



STARTER PACK

An introduction to Western for Beginners & Novice Riders

CONTENTS:-

- About The WAQHA
- WAQHA Membership
- Starting Out
- Class Descriptions
- Purchasing a Show Horse
- Western Gear For You & Your Horse
- Horse Preparation For The Show Ring
- Ring Etiquette
- Where to Get Help

ABOUT THE WAQHA

We are a club whose aims are to promote, foster and encourage the development of the Quarter Horse and the western industry in the state of Western Australia.

We are affiliated with the Australian Quarter Horse Association and with their assistance we aim to develop public interest in this wonderful breed of horse Australia wide.

We also aim to promote our youth and amateurs.

We conduct shows and exhibitions for the western industry at regular intervals during the year. The AQHA co-ordinates competitions all over Australia culminating with the huge National Championships held in Sydney each year. Our shows involve many disciplines, such as Halter, Showmanship, Western Pleasure, Trail, Reining and English events such as Hunter Under Saddle.

The WAQHA meets on the second Wednesday of each month. Members are allowed to attend to bring up your thoughts/ideas etc. Please contact our Secretary to advise you wish to attend.

The WAQHA is run purely by volunteers who give up their time to keep the club running at its best.

Our current committee can be found on the [WAQHA](#) website.

We do try to have social events throughout the year away from the show ring, you do not have to be a member to attend these.

The WAQHA does rely on the generous support/donations/sponsorship.

Majority of this is sourced by the committee however we do have some wonderful members who too source sponsorship and donations for the club. Many even donate themselves.

Without this kind of support the club would struggle to be able to supply more than just ribbons at the show, it also ensures better trophies.

So if you can help do let us know. In return we are able to give your business exposure within our club & industry.

Some ideas for donations:

Hoof picks or brushes

Saddle or bridle bag

Wine

Halters/lead ropes

Vouchers

Company products/vouchers

Horse food products

Feed bins/water buckets

Hoof black

Banding lackies

Horse shampoo

Horse rugs

Fly masks/fly veils

Tail wraps

Skinny hoods

Saddle pads

Helmet covers

Hat cans

We also seek monetary sponsorship to cover costs for our shows. These will vary per show.

Should you be able to help in this area please contact the committee on

committee@waqha.com.au

WAQHA MEMBERSHIP

Membership fees are essential to the WAQHA; they help cover some of the association's costs and ability to put shows on for all to attend. Some membership advantages:-

- Receive WAQHA newsletter
- Have your points from shows collated towards end of year awards
- Join the committee if elected
- Reduced entry fees for clinics
- Reduced prices for merchandise

Membership fees are due 1st August each year. Membership forms are located on our website www.waqha.com.au or you can contact committee@waqha.com.au to send you one.

Full Membership

This is an individual membership for 1 person. Any person holding a Full Membership to the WAQHA is eligible to attend and speak at meetings and is entitled to 1 vote.

Youth Membership

A Youth is a competitor 18 years of age and under. For horse show purposes the age of an individual on 1st August of that year shall be maintained throughout the entire year. (Example - a youth who has a birthday in July and is 18 years of age on 1st August, may show throughout the entire year as an 18 year old until 1st August, the following year.) For more information, please see our Youth Page. Youth Members are eligible to attend and speak at meetings, but are not entitled to vote

Family Membership

This is a membership for the entire family, it is to be an immediate family of two adults and two youth members. Each Family Member shall have full riding rights and each adult Family Member eligible to attend and speak at meetings and is entitled to 1 vote.

Life Membership

A life membership is the same as a Full Membership, but it has a subscription period of 20 years. A person holding a Life Membership to the WAQHA is eligible to attend and speak at meetings and is entitled to 1 vote.

Constituent Membership

This is a group membership for corporations, partnerships, societies and associations. Each Constituent Membership as 1 voting right, and each Constituent Membership shall nominate a representative that shall be the person who exercises the rights of the Constituent Membership as if it were a Full Membership

Associate Membership

An Associate membership shall be eligible to attend and speak at meetings, but is not entitled to vote.

STARTING OUT

If you are just starting out, or wanting to change to the western discipline here are a few things that may help you.

If your question is not answered by the below information, contact a WAQHA committee member for help.

We have 4 different levels of shows. A shows, AA shows, AAA shows & B shows.

