that you can afford your project before buying animals. It also is important to consider what you are likely to make from your project to offset the cost. Below is a breakdown:

- Horse-\$800-\$10,000

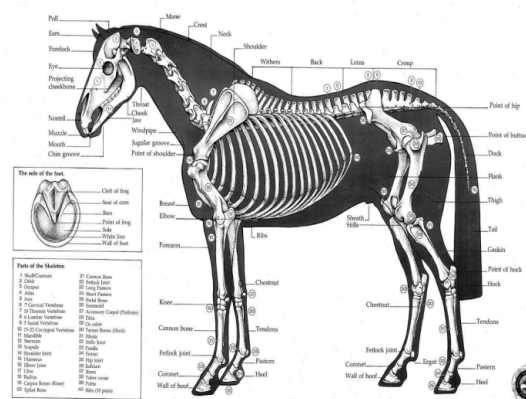
Summary: Annual Cost of Owning a Horse

Housing	\$1,200 – \$9,000
Feeding (<i>may be covered by board housing fees</i>)	\$0 – \$1,500 grain, \$0 – \$3,650 hay
Routine Veterinary Care	\$200 – \$500
Farrier	\$300 – \$2,750
Dentist	\$95 – \$235
Total Annual Estimate	\$1,795 – \$17,635



Parts of a Horse

Points and Skeleton of the Horse



Sources and Resources

- <https://horserookie.com/how-much-do-horses-cost-afford-one>
- <https://co4h.colostate.edu/projects/manuals/Horse.pdf>

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