



Intercollegiate/Interscholastic Horse Donation and Rehoming Guide



Introduction



This guide is designed to support Interscholastic and Intercollegiate clubs with the processes of horse donation and rehoming. Through this guide you can learn how to solicit, process, and manage horse donations. In addition, we have included input and useful questions for retiring or rehoming a horse.

Included are tips for how to process a donation, from screening a potential addition to your string, bringing a horse into your program, and retiring a polo pony from playing life.

Printable resources have been created to give your club a step up on critical questions to ask potential donors and retirement homes. These documents are not a comprehensive source, but are intended to jump start a club's horse documentation. Customizable files are available at [this link](#).

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Horse Donation Quick Reference

Create donation guidelines

Include things such as age, soundness, and level of play to help your club decide what type of donations they will accept.

What is the playing level of your members? Match the ability of the horse with the club. A hotter horse may not be the best fit for a program that is primarily beginners. An old faithful walk trot pony is not likely to meet the needs of upper level teams. Additionally consider size, temperment, and any vices when accepting a donation

The owner should provide detailed instructions about tack the horse currently uses, feed and supplements, any maintenance the horse requires and a list of past injuries. Check if your state requires a sold or donated horse to have a current EIA/Coggins result or a brand inspection before changing hands.

Don't overcommit

Your club needs to maintain enough horses to sustain your participation while being financially stable to care for the herd. Remember your expenses per horse: board, hay, feed, shots, de-wormer, farrier, vet, etc. and reference your club budget to ensure any additions to the string won't break the bank.

Seek advice

Does someone you know, know the horse? Having a first hand account of the horse will give you insight to whether it will fit into your program. If you don't know anyone familiar with the horse, ask for references. Ask to do a video call with the owner if all else fails. You can see the horse's physical condition and watch it be ridden in real time. If you need help, ask the I/I staff.

Have a pre-purchase vet exam administered so your club has an idea of what additional support the horse may need and that it has vision in both eyes.

Keep in touch

When you decide to accept a donation, be sure to send a thank you letter and stay in touch with the donor with updates and photographs. It is a great way to show your appreciation for your gift. When that pony is ready to retire, contact them first to see if they have any plans for the pony.

If an outside contact helped you find the donation (alumni, board member, club member) make sure to thank them as well!

If you decide the horse won't work for your club, think about who else might be able to accept the donation. Is there another college club that you could suggest to the donor? A high school team?

DONATION FORM

Name of Donor: _____

Date of donation: _____

Street Address: _____

Value of donated horse: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Will you be filing for a tax deduction?

Contact Number: _____

Yes No

Email: _____

Will you ship the horse to our club?

Yes No

If applicable:

Current Veterinarian: _____

Current Farrier: _____

Additional contact (barn manager, groom): _____

Additional contact number: _____

Horse Name: _____

Last Shoeing: _____

Age: _____ Color: _____ Sex: _____

Last Dentistry: _____

Significant Markings: _____

Last De-worming: _____

Most recent vaccinations:

Current physical condition of the horse (circle all that apply):

Sound Recovering from injury In Work Turned out Other: _____

Has the horse been injured or treated for illness in the last 2 years? Circle one: Yes No

If yes, please elaborate:

Does the horse have vision in both eyes?

Yes

No

Does the horse need special shoeing? Yes No

If yes, please elaborate:

DONATION FORM

What level of polo has the horse played?

0-2 goal

4-6 goal

8-12 goal

High goal

Has the horse played in the Arena?

Yes

No

How does the horse go when it plays? (on the bit, downhill, level, up, needs a loose rein, etc.)

What level of player is the horse appropriate for?

Beginner

Intermediate

Advanced

Does the horse have any important behaviors we should know about?

(kicks, cribs, will not tie, girth sensitivity, will not stand for farrier, etc.)

What kind of bit does the horse play in?

Draw reins or straight reins?

