



Laurel Manor Equestrian, LLC

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Why Lease? An Economical Way to Enhance Your Riding Experience

For the budget minded, leasing a horse is a practical way to make the most of available resources. A lease between an owner and a rider for a horse's use are popular with rider's that wish to expand their horse activities budget without breaking the bank. Leasing is a means to greater equestrian involvement, exclusive horse access, increased skill, and more competition.

Affordable Access

Owning a horse provides riders with the greatest level of flexibility, allowing freedom in competition, skill development, and horse training. However, ownership can be expensive as the actual cost of the horse is in added to the inevitable boarding, feed, training, medical care, routine maintenance, transportation, insurance, and unexpected events quickly add up and strain the budget.

Leasing allows riders to gain access to nearly the same level of benefits while minimizing the risk and commitment that comes with ownership.

While cost savings may be the primary goal for a rider to lease a horse, there are a number of other motivations as well. For example, leasing allows a rider to pursue equestrian interests without making a full-time commitment. It is important to choose a horse who's tried and true, which means leasing allows riders the opportunity to use a horse who has proven to be talented in the arena and safe for riders.

Regularly riding the same can increase a rider's skills more quickly than riding a variety of school horses. Once has rider has learned and shown successfully on a leased horse, they can easily move up to another horse after entering into a new or amended lease. Selling a horse to purchase a new horse is always a burden and worry for owners, even in a healthy market.

To Make a Match

In matching a rider with an appropriate horse to lease, we look at four basic criteria:

1. **Activity:** What will a rider be doing?
2. **Ability:** What is the skill level of the horse and rider? How likely are they to progress together during a lease period?
3. **Size:** Are horse and rider proportioned to one another?
4. **Temperament:** Do the personalities of the horse-rider relationship complement each another?

Leasing Options

Once a match is made, the horse's owner (technically, the "lessor") and the rider (the "lessee") must agree on the terms of the arrangement. There are two basic types of leases:

Full Lease

With a full lease, a rider assumes responsibility for a horse for a fee. In most cases, a lessee will pay some to all of the horse's board, as well as maintenance costs of routine farrier, veterinary care, and any other supplemental care. In return, the rider enjoys the use of the horse and gains special access for competitions and clinics.

Partial Lease

In the case of a partial lease, a lessee agrees to cover a portion of a horse's expenses. This is usually a portion of the horse's board, as well as maintenance costs of routine farrier, veterinary care, and any other supplemental care. In return a rider has a schedule of allotted days to enjoy riding and participating in competitions and clinics.

Nuts and Bolts

A lease agreement between owners and riders, will be detailed in writing to minimize the possibility of miscommunication and misunderstanding.

Although the extent of the details covered in a lease agreement will vary according to the circumstances of a situation, the matters usually addressed include:

- Horse Description: (name, age, breed, gender, height, color, distinguishing markings, registration number, etc.);
- Term Limits: the start and end dates of the agreement (which could be month-to-month or for a year, a season or a series of shows);
- Fees (deposit, rent, late charge) and due dates;
- Stipulations of Use (number of days per week, purpose/ activity, under the guidance of a specific trainer/instructor, etc.);
- Instructions for Care (stabling, turnout, feed, water, supplements, routine veterinary and farrier care, emergency assistance) and who bears the cost;
- Insurance Requirements (if applicable);
- Stipulations prohibiting the horse from being subleased or moved to another location except for travel to a show;

In most cases, the cost of a full lease for a year will range from 25 to 30 percent of the horse's value. For example, a horse worth \$10,000 could be leased for just \$2,500 to \$3,000!

The above highlights are from Linda Buchanan Allen's "The Benefits of Leasing a Horse. How this alternative to horse ownership can help you get your horse fix without maxing out your budget." (The Practical Horseman, Feb 22, 2017)