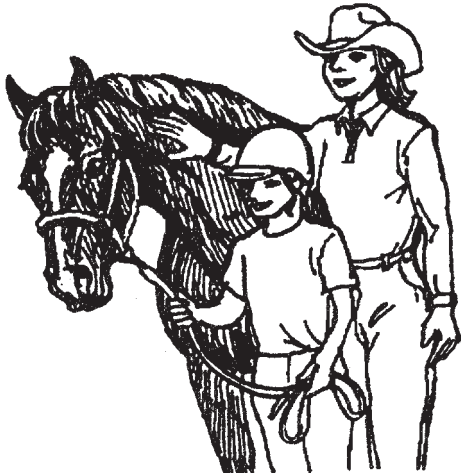


## Selection and Buying



Selecting the right horse is a very important decision.

One of the most important safety decisions you will make is selecting the right horse for you to use or buy. Safety and suitability of horse to rider are the most important factors when selecting a horse. The horse should be appropriate for your level of horse handling and riding skills and, hopefully, as safe as possible for its intended use.

### Purchase or Lease

Begin by consulting a knowledgeable horse person to help select your horse. Qualified, reputable riding instructors, trainers, breeders, veterinarians, or other horse professionals are good sources for help in locating a horse. Next, decide if you will purchase or lease the horse. If you are unable to purchase or lease a horse, you may be able to locate someone willing to share a horse with you. A variety of “*shared horses*” or “*share boarding*” options are available to share expenses and/or responsibility for care of the horse with the owner. The conditions for sharing the horse should be specified in a *written* agreement.

### Suitability

The purpose and intended use of the horse will determine the type and breed of horse that is most appropriate for your needs. An outstanding show horse may not be suitable for competitive or pleasure trail riding. Likewise, an excellent trail horse may not be successful in the show ring.

Carefully compare your horse handling experience and abilities to the experience, ability and disposition of the horse. A novice rider is usually not well suited to a young, inexperienced, or highly spirited horse. An older, calmer horse with a successful show record or considerable experience is generally preferred for young or inexperienced riders. Recommendations from horse professionals or knowledgeable horse owners (other than the seller) can be very helpful in locating suitable horses that match the rider’s ability.

# 4 - H Horse Project Manual - Selection and Buying



Veterinarian examining the horse's mouth.

A qualified veterinarian can help assess the athletic ability, soundness and conformation or structure of the horse with a pre-purchase exam.

The conformation and soundness of a horse affect its suitability for a specific purpose or long-term usefulness. The horse should be balanced, sound, and free of serious structural abnormalities or health problems.

## Disposition

Disposition is the sum of personality, trained manners and experience. It will determine the compatibility of you and the horse. Disposition is extremely important to consider because it is the characteristic that will determine whether or not you actually like your horse. Inquire about his disposition and observe the horse's behavior in his surroundings. Is he gentle and friendly, is he stubborn or lazy, or does he have any bad habits? Don't buy a horse with a bad habit hoping to change its behavior.

Before you climb on, watch someone else ride him. Finally try him yourself. Can you control the horse and does he respond to you?

## Price of the Horse



The price of the horse must be within your budget, and it should be compared to current market prices for similar type horses. Compare prices of horses from several sources, review current sale averages of breed auctions, and talk with knowledgeable horse owners in your area to establish an idea of a reasonable price. However, the purchase price is generally the cheapest part of horse ownership.

## Paperwork

Finally when you have located a suitable horse, request a sales or lease agreement. The sales agreement will define the conditions of sale, and protect you in the event of a later dispute. The agreement should identify the horse, the price, deposit (if required) method of payment, and any other details such as a trial period. A bill of sale, transfer of ownership or registration papers and any required health certificates must be provided at the time of sale. The Animal Pedigree Act of Canada states that, by law, sellers of registered horses must transfer the registration papers to the buyer within six months (or as dictated by the breed association).