Other terms you may hear or read on show programs are:

Walk/jog - These classes are great for people (beginners) starting out, young horses or people that feel they are not yet up to loping.

Novice these classes are for people that feel they are not quite up to amateur level yet but are able to lope their horses comfortably.

Senior Horse & Junior Horse Senior is a class only for horses 6 yrs and older. Junior Horse is class only for horses under 6 yrs of age. Any rider can enter these classes, including youth and trainers etc.

Amateur - These classes are only for people who hold an amateur owner card (acquired from the A.Q.H.A.) which means that the horse you show must be either owned or leased by you or your immediate family and that you have not shown, trained or assisted in the training of a horse for either direct or indirect compensation in the three years prior to application or your amateur ticket.



Youth - these classes are for people aged 18 yrs and younger.

Jog this is a two beat gate best described as a very slow trot.

Lope this is a three beat gate best described as a very slow canter.

Rein back go backwards.

If you compete in Beginner Rider or Novice Rider categories you are **not eligible** to compete in youth or amateur categories.

No Stallions/colts in any type of Beginner or Novice event, halter or performance.

Owning a Quarter Horse

If you purchase a registered quarter horse, you need to get the horse transferred into your name. The seller is to provide you with the transfer papers, which you complete and send to the AQHA with your membership fees (if not already a member), in which the AQHA will return to you with you as the new (current) owner. Once you've stepped up past walk/jog and novice to show at WAQHA shows you need to be a member of the AQHA and you must have signed the insurance waiver form, this ensures you are covered under the correct insurance should anything happen. If you are unsure of any of this please make contact with the WAQHA President.

The Clothes

To compete at any western show in a **Beginner or Novice style class** you must wear long pants (slacks or jeans), long sleeve shirt (cowboy/western style would be nice) and a western style hat (Akubra is fine), boots can be western/cowboy style or jodhpur boots for this level. You are allowed to use kind spurs. Belts & Chaps are not necessary at this level. Once you have left this level, then there the dress regulations become strict and you must adhere to the AQHA rules and regulations.

The Horse Gear

For this level of riding the saddle can be anything safe which horse & rider are comfortable. Beginners – can ride in snaffle bit or shank bit (riders can 2 hand in a shank bit). Novice – if using a snaffle, riders must use 2 hands, if using a shank bit, riders must 1 hand. (Choice of bits is at the competitor's discretion)

If you only have an english saddle but would like to try western at this level you can use them in either category (and vice versa if you have only a western saddle for hunt classes).

Basically your gear must be clean, safe and tidy. Once you have left this level, then there the gear regulations become strict and you must adhere to the AQHA rules and regulations.

Climbing The Ladder

If you are new to this industry and when we say new it could mean this is your first attendance to a western show or you've been trying it now for 12 months or so and are still learning. You may not fully understand the levels of competition, below is a listing of how the western industry works.

- You start off in the "beginner walk/jog" classes, the titles of these classes can vary from club to club. But this is basically for the "absolute" beginner. Horse & rider have very little western experience or exposure
- Once you gain confidence but still not ready to canter or lope you can move up to the "Open or Improver walk/jog" class. This is for people who've done some showing, or their horse is more trained or experienced and the rider has more knowledge than a beginner. This class also can contain experienced riders with green horses.
- Once you've nailed Beginner/Open and you're feeling you and your horse can take on the lope/canter, then "Novice" is your next step.
- Please note once you have left each of these levels you cannot return to that level unless you have permission from the club that is putting on the show that you are riding at.
- Once you're feeling on top of the world and ready to take it on you have two options depending on your age. If you are a Youth (under 18) you can now step up into the "Youth" classes, Youth can also enter "Junior & Senior Horse" classes. If you are over 18 you can now purchase your Amateurs ticket. Amateurs can also enter "Junior & Senior Horse" classes and at A & AA shows can enter "Open" classes.

CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

Here is a brief description of the different types of events we hold at our Western shows:

WESTERN PLEASURE This event you ride with all the other competitors in a circle around the judge who will ask you to walk, jog, lope and rein back your horse in both directions. The horse is being judged and they are evaluated on their quality of movement through the gaits whilst staying calm and quiet when travelling on a loose rein.



