

Winning characteristics

Ranging in height from 15 to 17 hands and weighing 1,000-1,200 pounds, Saddlebreds come in almost all colors because registration is based on pedigree alone, with no color restrictions.

The head and eye of the ideal Saddlebred suggest refinement and intelligence. Long, sloping pasterns give a spring to the stride, making Saddlebreds very comfortable to ride. High quality, smoothness, and balanced proportions complete an overall picture of symmetry and style.

Perhaps the breed's most distinguishing trait is its mental acumen. Happy, alert and curious, American Saddlebreds possess that people-oriented quality called personality, endearing them to their owners and admirers.

How to get started? Get acquainted!

There are many ways to learn about American Saddlebreds and the people involved with them. A good place to start is the American Saddlebred Horse Association (ASHA). Once you get serious about owning a Saddlebred, you should join ASHA and have access to its wealth of information; membership is required for those doing business with the American Saddlebred Registry.

Another important resource for the new owner is the ASHA Charter Club, made up of local area Saddlebred owners. A worldwide network of more than 45 organizations, Charter Clubs conduct many equine and social activities and are happy to help newcomers learn more about the breed. For younger enthusiasts, more than 60 ASHA Youth Clubs offer projects, activities and camaraderie as they absorb the finer points of horsemanship.

Horse shows are excellent places to meet owners, exhibitors,

trainers, riding instructors, and breeders. At a show, see first-hand how Saddlebreds compete, then visit the stabling area and ask questions. Most Saddlebred people are friendly, helpful and encouraging. One step leads to another, and it's easy to become acquainted with American Saddlebreds and people of all ages who love them.

Set your goals

Before buying an American Saddlebred, you should try to assess your goals. Do you want a show horse? A broodmare? A prospect? A horse to keep in training? At home? How much do you wish to spend? Are you buying as an investment? Strictly for pleasure?

If you wish to ride or drive, evaluate your abilities: Do you have any experience? Is competition a goal? Are you in a lesson program? How much time will be spent with the new horse? Do you have the knowledge and skills to train a horse without assistance? And don't forget physical characteristics: Are you tall or short? Stocky or lean? The size of the horse should suit the rider.

percent of the sales price for either buying or selling a horse on behalf of a client, but there may be additional expenses involved in finding the right horse.

How can you find someone to help you? The best way is to ask for recommendations from experienced people who already own Saddlebreds, such as friends or those involved with an ASHA Charter Club. Having your questions answered will smooth the process of buying a Saddlebred. Keep an open mind, make comparisons, avoid hasty judgments—and have a good time!

Competition

The horse show is the proving ground for American Saddlebreds. Men and women compete on an equal footing, and, as the skills of a rider progress, shows offer opportunities to participate in “big league” athletic competition.

There are local shows where your Saddlebred may compete against horses of different breeds in pleasure, jumping, or trail classes. Riding tournaments, where academy riders show with their peers, are popular for stables with lesson programs. “County Fair” type shows attract entries from the grass-roots level to top contenders, depending on the event's location and management.

At the upper end of the scale are the state fairs and major shows where high performance Saddlebreds compete for championship titles and large purses. The Kentucky State Fair, held in August in Louisville, Kentucky, is considered the World's Championship Show for American Saddlebreds, and the UPHA/American Royal National Championship in Kansas City, Missouri, is home to several blue chip finals. *American Saddlebred* and other publications have listings of U.S. horse shows.

All horse shows, large or small, have many things in common—the excitement of competing, the thrill of achievement, and a keen sense of belonging and fellowship. The competition itself builds sportsmanship and character. Entire families participate in the sport, and the opportunity to travel and show together is often mentioned as one of the best experiences of owning a Saddlebred.

For more information about the breed or membership, contact:



AMERICAN SADDLEBRED HORSE ASSOCIATION

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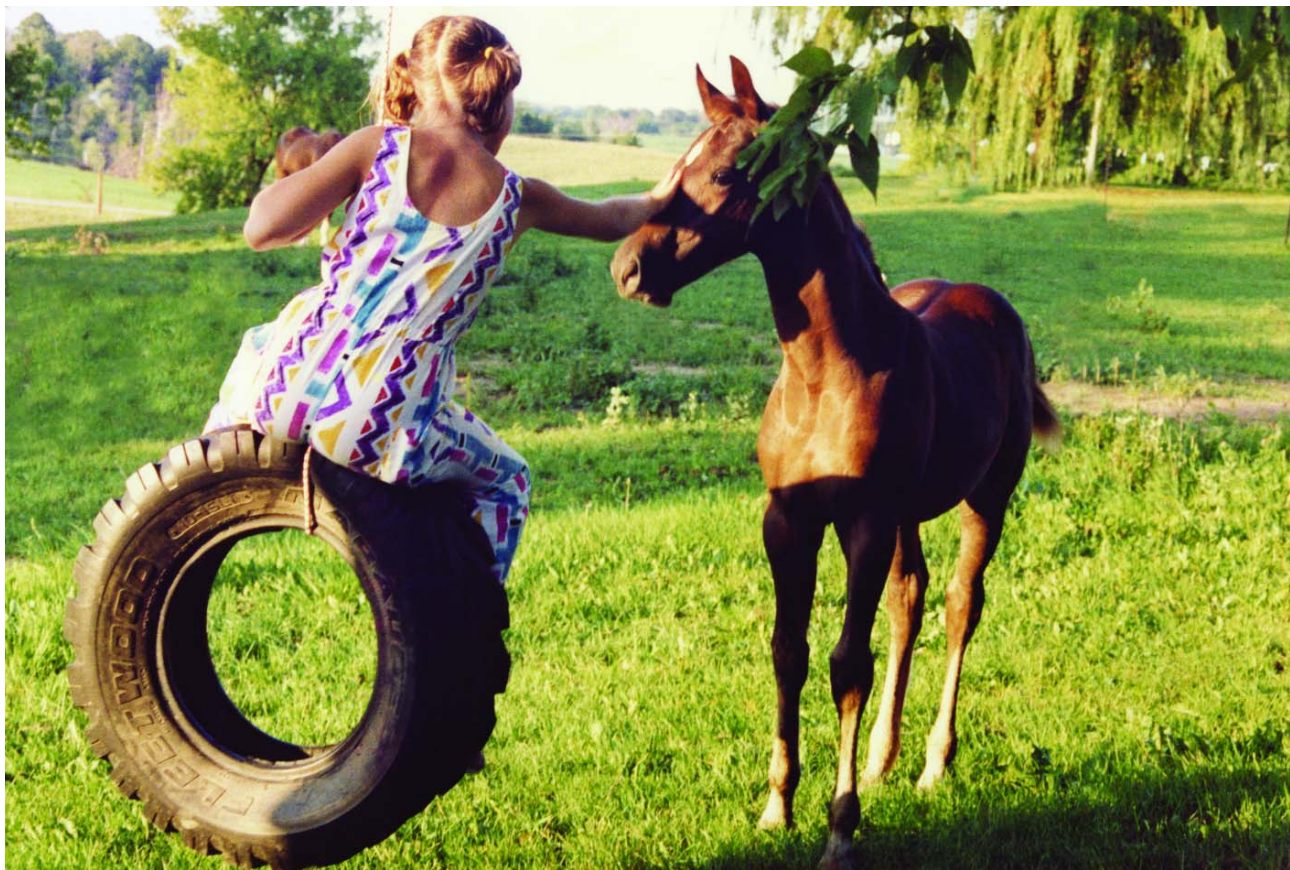
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AMERICAN SADDLEBRED HORSE ASSOCIATION



Newcomers Guide



The cost of ownership

Ownership of a horse is not the exclusive privilege of the wealthy. The original price of an American Saddlebred may have a wide range. However, blue ribbons are based on performance in the show ring, not on the price of the horse. An unbroken yearling out of the field might be purchased at auction for a small price, while a finished show champion or breeding stallion could command hundreds of thousands of dollars in a private sale. Although making a profit on horse ownership is possible, a newcomer should not purchase an American Saddlebred expecting to make money.

The best available barometer of price comes from the records of TSE Tattersalls Sales, a company which holds three public auction sales per year. However, public auctions account for only about 10 percent of all Saddlebreds sold.

In formulating financial plans for horse ownership, a newcomer should look at more than the purchase price. Understanding the expenses of basic horse maintenance is important as well.

- Feed and bedding
- Training
- Farrier (shoeing)
- Veterinary
- Riding/driving lessons
- Tack and equipment
- Riding clothes
- Horse shows and tournaments
- Transportation
- Entry and stall fees
- Hotel and food
- Trainer's per diem fees at horse shows

Most training stables include everything in their monthly fee except shoeing, veterinary, and horse show expenses. Training and boarding costs vary widely, depending upon the area of the country and the level of services offered.

Many American Saddlebreds are ideal for non-competitive pleasure and recreation, and expenses will vary accordingly.

Some other possible expenses to be considered as part of horse ownership are insurance, advertising, stud fees, registration and transfer fees, memberships, and commissions.