Draw

Straight

Current feed or medications the horse is on and amounts:

When the horse reaches the point of retirement from the program would the donor like right of first refusal on taking the horse back?

Yes No

Was there an additional contact that brought this donation to the club?

Intake Information

Intake Status

Once a horse is in your care, you should take note of all significant markings, bumps, and lumps. By having a baseline of what is normal for your new horse, your club will be able to track changes and address any new injuries or masses. Accurate descriptions and recent side and front view pictures of the horse will also aid club members and outside individuals in identifying horses correctly.

Body Condition Scoring

Body condition scoring is a great way to assess the health of your club's horses. Your club should body condition score their herd on a regular basis in order to make adjustments in feed and work load.

Vet Work & Shoeing

If the horse receives regular maintenance work (ulcer medication, joint injections, chiropractic work, etc.) your club needs to share the information with your veterinarian so a prescription can be ordered or upkeep scheduled. As treatment for the horse changes, your club should document them to keep accurate veterinary records.

You should receive shoeing instructions from the horse's previous owner. This information should be tracked and shared with your farrier. You should then continue to add information if your farrier determines that changes need to be made.

Tack

The horse's donor should let you know what type of bridle the horse goes best in, but your club will need to decide what type of saddle the horse needs, any additional padding to help the saddle fit, if the horse requires additional leg protection, etc. All of this information should be written down in the horse's record and tracked as it is changed. Your club should also display this information as a reference for all of your club members to avoid confusion. Include things like if players can wear spurs on the horse and what level of play they are appropriate for.

The First Ride

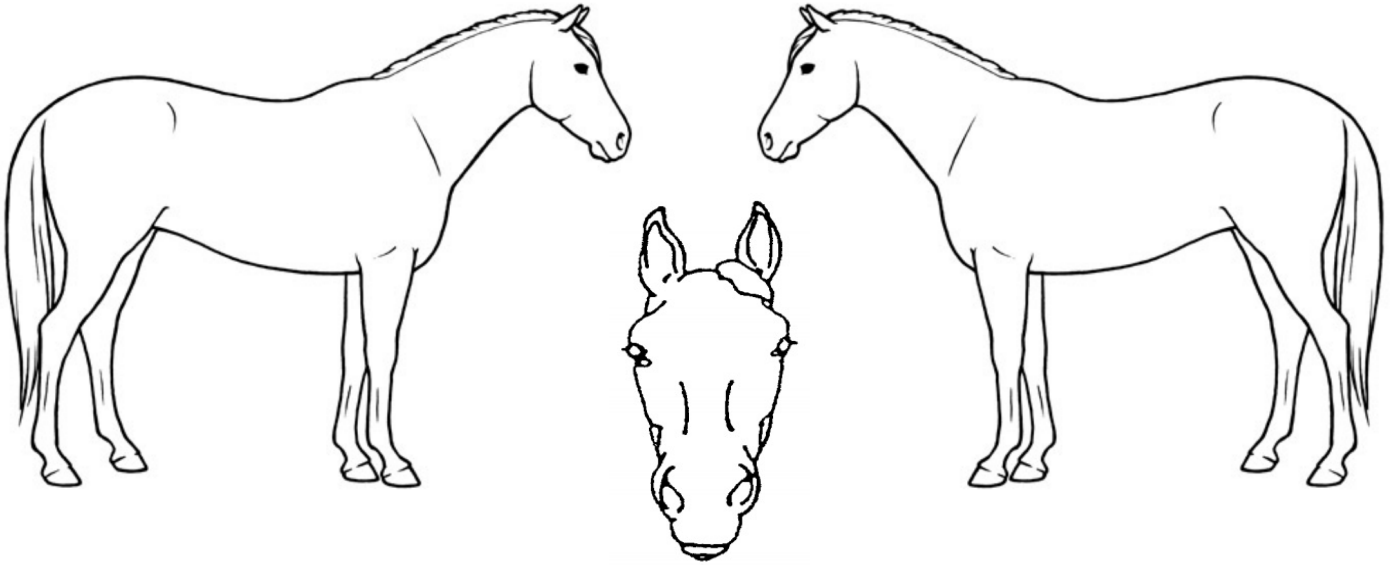
Make sure that an advanced rider is trying a horse for the first few rides and never underestimate a new horse's temperament. If possible, lunge and pony the new horse with a saddle the first few times it exercises so it can get used to its surroundings.

