

Horse Buying Checklist

Part I: Preliminary Information

Basic Information

1. Where you learned about the horse: _____

2. Asking price: \$ _____
3. Person representing the horse for sale:
Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone number: _____
Email: _____
They are: Owner Trainer Agent Other
4. Horse's current location: _____
5. Horse's gender: Mare Stallion Gelding
Age gelded: _____
6. Horse's age: _____
7. Horse's color and markings: _____

8. Horse's height: _____
Has the horse's height been professionally verified
(e.g., pony card)? _____
 Yes No
Notes: _____
9. Horse's breed(s): _____

10. Is the horse registered? Yes No
Registration(s): _____
Breed/association: _____ #: _____
Registered name: _____
Breed/association: _____ #: _____
Registered name: _____

Breed/association: _____ #: _____

Registered name: _____

Has the horse's parentage been DNA-verified?

 Yes No

Does seller have the horse's original registration papers?

 Yes No If not, why? _____

Is the seller listed on papers as the horse's current registered owner?

 Yes NoIf not, why, and does the seller have a registration transfer form signed by the registered owner? _____
_____11. Was the horse imported? Yes No

From where? _____

By whom? _____

When? _____

Does the seller have the horse's original passport?

 Yes No

Notes: _____

12. Why is the horse for sale?

_____13. How long has the horse been for sale? _____

14. Has any potential buyer taken the horse out on trial?

 Yes No

If yes:

Buyer's name: _____
_____

Buyer's phone number: _____

Buyer's email : _____

Why didn't they purchase the horse? _____

Photos and Videos Provided by Seller

1. When and where were the photos and videos taken?

2. Do the photos clearly show front, back and both sides of the horse?

Yes No

Notes: _____

3. Do the photos clearly show all four hooves all the way to the ground?

Yes No

Notes: _____

4. Who is riding or handling the horse in the videos?

Professional trainer Amateur Youth

Other: _____

5. Do the videos show all gaits in both directions, as well as all gait transitions?

Yes No

Notes: _____

6. Do the videos show everything the horse is trained to do?

Yes No

Notes: _____

7. Do the videos appear to be edited (i.e., breaks between gaits, different lighting angles, different tack/equipment)? Yes No

Notes: _____

8. Do the videos appear to have been slowed down (note any "slower than normal" movements in the horse's tail, movement of reins, background)? Yes No

9. Watch the videos multiple times, turn up the volume, and listen carefully for any background conversations.

Notes: _____

10. Examine photos carefully to see if the horse is presented or posed in a way that might conceal conformation defects or blemishes.

Notes: _____

11. If the horse's height is important, when viewing photos and videos, compare its height to any fencing or other stationary objects in the photos and videos.

Notes: _____

Soundness

1. Is the horse currently completely sound? Yes No

Notes: _____

2. Has the horse ever been lame? Yes No

Notes: _____

3. Is the horse currently shod? Yes No

Front Hind

Type of shoes: _____

Any special trimming or shoeing required: _____



4. If the horse is currently barefoot, does it need shoeing and/or hoof boots to be comfortable when being worked regularly and/or ridden on trails? Yes No