WESTERN HORSEMANSHIP is an event where every rider rides individually through a pattern set by the judge on the day. The pattern will generally include various manoeuvres at the walk, jog and lope. The rider is being evaluated in this event with judges focusing on body position & seat and the rider's ability to control the horse.



TRAIL is an individually ridden class that is also to a set pattern and will consist of working thru different obstacles, working over poles and around cones including rein back, gates, bridges and side passes.

REINING is ridden to a set Reining Australia pattern (there are 10 patterns and 2 practice patterns) and will contain movements such as stops, spins, rollbacks, lead changes and circles at a lope. It is ridden with some speed and the horse should show willingness to be guided with little or no resistance.

WESTERN RIDING is an event where riders ride individually through a set pattern and will generally be required to work a log on the ground and perform a number of flying lead changes in lope. This class is generally ridden with some speed. The horse is being judged on the ability to stay sensible, well mannered and be free and easy moving.

All the above events are ridden in western attire and using western tack.



HUNTER UNDER SADDLE This event where all riders ride together in a circle around the judge and again will be asked to walk, TROT & CANTER in both directions. Emphasis is placed on the correct head carriage of the horse (not too low) and also the smoothness of the gaits of each horse.

HUNT SEAT EQUITATION is ridden individually following a set pattern by the judge. Again, you will be asked to ride various manoeuvres at walk, TROT & CANTER. Most patterns will contain the changing of gaits (to show smoothness of changes), travelling a figure 8 pattern specifically looking at correct rider rising diagonals, and maybe a rein back. Emphasis is placed on the ability to maintain body position and direct your horse on the precise pattern.

Competitors are required to wear English attire and use English tack. Spurs are optional.

NOTE - when starting/finishing your pattern at cones, it is your horse's SHOULDER that must be level with the cones, NOT HIS FEET OR YOUR BODY. Unless the pattern states differently.



HALTER CLASSES are divided into mare/filly, colt/stallion and gelding classes and will be further divided by horses age ie: gelding 3 years and under and then gelding 4 years and over. The object of these classes is to show the best conformed animal. Each competitor will do a small walk and jog out for the judge so the judge can evaluate movement of the horse, then all competitors will line up whilst the judge inspects each horse's conformation on an individual basis.

SHOWMANSHIP AT HALTER is a class that is based solely on the competitor and their ability to control their horse whilst manoeuvring through a set pattern. Each competitor will take their turn to do the pattern and the judge is looking for precision and style throughout the movements which will include jogging out, squaring up for presentation, pivoting, and backing.



All horses must be shown in a western halter in these classes. Bits and whips are not allowed at any time. For halter classes the chain can be placed under the chin or over the nose of the horses, and all colts and stallions must be exhibited in this manner. However in showmanship if you have a chain it must be under. Attire is western.

Please refer to the AQHA rule book for further information on our classes.

What To Look For When Purchasing Your Show Horse

This is probably the most daunting part of getting yourself into the show ring. Purchasing the right horse for what you want to do!!

You will be told many a different thing from every person you talk to you.

Here are a few simple tips; we hope that they help you.

- Quarter horses are extremely versatile but you need to decide what it is you like to do and look for something that is going to get you to where you want to go. For example if you only want to show in halter classes buy a halter bred horse, it will need to have a good body and confirmation. If western pleasure/trail riding and showing is what you are looking for then these things are not as important in a good pleasure horse. Ridden only horses do not necessarily need great confirmation. And you'll need to be looking for a horse with the right breeding for pleasure work. If reining or cow work is what you are after then a more forward type of horse is what you will need. Bloodlines are very important in most cases, for example a bloodline of pure cutting or reining horses will not necessarily be a great western pleasure horse.
- Acquire the AQHA number or show name of the horse you are interested in and look on the AQHA website (www.aqha.com.au) for the horses performance record, this will give you an idea of what the horse is capable of or has done (if it's not a baby).
- There are many adverts that read "Western Trained" this can cover many aspects of this industry and can be deceiving. Unfortunately a horse that has spent its life chasing cows for example is not necessarily going to be the best buy for a pleasure show horse.
- Learn and look into the horses breeding and at the performance of other progeny by the same stallion will give you an insight to what the horse maybe or could be capable of.
- There are many studs breeding for specific needs. If you are looking at buying a riding horse (pleasure/trail/hunt) that has already been there done that and is highly trained, then your price range will be \$8,000-\$20,000+.
- Your other option is to buy a young horse but remember unless you have the knowledge and experience, you will need help from trainers and it may take longer to get to the show ring. This option may seem cheaper initially but the costs of training and lessons add up over time. For a newcomer to this industry this really is not the way to go until you are experienced.
- Research is your best tool. Chat to everyone possible.
- Remember western pleasure riding isn't as easy as just jumping on your horse, there is much to consider in regards to the right horse for the right ride. Training and lessons are vital.
- Any queries at all on purchasing a western horse drop the WAQHA committee a line and they will happily help you.