INTAKE FORM

Horse Name: _____ Date donated: _____

Year foaled: _____ Current Feed & Hay: _____

Locate & describe significant lumps & bumps: _____ Tatoo #: _____



Health Information

Dates							
BCS							
Shoeing							
Coggins							
Flu/Rhino							
Rabies							
EEE WEE							
Tetanus							
Dewormer							
Dentistry							

Tack

Bit: _____ Reins: _____

Saddle: high withered, low withered, etc.: _____

Additional padding needed (saddle pads, riser, leg protection, etc.):

Shoeing - fronts or all the way around? _____

Type of shoes: _____

Meds needed for shoeing? _____

Retirement Options

When

It is always better to retire a horse earlier than later. If you know of a good option for a horse that has limited time left in your program, early retirement to a good home is usually the best situation.

Waiting too long to retire a horse can put stress on your resources and bank account if you can't find an appropriate home, especially if the horse is no longer useable to your club.

Who

Your club will need to decide at what physical level the horse can continue to be useful. Is the horse still able to play polo, but needs a lower level? Should the horse only be lightly ridden, but not played? Would a pasture home only be in the horse's best interest?

Mentally, is the horse calm enough to be ridden by children? Could it be of use to a therapeutic riding program?

How

Use your local horse community, social media, and other equine listings to find possible homes for retirees depending on the level of work they can continue at.

Polo

Ask: Local Polo Players, Vets, Farriers, Alumni
Use social media sites

Pasture Pet

Ask: Local Polo Players, Vets, Farriers, Alumni
Use social media sites
Is there a vet school that is looking for teaching horses?

Walk/Trot

Local therapeutic riding rehabilitation
Local barns looking for lesson horses
Trail Horse associations
Hunt Clubs
Ask: Vets, Farrier, Other Trainers, Alumni
Does your university have an annual sale or a website for university owned animals where you could post the horse?

Euthanasia

When your club takes on a donation horse, you commit to doing what is best for that animal and sometimes euthanasia is the most humane option for a horse. Consult with your veterinarian about costs and state regulations. Some vet schools may take on euthanasia cases for teaching purposes.

Critical Retirement Questions

For All Potential Homes:

Who does your veterinarian work?

Who is your blacksmith?

Where will the horses be stabled/turned out?

Who are your clientele, age, need, etc.?

For Personal Riding/Playing Homes:

How often do you plan to ride/play each week?

For Riding/Lesson/Therapeutic Riding Homes:

What type of programs do you offer?

How long have you been in business? Are you growing?

Where do you typically get horses from for your programs?

Tell me a bit about your facility.

Do you operate year-round? Indoor arena?

How many horses do you have on-site? Acreage?

How often are they fed?

How often is a horse used (e.g., more than once a day, once a week)? (This would be helpful to understand if the horse is really “retiring” or just working hard at another job. Also, are they getting enough work to be fit for their new role?)

What is the plan for rehoming a horse once its useful life with your program has ended?

Can our club have the right of first refusal to get the horse back once its useful life with your program has ended?

EXIT FORM

Date horse left the program: _____

Reason for horse's exit: Adopted Sold Euthanasia

If euthanized, explain reason: _____

If adopted or sold, explain decision to move the horse on:

If sold, purchase price received: _____

What level of work was the horse adopted/sold for?

Pasture pet Trail riding/light work Medium work As a playing polo pony

Other: _____

Name of new owner: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Polo Club Representative Signature: _____

Polo Club Representative Name (Print): _____