Notes: _____

5. Has the horse ever received joint injections?

Yes No

Types of injections, locations and reasons: _____

Last injection date(s)/location(s): _____

How often the horse receives injections: _____

6. Has the horse ever displayed any symptoms suggestive of, or been diagnosed with, laminitis (founder)?

Yes No

Notes: _____

7. Has the horse ever displayed any symptoms suggestive of, or been diagnosed with, navicular syndrome?

Yes No

Notes: _____

8. Has the horse ever had a neurectomy (i.e., been "nerved")? Yes No

Notes: _____

9. Has the horse ever displayed any symptoms suggestive of, or been diagnosed with, osteoarthritis (arthritis)?

Yes No

Notes: _____

10. Has the horse ever been diagnosed with osteochondritis dissecans (OCD)?

Yes No

Notes: _____

11. Has the horse ever displayed any symptoms suggestive of, or been diagnosed with, degenerative joint disease?

Yes No

Notes: _____

12. Has the horse ever had a soft-tissue injury, such as a bowed tendon or strained ligament?

Yes No

Notes: _____

Health

1. Does the horse have any current health conditions, issues or concerns? Yes No

Notes: _____

2. Does the horse have any past health conditions, issues or concerns? Yes No

Notes: _____



3. Has the horse ever been exposed to, diagnosed with, or treated for, any contagious disease or condition?

Yes No

Notes: _____

4. Has the horse ever had any surgeries or other medical procedures? Yes No

Notes: _____

5. Is the horse currently on any medication(s)?

Yes No

Medication(s): _____

Dosage(s): _____

Frequency: _____

Reason(s): _____

Notes: _____

6. Has the horse ever received any medication(s) (including Legend, Adequan, etc.)?

Yes No

Medication(s): _____

Dosage(s): _____

Frequency: _____

Reason(s): _____

Notes: _____

7. Has the horse ever been tested for any genetic traits or conditions, such as HYPP, PSSM or HERDA?

Yes No

Notes: _____

8. Does the horse have any allergies or sensitivities?

Yes No

Notes: _____

9. Does the horse have any history of colic?

Yes No

If yes, was surgery required? Yes No

Notes: _____

10. Has the horse ever been treated by a chiropractor?

Yes No

Notes: _____

11. Has the horse ever been professionally fitted for a saddle?

Yes No

Notes: _____

12. Has the horse ever displayed any symptoms suggestive of a neurological disorder, or been diagnosed with a neurological disorder, such as EPM (equine protozoal myelitis) or wobbler syndrome?

Yes No

Notes: _____



13. Has the horse ever displayed any symptoms suggestive of, or been diagnosed with, any metabolic disorder, such as Cushing's disease or Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS)?

Yes No

Notes: _____

14. Has the horse ever displayed any symptoms suggestive of polysaccharide storage myopathy (PSSM), such as tying up, or been diagnosed with PSSM?

Yes No

Notes: _____

15. Has the horse ever displayed any symptoms suggestive of, or been diagnosed with, kissing spine?

Yes No

Notes: _____

16. Has the horse ever displayed any symptoms suggestive of, or been diagnosed with, shivers?

Yes No

Notes: _____

17. Has any other potential buyer had a veterinary pre-purchase examination performed on the horse?

Yes No

How many? _____
When? _____

Name of buyer(s): _____

Phone number(s): _____

Email(s): _____

Name of vet(s): _____

Phone number(s): _____

Email(s): _____

Why they didn't buy the horse: _____

PPE report(s)/imaging available? Yes No

Notes: _____

18. When did the horse last receive vaccinations? _____

Is the horse due for any vaccinations? Yes No

Notes: _____

19. When was the horse's last dental? _____

Is the horse due for a dental? Yes No

Notes: _____

Has the horse had its wolf teeth removed?

Yes No

Notes: _____



20. Most recent fecal egg count and/or deworming

Description and date(s): _____

Is the horse due for deworming and/or a fecal egg count? Yes No

Notes: _____

Diet

1. What is the horse's current diet (type, amount and frequency)? _____

2. Does the horse have any special dietary requirements?

Yes No

Notes: _____

3. Does the horse receive any supplements?

Yes No

Supplement(s): _____

Amount(s): _____

Frequency: _____

Reason(s): _____

Notes: _____

4. Does the horse have any food allergies or sensitivities?

Yes No

Notes: _____

Disposition, Vices and Ground Manners

1. Ask the seller to describe the horse's disposition: _____

2. On a scale of 1-5, what is the horse's typical energy level? (1 = bone lazy, 5 = spirited)

1 2 3 4 5

3. Has anyone ever been injured while riding or handling the horse? Yes No

Notes: _____

4. Has the horse ever injured another horse?

Yes No

Notes: _____

5. Has the horse ever kicked or struck a person?

Yes No

Notes: _____

6. Has the horse ever bitten or nipped a person?

Yes No

Notes: _____

7. Is the horse suitable for a child or beginner to handle on the ground? Yes No

Notes: _____

8. Has the horse ever exhibited any of the following behaviors?

- Cribbing
- Windsucking
- Wood chewing
- Weaving
- Stall walking
- Anxiety when separated from herd/buddy



