

Leasing 101

Basic leasing guide for Medicine Hat Area

This criteria is subject to change based on each agreement

What is a lease?

A lease is when you “rent” a horse from someone on a short-term or long-term contract. Usually, leases have a minimum 30 days notice clause to terminate so it should be at least a 30 day commitment from both parties.

Why should you lease?

At some point you are going to outgrow the lessons horses unfortunately, or you’re going to need a change depending on your goals. Lesson horses are picked to be solid and safe to teach beginner students basic horsemanship and confidence. It is a good idea to sit down and have a family discussion about your goals as a rider, lesson horses are great if you are just looking for a once-a-week commitment with no extra responsibility to your horse. If you are looking to expand your knowledge and experience or advance your riding then leasing is the next step. With a leased horse you get the opportunity to do extra things like bathing, clipping, feeding, trail riding, horse shows and clinic. Leasing can help prepare you for owning a horse, not every horse can be leased for the rest of their lives so at some point these to come to an end and either we find another lease or start looking into purchasing your own horse.

How do you know when you’re ready to lease a horse?

Leasing a horse can be overwhelming and exciting, there are some skills you should have to make it a great experience. If you can say yes to all these questions you are one step closer to being ready to lease.

1. Can you catch and safely lead a horse?
2. Do you know all your tack and how it goes on? Or does your parent/guardian know this?
3. Can you mount by yourself?
4. Can you safely walk/trot around the arena in a group setting? (I recommend you know how to canter as well before leasing, just in case your horse decides it wants to test out the faster speeds)
5. Do you know how to care for tack? Cleaning tack is important especially if it is not yours
6. Are you in a lesson at least once a week? (Most people will not lease their horse unless you are supervised at least once a week by a coach)

How much is a lease?

This question is hard to answer as the prices is dependant on each owner. Most beginner leases in Medicine Hat area are fairly economical and run close to the board of the horse, as the level of the horse goes up the price increases as you are paying for the training on that horse as well.

Quarter leases are the minimum, these run around \$175.00 a month and include 6 rides. This usually means you get that horse for your lessons and then a ride on your own every second week. These are good for those just starting out leasing and wanting to see what its about.

Half leases are the most common, these run around \$350.00 a month and include 3 rides a week. This means 1 or 2 lessons a week and 1 or 2 rides on your own. These are the most beneficial to students as they allow more personal ride time, and more options to show.

Full leases are also available, these run from \$500.00 and up. This lease you take over the horse, usually it includes farrier, and vet costs as well but this horse is yours without the cost of purchasing. This is more common for students moving up into some more expensive horse price ranges.

Paid leases are if you are looking to advance your skills you pay for a full lease and then extra on top of this towards the owner. These leases are great for kids looking for a more advanced horse to teach them specific goals.

What are my responsibilities?

Every lease has different responsibilities and will come with a contract to explain these. Most leases include blanketing the horse (or taking it off), taking care of the horse (no sweat marks, bath if need be), cleaning the tack (at least once a month), bits washed after every ride, grain given (if asked).

How do I pick a lease?

You talk to your coach! They will help you coordinate a lease so please let them know ahead of time, there may not be any available at that time or maybe your coach knows of some coming up. Some riders are not suited for some horses, either they are nervous, excited, quiet (this goes for rider or horse). Your coach will help you get set up with the right horse and owner so this can be a great experience.

What do I need to lease?

Most horses come with all their tack that will have to be returned in the same condition so you will need to take care of it. Some need be items include:

1. Own helmet
2. Proper riding pants
3. Whip
4. Riding boots
5. Brushes
6. Saddle soap and conditioner

Some extra items include:

1. Stirrup irons/ leathers (these stretch really easy some owners might make you get them)
2. Saddle pads
3. Treats
4. Gloves
5. Spurs

These items can be found locally at Lammles, Peavey Mart, and the Tack Shack. www.greenhawk.com in Calgary also has lots of affordable items.

So I have a lease now what?

You committed to a lease, you will be shown the horse and all its things by the owner as well as going over the contract. When you come out for your first ride that horse is your responsibility, you catch it, bring it in, brush it, tack it up and ride (follow your previous lesson or tips from your coach). After your ride you cool them down yourself, feed them, brush them, clean your tack, put your horse away, and sweep your area. Have fun!