



Selling a Horse

There are various reasons for selling your horse, from childhood ponies that have been outgrown to horses that will not meet the competitive requirements you would like. Whatever your reason for selling your horse, it is important that you are open and honest throughout the selling process, thoroughly vet any potential buyers and most importantly, have your horses' best interests at the heart of the decision. For horses with ongoing health conditions or veteran horses consider whether selling them is the right option, perhaps a long-term loan or euthanasia needs to be considered. This is never an easy choice to make, for further details on assessing quality of life and making end of life decisions, please see our [equine end of life advice page](#).

Our selling a horse guidance provides an overview of how to sell your horse responsibly, how to check potential buyers are suitable for your horse, changing ownership details and your legal responsibilities as the seller.

Have you written an honest advert?

Writing an honest advert for online sales is important to ensure that you attract potential buyers with the relevant skills, knowledge and experience to meet your horse's needs. Is the price you are asking for realistic in comparison to the horse's experience, breed, age and intended purpose? We are all guilty of viewing our own horses through rose tinted glasses – when you write your advert think about any previous injuries, medical conditions or behavioural problems that the prospective new owner would want to know about. The [Pet Advert Advisory Group](#) has put together guidance on what a sales advert should include and can also provide further information on your legal responsibilities in relation to equine identification (passports and microchips). Use reputable websites to advertise your horse. If you chose to advertise on a social media platform, check their policy on animal sales before posting your advert.

Assess the suitability of potential buyers before agreeing to viewings.

Try and avoid text or email interactions, try and speak to any potential buyers on the phone so you can ask them questions about their knowledge and skill level – you will pick up on any inaccuracies in their responses better over the phone when they have to respond in the moment. You have a duty of care to your horse to ensure that potential buyers that may come and view them/ride them are thoroughly vetted before doing so. Ask them to send you videos of them riding/handling horses and ask if there is a yard manager and/or coach who would be able to provide a reference. You may be able to find their profiles on social media to ascertain if the personal information they have provided you with is correct, as well as potentially see pictures of them interacting with horses depending on their privacy settings.

Viewings – what are your responsibilities as the seller?

Have the horse's identification (passport) and any other relevant documents to hand so the potential buyer can verify the horses ID and ownership details.





Where possible, let the potential buyer do as much of the handling as possible. You need to be ready to trot the horse up for them and potentially ride the horse before the prospective buyer or their coach does. But you can ask them to catch the horse/bring out of stable, groom and tack up as this will provide you with practical evidence of their skill level and whether it matches what they have told you prior to the viewing. Remember, if the potential buyer, yourself or your horse will be put at risk, or you are not comfortable with how they are handling the horse you can stop the viewing at any time. Equally, when it comes to the time for the prospective buyer to ride, if you have any doubts or concerns for their and your horse's safety – stop the viewing.

Be open and honest about your horses needs and preferences, ask the buyer questions about the facilities they have access to, this means you can check that the yard your horse is potentially moving to is suitable.

If you find a suitable buyer, accommodate pre-purchase examinations – if you have been honest about your horse's history then there shouldn't be any surprises. Should anything unexpected be found during a pre-purchase exam, then it is your duty as the owner to provide appropriate treatment as the horse is still your responsibility. Some buyers may ask to pay less than what you are asking for if the finding's impact on what they were hoping to do with your horse. Ensure that any changes to use are thoroughly explained to potential buyers and that you feel confident that they will not use them for any activity beyond those which you have discussed with the vet. Some buyers may pull out of a sale, you will need to readvertise, and it is good practice to disclose what was found in the pre-purchase exam to other potential buyers.

Receiving payment.

When you have found a suitable buyer for your horse it is most common to ask the buyer to pay via bank transfer. This way the payment can be recorded. Don't let the buyer take the horse without having received payment. Be wary of accepting large quantities of cash. Provide the buyer with a receipt, plus it is good practice to provide a list of the tack and equipment being sold with the horse. Remember to provide the new owner with their passport and if known, the provider their microchip is registered with so that the new owner can update the ownership details.

Transferring ownership.

It is the new owner's legal responsibility to update the passport and microchip details, however you can remind them that this needs to be done within 30 days as per [equine identification regulations](#).

Loan with view to buy

Loaning your horse to a prospective buyer can be beneficial to ensure that the partnership will work for both the prospective new owner and most importantly, your horse. Ensure that you have a robust loan agreement in place that covers responsibility for farrier and veterinary costs and a return procedure should the horse not be suitable for the prospective owner. It is important that you obtain a signed copy from the loanee and that you each keep a fully signed copy. For more information on loaning horses please see our [responsible rehoming advice page](#).





Do you have to sell to someone who offers to buy your horse?

No – if you have any doubt in your mind that the prospective new owner will not be able to fully meet the needs of your horse or lacks the necessary skills or experience then you don't need to sell to them. It may be hard, especially if the prospective buyer really likes your horse but it is important to always put your horses needs first. It is important to make this decision before any money has been exchanged.

Selling outside of GB – exporting your horse

There may be additional requirements when selling to someone outside of Great Britain. Avoid selling unseen, even if the horse will be exported, the prospective buyer should still come and view the horse. Discuss who will be responsible for export costs before a sale has been made. Ensure reputable transport companies are considered to transport the horse, there are many which specialise in international transport. There will be additional health checks and documentation required – this can vary depending on country. Ensure the horse is fit enough to complete the intended journey, especially if air or sea transport is required.