Notes: _____

9. When the horse spooks while being handled on the ground, what does the horse typically do?

Notes: _____

10. Can the horse be reliably tied and cross-tied without pulling back or panicking? Yes No

Notes: _____

11. Does the horse reliably stand quietly for farrier work?

Yes No

Notes: _____

12. Is the horse reliably safe to handle for routine veterinary examinations and vaccinations?

Yes No

Notes: _____

13. Does the horse reliably stand quietly for grooming, including picking out feet? Yes No

Notes: _____

14. Does the horse reliably stand quietly for saddling and bridling? Yes No

Notes: _____

15. Does the horse reliably stand quietly for clipping?

Yes No

Notes: _____

16. Is the horse accustomed to wearing a blanket?

Yes No

If yes, does the horse reliably stand quietly for blanketing and unblanketing? Yes No

Notes: _____

17. Horse's current living situation (e.g., stall with paddock, pasture): _____

18. Is the horse easy to catch in turnout?

Yes No

Notes: _____

19. Can the horse be turned out safely with other horses?

Yes No

Notes: _____

Under-Saddle Manners

1. Is the horse broke to ride? Yes No

If yes, how long has the horse been under saddle?

Notes: _____



2. Is the horse suitable for a child or beginner to ride?

Yes No

Notes: _____

3. Does the horse need to be longed or turned out before riding?

Yes No _____

Notes: _____

4. Has the horse ever reared when being ridden?

Yes No

Notes: _____

5. Has the horse ever bucked or crowhopped when being ridden? Yes No

Notes: _____

6. Has the horse ever kicked out when being ridden?

Yes No

Notes: _____

7. Has the horse ever bolted when being ridden?

Yes No

Notes: _____

8. When the horse spooks while being ridden, what does it typically do?

Notes: _____

9. How does the horse react to being ridden in an area with no other horses present?

Notes: _____

10. How does the horse react to being ridden in an area with other horses present?

Notes: _____

Training

1. What is the horse trained to do?

2. Is the horse currently in professional training?

Yes No

Trainer's name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

How long has the horse been with this trainer? _____

What is the horse in training for? _____

3. Has the horse previously been to a professional trainer?

Yes No

Trainer's name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

How long was the horse with this trainer? _____



What was the horse in training for? _____

Competition Record

- 1. Does the horse have a competition record?
 Yes No

If yes, in what discipline(s)/event(s): _____

Online location(s) of results: _____

- 2. Is the horse currently sound, fit and otherwise ready to compete? Yes No
Notes: _____

Trailer Manners

- 1. Does the horse load readily and willingly into a trailer?
 Yes No
Notes: _____

- 2. Can the horse be tied in the trailer? Yes No
Notes: _____

- 3. Can the horse be hauled in both slant load and straight load trailers? Yes No
Notes: _____

- 4. Does the horse unload quietly and willingly?
 Yes No
Notes: _____

- 5. Does the horse kick, paw or move around excessively inside the trailer?
 Yes No
Notes: _____

- 6. Does the horse get along with other horses being hauled? Yes No
Notes: _____

- 7. Does the horse require a stud wall?
 Yes No
Notes: _____

- 8. Can the horse be hauled in any spot in the trailer?
 Yes No
Notes: _____

- 9. Does the horse have any special trailering needs or quirks?
 Yes No
Notes: _____

Terms of Sale

Will anyone receive a commission on the sale?
 Yes No
If yes, who will be responsible for paying the commission(s)? _____
Notes: _____



Breeding Soundness

Mares

- 1. Is the mare approved for breeding by any registries?
 Yes No
 If yes, which registry(ies): _____

 Any restriction(s) on breeding approval(s)? _____

- 2. Has the mare ever been bred? Yes No
 If yes, how many times? _____
 What years? _____
 Name(s) of stallion(s):

 Mare was bred via (check all that apply):
 Artificial insemination (AI) Live cover
 Pasture Embryo transfer
 Notes: _____
 Number of pregnancies: _____
 Number of live foals: _____

- 3. Has the mare ever been difficult to breed or inseminate?
 Yes No
 Notes: _____

- 4. Has it ever been difficult to settle the mare in foal?
 Yes No
 Notes: _____

- 5. Has the mare ever had any difficulty foaling?
 Yes No
 Notes: _____

- 6. Has the mare always produced enough milk for the foal?
 Yes No
 Notes: _____

- 7. Has the mare ever rejected a foal?
 Yes No
 Notes: _____

- 8. Are all of the mare's previous foals still alive?
 Yes No
 Notes: _____

- 9. Have any of the mare's foals ever had any health or soundness issues?
 Yes No
 Notes: _____