WESTERN GEAR FOR YOU & YOUR HORSE

Sadly in WA western saddlery stores are few and far between. Most of us have to buy from over east or overseas or even Ebay. However some gear can be bought in Perth. Below is a listing of Perth stores that can help you. Ensure you do your homework when purchasing your western gear, it can be a costly mistake if you don't. Any queries don't hesitate to contact a committee who'll do their best to help you.

HORSELAND

SADDLEWORLD MIDLAND

Below is a listing of Eastern States stores, you have the option of buying over the phone or buying online with most of these stores. Many of these are sponsors or donators to the WAQHA, please do support them.

WESTERN WORLD SADDLERY

www.westernworldsaddlery.com.au

IVY WESTERN WEAR & SADDLERY

www.ivywesternsaddlery.com.au

GREG GRANT SADDLERY

www.greggrantsaddlery.com.au

CROWN MANOR STABLES

(ride-able western saddle covers)
www.crownmanorstables.com.au

SADDLE TRAMPS HORSE GEAR

www.saddletrampshorsegear.com.au

HORSEMANS TRADING POST

www.horsemanstradingspost.com.au

OZWEST SADDLERY

www.ozwestsaddlery.com

IDEAL WESTERN SADDLERY

www.idealwesternsaddlery.com

MCDONALDS WESTERN SADDLERY

www.mcdonalds-saddlery.com.au



HORSE PREPARATION FOR THE SHOW RING

A well-groomed and a smartly turned out horse just might give you that extra edge in the show-ring. Everybody prepares differently but here are several steps most use in preparation for a show. There is no harm in starting preparation well and truly before the show to make life a little easier and more relaxed.

Ensure you regularly brush your horse this helps stimulates and assist in placing a nice shine/gloss on your horse's coat.

Clipping is not a necessity however clipping will give your horse a neat, polished look and make it appealing to the judge. If you are not experienced with clippers, clipping a week before reducing any lines or marks. Preference is given to using electric clippers; however you can also use scissors. You can purchase horse clippers however for about \$30.00 a set of hair clippers from Big W or the likes will suffice. Areas to clip:-

Bridle Path - The bridle path should be clipped to approximately 6-8 inches in length; a good rule of thumb is to clip the length of your horses' ear when laid back on the Crest of the neck

Ears - Excess hair in the ear should also be removed. A good way to clip the ear without removing too much is to fold the ear in half and clip away anything that sticks out beyond the edges of the ear.

Nose – Clipping the whiskers from the nose gives a more finished look in the show arena. Be careful of the skin which has a tendency to wrinkle when clipping the whiskers from around the nose to avoid cutting your horse.

Fetlocks - When trimming the fetlocks, remove any excess hair to make it look clean and try to make the hair lay as naturally as possible.

Bathing Your Horse

Best done the day before the show. You will need water, shampoo, conditioner, sweat scraper, sponge and bucket.

Use a quality shampoo for the body, mane and tail but only use the conditioner for the mane and tail. Sometimes it is less hard work to use a sponge and bucket to do the head area, with the sponge thoroughly dampen his head at this point wash his forelock, you need to be careful with the shampoo as you don't want to get this in his eyes, wash horses face then rinse off. With horses who have white markings such as socks and blazes you can use a small scrubbing brush to get them clean and then dry them thoroughly before moving him from the wash bay.

You can now band the horse if you wish, as he may still be wet put a clean warm rug on him to stop him from getting a chill. You may also wish to apply a coat conditioner to help repel dust and to make a nice shine once the horse is dry.

Mane & Tail

Banding is not a necessity it can be left clean and free flowing however it can make your horse's mane lie flat and close to his neck even on a windy day and when the mane lies close to the neck it can give the illusion of a slimmer neck.

