

Are you ready to own a horse?

Having your own horse may sound an exciting prospect but before you jump into it, you need to be certain that you fully understand the commitment - both financial and time - that is involved? There are several questions that you need to consider.

Do you have the ongoing budget to support a horse?

You may have enough money to buy a horse but can you also cover the on-going costs of keeping one? It is estimated that the annual cost of a horse is around £10,000 when at livery and £6,500 when at grass. Basic costs include stabling and/or grazing, food and bedding, tack, rugs and grooming equipment, while additional costs such as regular visits by the farrier, dental checks, vet fees and insurance all need to be included in the budget.



Do you have the knowledge and experience to look after it?

The care of any animal is a big responsibility. You may be able to ride but riding does not prepare you for the wider task of looking after a horse. It is important that you have an understanding of basic stable management and can recognise the important signs that indicate your horse may be ill or injured.

Can you balance the time commitment with work and family?

Finding the time to look after a horse can be a problem if you have a demanding job or a family to look after. Horses need routine and care seven days a week. Think about whether you can allocate sufficient time every day to look after your horse. If you feel you might struggle, then you need to be able to afford full-time livery costs or the help of someone experienced and responsible to ensure that your horse is looked after when you don't have time to do it yourself.

Do you have you the facilities or access to facilities to keep your horse?

You may be lucky enough to have a stable and land at home but if not you will need to find a suitable place for your horse to live. A shed at the end of the garden is not the answer and it is important that whether you choose a livery yard, riding stables, a private yard or rent grazing from a farmer that the facilities are well maintained, safe, secure and as close to your home as possible.

Are you willing to put the care of your horse before a holiday, new car or designer outfit?

A horse is a full time commitment and needs to be cared for every day, winter and summer, rain or shine. If you feel that the 'Great Outdoors' should only be experienced when the sun is shining then owning a horse is not for you. Horses are also a financial consideration and it's important to remember that sometimes that planned bit of retail may have to be sacrificed to take care of your equine companion.

If any of these factors are a concern, or taking on a horse full time is a daunting prospect, it may be worth considering loaning or sharing a horse.

If you are confident that you are ready to own a horse then you need to start looking for the right one.