- 10. Any photos and videos of previous foals?
 Yes No
 Notes: _____

- 11. Were any of the mare's previous foals presented for inspection by a registry?
 Yes No
 Notes: _____

- 12. Any notable accomplishments of the mare's previous foals:

- 13. Is the mare enrolled in or eligible for any breeding incentive programs?
 Yes No



Notes: _____

Notes: _____

Stallions

14. Is the stallion approved for breeding by any registries?

Yes No

If yes:

Registry(ies): _____

Any restriction(s) on breeding approval(s)? _____

15. Has the stallion ever been used for breeding?

Yes No

How many times? _____

Online location(s) of breeding records: _____

Type(s) of cover(s) (check all that apply):

Artificial insemination (AI)

Live cover Pasture

Notes: _____

Number of live foals: _____

16. Is the stallion trained for AI collection?

Yes No

Notes: _____

17. Has the stallion ever had any difficulties with collection and/or breeding?

Yes No

Notes: _____

18. Has the stallion ever had any behavioral issues when collecting and/or breeding?

Yes No

19. Semen quality notes: _____

20. Are all of the stallion's foals still alive?

Yes No

Notes: _____

21. Have any of the stallion's foals ever had any health or soundness issues?

Yes No

Notes: _____

22. Any photos and videos of the stallion's foals?

Yes No

Notes: _____

23. Were any of the stallion's foals presented for inspection by a registry?

Yes No

Notes: _____

24. Any notable accomplishments of the stallion's foals:

25. Is the stallion enrolled in or eligible for any breeding incentive programs?

Yes No

Notes: _____



Part II: In-Person Evaluation

Visual Inspection

- Your initial impressions: _____

- Overall healthy appearance? Yes No Notes: _____
- Horse's weight: Appropriate Too fat Too thin
 Notes: _____
- Muscle tone: Fit Flabby Notes: _____
- Coat condition: Appropriate for time of year and location Shaggy and unkempt Parasites Skin disorders
- Breathing: Normal, healthy sounds Wheezing Labored (without exertion)
 Notes: _____

Conformation

- Overall conformation Notes: _____

- Overall balance: Uphill Level Downhill Notes: _____
- Head: Attractive Roman nose
 Eyes: Large Small Clear and bright Discharge Corneal scars Blemishes
 Ears: Good size Too large Too small Wide set Closely set Blemishes
 Nostrils: Correct size and shape Discharge Blemishes
 Muzzle: Good size Too long Too small Scars at corner(s) of mouth Blemishes
 Teeth: Appropriate for age Missing or broken teeth
 Notes: _____
- Front legs:
 Overall: Straight Crooked Toes in Toes out Blemishes
 Knees: Correct Over at the knee Back at the knee Blemishes
 Fetlocks: Correct Blemishes
 Pasterns: Appropriate length and angles Too short Too long Too low Too upright Blemishes
 Notes: _____



5. Back legs:Overall: Straight Crooked Toes in Toes out BlemishesHocks: Appropriate, uniform angles Too straight Too much angle Defects BlemishesPasterns: Appropriate, uniform angles Down in the pastern(s) Too upright Blemishes

Notes: _____

6. FeetFront feet: Normal Uniform shape and size Low heel(s) Too much heel Club foot
 Ridge(s) Crack(s) Quarter crack(s) Scars BlemishesBack feet: Normal Uniform shape and size Low heel(s) Too much heel Club foot
 Ridge(s) Crack(s) Quarter crack(s) Scars Blemishes

Is the horse shod?

Front: Yes: Steel shoes Aluminum plates Wedge(s) Bar shoes Pads Other
 No: Always barefoot Usually shodBack: Yes: Steel shoes Aluminum plates Wedge(s) Bar shoes Pads Other
 No: Always barefoot Usually shodCondition of hooves: Good Dry Chipped, broken Thrush Thin soled Healthy frog

Notes: _____

7. Neck: Appropriate length Too short Too long
 Appropriate muscling
 Symmetrical BlemishesTies into shoulder: Correctly for breed Too high Too lowThroatlatch: Correct for breed Too thick

Notes: _____

8. Shoulder: Appropriate angles Too straight/steep Too laid back
 Symmetrical Blemishes

Notes: _____

9. Withers: Appropriate for breed Mutton withered (withers not prominent) Very prominent withers
(shark finned)

Notes: _____

10. Back: Appropriate length Too long Too short Abnormalities Blemishes

Notes: _____

11. Hips/croup: Appropriate for breed Appropriate muscling Abnormalities/blemishes (e.g., hunter's bump)

Notes: _____

12. Tail: Appropriate for breed Too high Too Low Hangs symmetrically Evidence of surgery
 Tail has been injected Abnormalities Blemishes Can use tail properly