You will need rubber bands (appropriate colour for horse) Plait spray, alligator hair clips, comb, stool, spray bottle and scissors.

If the mane has become a little dry spray with some water you don't need to drench the mane just dampen the area you are working on. Starting towards the Poll take a section of the mane approx half inch to three quarters of an inch separate the rest of the mane by using your hair clips. Spray the piece of mane you are working on with a little of Plait Spray and then comb downwards, once you have it neat wrap the rubber band around until firm closest to the crest as possible. With the piece of mane you have just placed a rubber band around take it in two sections split it by grabbing half of the bottom in one hand and then the other half in the other hand and very gently press your thumb in the middle to push the band even further up to the crest of the neck you should gently pull the bottom



piece of mane at the same time, this does take some practice. Continue this process until all the mane has been banded. Once you have finished banding the mane tidy up by trimming the mane even do not make too much of a fuss as the mane will still be damp and it will sit differently once dry finish the trimming the day of the show.

To finish off you can either loosely plait the tail and then place in a tail bag or just place straight into the tail bag, ensure the tail bag fits well so during the night the tail does not come out, you can always tape the tail once in the tail bag half way down to stop it from coming out. The tail can again be left clean and free flowing or you can add a false tail.

Place night rugs on ensuring they are clean and fitted correctly. You can use a skinny hood which attaches under the belly to ensure the mane is kept flat, however please note with the skinny hood as some of them can agitate the eyes.

Clean Tack

For that overall look ensure your gear is clean, any silver is shiny

Show Day

Take off all rugs and thoroughly groom horse, clean all debris off hooves ready to be painted. For white markings chalk the areas or use a Horse Whitening Cream, if using the whitening cream ensures the white areas are damp before applying as this will ensure no streaks. This can be done on show day or the day before, however the day before sometimes you'll find that it would have rubbed off overnight. Use a black shiny polish or clear lacquer on all four hooves; whilst these dry you can trim up the bands. With some black chalk or polish you can polish up his chestnuts. At show a final preparation with some makeup around the muzzle, eyes if required. A final wipe over with a sheepskin mitt to rid any dust of his coat and put a little more gloss for that extra wow factor.

RING ETIQUETTE

This is **EXTREMELY** important, not only for the pleasurable experience for all riders but also for the safety of all in the arena and marshalling area.

Please remember these few rules when riding at a show:-

- When in the warm arena
 - If changing direction or stopping, always look behind or in that direction first, giving way to other riders
 - Always listen out for the gate marshall calls and act upon all calls immediately.
 - Do not enter the show ring until a gate marshall advises you and always enter at the gait they tell you to, always leaving a good space between you and the horse in front.
 - If your horse is badly misbehaving, please remove it from the warm up area as soon as it is possible and safe.
 - If you have any queries and are unsure please make contact with one of the show officials in the marshalling or office area. They will be wearing show official badges.

- When in the show ring
 - Overtaking is always done to the inside of the arena, do not cut across the arena or do a small circle to make space, just pass on the inside leaving plenty of room around the horse you are passing.
 - Though not a rule, at this level, when the judge asks you to change direction, always look behind and do not make your move until the person behind you has. However if they are taking too long, maybe they didn't hear make your move and they should follow.
 - Though not a rule, at this level, when the judge asks to move up a gait, wait until the horse in front of you has moved up to the gait, otherwise you could collide or have to immediately overtake. However if they are taking too long move immediately up to the required gait and overtake.
 - If your horse is misbehaving badly in the show ring bring your horse to the middle of the arena and wait there until your event has been completed and is leaving the arena



WHERE TO GET HELP WITH YOUR HORSE OR RIDING

Western riding is quite a skilled ride, and tho at this level you can ride to be competitive most people like to go to trainers or coaches to have lessons or send their horses to a trainer for further education.

You can contact any of the committee members who can point you in the direction of who would be suit your needs or here is a list of the names and phone numbers of a few of the coaches/trainers we have over here in WA. You will find that some of them will travel to give lessons and that most of them will take horses on for a number of weeks (depending on how much work your horse needs). They will be able to help you with more of the finer points of showing in this industry and show you most of all how to enjoy your horse while you learn and have fun showing!

Check out the WAQHA website for contacts!

Remember, the most important thing of all when showing is to enjoy yourself!