Likely places to purchase Saddlebreds are training stables and riding academies where there are always horses for sale. *American Saddlebred* and other publications have country-wide listings to consult, and many horses are listed for sale on the Internet from Web sites to breeding farm home pages. Other opportunities to see and buy horses may be found at breeding farms, auction and/or dispersal sales, and horse shows. Also, trainers and instructors have a network of sources throughout the country and can usually find something suitable if you give them the authority.

Because Saddlebred barns are busy places, courtesy dictates that you call for an appointment before arriving to inspect candidates. Be as specific as possible about the sort of horse you are seeking and your price range.

the seller, and the fee paid to the American Saddlebred Registry. The registration certificate is not legal title to the horse, but is an important document and should be kept in a safe place. If you plan to show, be sure to make copies, because U.S. Equestrian Federation licensed competitions require that a copy be submitted when a horse is entered in a show.

Before you purchase a horse privately, make sure you see the certificate and verify that the seller's name is the same as the recorded owner's name. The description of the markings and color also should be compared to the horse for positive identification before purchase. This may be done by the veterinarian during the pre-purchase examination.

The pre-purchase exam

A pre-purchase veterinary examination for soundness is common practice. A sound horse is one that is free from defects in form or function that may interfere with its usefulness. The veterinarian of your choice should be given some background on what will be expected of the animal in order to determine how detailed the examination should be.

Reputable auctions employ a veterinarian to examine all the horses, with health papers required. However, at the auction, the principle of "buyer beware" applies. Purchasers do have 24 hours in which to reject a horse found not to be as represented—but again, the inexperienced buyer should seek advice.

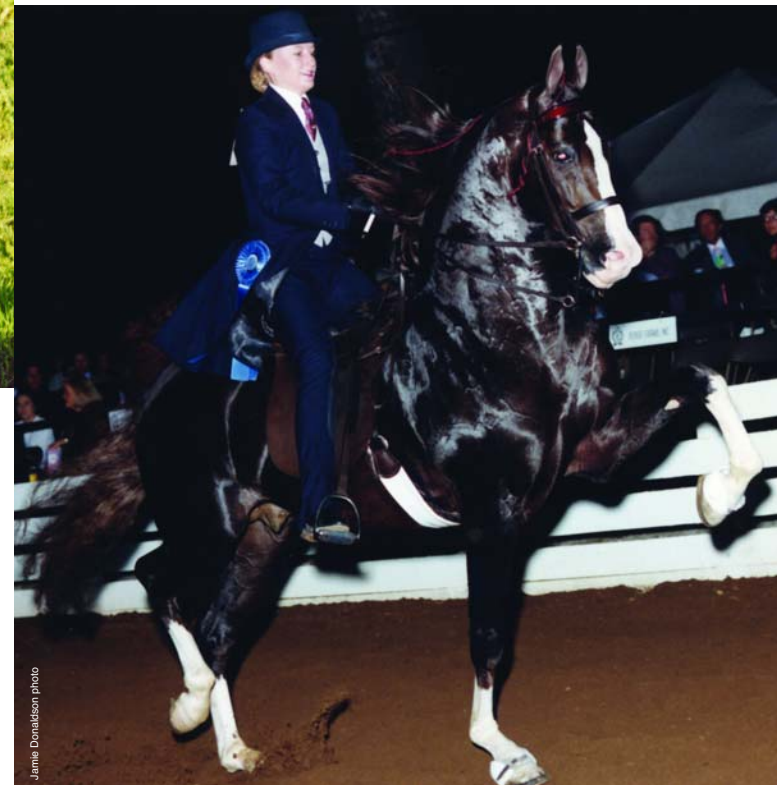
If the sale is private, both buyer and seller may wish to have a purchase contract. It should be drawn up by an attorney, especially if term payments are involved.

Insurance

You may choose to insure your Saddlebred. Many types of equine policies are available from reputable companies with qualified agents ready to explain their plans. Insurance companies often advertise in equine sale catalogues and trade publications.

The trainer/advisor

It often is in your best interest to seek the advice of an expert before buying a horse. An experienced professional advisor will help you avoid mistakes in selecting a horse that is suitable for the way you want to use it. Often your expert will be a trainer or riding instructor, but experienced amateur exhibitors and/or breeders can be competent advisors as well. You should expect to pay for a professional's advice; a clear understanding ahead of time about fees, expenses and commissions is prudent. The standard commission is 10



Jaime Donaldson photo

Transfer of the registration certificate

When a horse is purchased, its registration certificate (the "papers") should be transferred from the previous owner to the new owner. According to Registry rules, the seller (recorded owner) is required to pay for the transfer of the horse and to mail the registration certificate to the Registry. The transfer should be completed and signed by