Notes: _____



Temperament

1. Overall impression when you approach: Friendly Aloof Grumpy

Notes: _____

2. Does the horse stand quietly for grooming, saddling and bridling? Yes No

Notes: _____

3. Does the horse willingly pick up all four feet? Yes No

Notes: _____

4. While moving around the horse on the ground, ask it to move over, first one direction then the other. Does the horse move willingly? Yes No Does the horse swish its tail or raise a hind leg? Yes No

Notes: _____

Soundness and Way of Going

1. Ask to see the horse on a longe line or in a round pen at the walk, trot and canter in both directions, preferably on a hard surface, and preferably unsaddled. Note the horse's way of going as well as its temperament and willingness. Look for any irregularities in length of stride, head bobbing or other indications the horse may not be completely sound.

Notes: _____

2. Ask to see the horse trotted toward and away from you on the lead line, preferably on a hard surface. Make sure the handler keeps the horse straight. Note any interference or gait irregularities.

Notes: _____

Performance

1. Note the equipment being used on the horse:

Type of bit, hackamore or bitless bridle: _____

Type of saddle: _____

Saddle pad: _____

Girth/cinch: _____

Spurs: _____

Tie down, martingale, draw reins or any other training equipment: _____

Crop or whip: _____

Notes: _____

2. Does the horse stand quietly while the girth/cinch is tightened? Yes No

Notes: _____

3. Does the horse stand quietly while being mounted? Yes No

Notes: _____



- 4. What is the horse's general demeanor under saddle? Watch for any signs of ear pinning, tail swishing, inattention, nervousness or spookiness.

Notes: _____

- 5. How responsive is the horse to the rider's cues? Is the horse soft and willing or resistant? How noticeable are the rider's cues? Pay special attention to gait transitions.

Notes: _____

- 6. Ask seller to have the horse do everything it has been advertised to do, even if you don't plan to make use of all the horse's talents. Make sure you see all gaits in both directions, halts from all gaits, backing, and if the horse was advertised as having lead changes, etc., ask to see those as well.

Notes: _____

- 7. If you still like the horse, ride it yourself and test everything it has been advertised to do. Note how responsive it is to your cues and whether you feel comfortable on it.

Notes: _____

- 8. If possible, ask to take the horse outside of the arena, even if you don't plan to ride on the trail. It will take the horse outside of its comfort zone and give you an idea about its general temperament. Does the horse stay quiet and relaxed, or does it become anxious or spooky? Is the seller hesitant when you ask to ride the horse outside of the arena, or do they even refuse to allow you to do so?

Notes: _____

- 9. If you are buying a horse for a specific purpose, such as trail riding or barrel racing, make sure you get to see and try it thoroughly in that context, even if it means the seller hauling the horse to a place where you can do that.

Stabling/Enclosure

- 1. What kind of enclosure is the horse kept in?

Stall Stall with attached paddock Pasture

Notes: _____

- 2. If the horse is in a stall, how often does the horse get turned out? _____

- 3. If the trash is easily accessible, walk by and look for any tubes of calming paste, syringes or other items of interest.

Notes: _____

- 4. What do the other horses at the facility look like? Are they in good condition?

Notes: _____

Friends' and Trainers' Notes



Part III: Veterinary Pre-Purchase Examination

Before purchasing any horse (or even accepting a free one!), ELS highly recommends you have a veterinarian who has never seen the horse before and has no relationship with the seller perform a thorough pre-purchase veterinary examination (PPE). For more information, please see the series of articles about PPEs that ELS has published in the Equine Legal Library at equinelegalsolutions.com under “Buying.”

Part IV: Purchase Contract

When you are ready to purchase a horse, don't forget the purchase contract! Putting all the important terms in writing helps protect both parties. When buying a horse, if you rely on the seller to provide the sale contract (also known as a bill of sale), you risk the contract favoring the seller and/or not containing all important terms. ELS has a variety of affordable purchase contracts that are specifically designed to protect buyers and are available for immediate download on its website at equinelegalsolutions.com.



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