



4-H Parent Guide

4-H Horse Project

A Guide for Raising Horses

Horse Selection

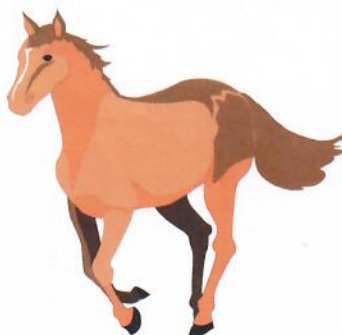
Rider ability and type of discipline should be the main factors used when selecting a horse for a 4-H project. There is no "one size fits all" when it comes to selecting the right horse for each 4-H'er. It is simply a matter of personal choice. Keep in mind that stallions are not permitted in 4-H shows, but there are no specific breed recommendations for 4-H project animals. These factors are keys to determining if a horse is right for your project:

- Conformation
- Movement
- Trainability

General Care and Management

Vaccination

- Tetanus
- Rabies
- Eastern and western encephalomyelitis
- West Nile
- Influenza
- Rhinopneumonitis



Coggins

- Annually test for equine infectious anemia, as required by Louisiana law

Internal parasites

- Perform fecal analysis
- Deworm according to veterinarian's recommendations

External parasites

- Flies and mosquitoes
- Treat with appropriate insecticide

Health exam

- Dental
- Body condition score
- Disease prevention

Hoof care

- Establish a hoof care regimen with advice from a veterinarian or trained farrier

Horse Exercise

- Improves muscle development
- Improves condition of muscle
- Improves performance
- Decreases injury

Exercise plays a vital role in ensuring your horse is in adequate condition to compete at its optimum performance level. Begin practicing and exercising your horse a minimum of three months prior to any show. This will help improve performance and reduce chances of injury.



Feeding Facts:

- Routine schedule (feed at the same times daily).
- Minimum of 10-12 gallons of water daily.
- Free choice water.
- Feed 3 percent of body weight as roughage (hay or pasture).
- Introduce grain in small amounts.
- No more than 1 percent of body weight in grain.
- Feed by weight NOT volume.
- Supplements normally are not needed.
- Pasture is preferred.

Project Costs

1. **Animal cost** — low end is \$1,000, and the sky virtually is the upper limit
2. **Hay cost** — \$650 to \$1,250 per year (185 bales of hay per year: \$650 in field, \$950 at farm, \$1,250 feed store)
3. **Grain** — \$500 per year (5 pounds per day)
4. **Hoof care** — \$250-\$300 (no shoes); \$600-\$750 (standard shoes)
5. **Veterinary care** — \$300 (basic vaccinations and deworming, no accidents or illness)

6. **Bedding** — \$150 - \$850 (\$150 run-in sheds; up to \$850 for well-bedded, maintained stall)
7. **Equipment** — low end is \$600 (saddle, bridle, pad, grooming supplies, halter and lead rope, etc.)

Total project cost: \$3,450 - \$4,800

On average, it costs \$2,000 to \$4,000 per year to maintain a horse after the initial investment of purchasing the horse and the equipment.

Basic Housing Facilities

Equine facilities can vary in cost and extravagance. This information may be useful to help you get started if you plan to keep your horse on your own property:

- Check the zoning laws to make sure horses are permitted.
- Provide adequate housing. Area should be clean, dry and free from drafts, with adequate sunlight and ventilation. A full-size horse needs a minimum of 10-foot-by-10-foot or 10-foot-by-12-foot stall.
- Remember you need utilities such as water and electricity and a place to store feed and equipment, etc.

- Your horse needs an exercise area such as a pasture, riding arena or turn-out area where it can get adequate exercise.

- Basic facility costs:

- o Fenced paddock, 50-by-50 feet (200 square feet at \$5 per square foot) = \$1,000

- o Shed 10 feet by 12 feet (120 square feet at \$6 per square foot) = \$720

- o Storage 8 feet by 10 feet (80 square feet at \$8 per square foot) = \$640

- o **Facilities Total: \$2,360**



Glossary

Stallion – adult male horse

Mare – adult female horse

Gelding – castrated male horse

Foal – generic for juvenile horse

Colt – male juvenile horse

Filly – female juvenile horse

Vital Signs

Temperature – 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit

Pulse – 35-40 beats per minute

Respiration – 8-15 breaths per minute

Gut sounds – 3-4 per minute

Capillary refill time – 1-2 seconds



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The LSU AgCenter and LSU provide equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Reference: Dr. Neely Walker, LSU AgCenter Equine Specialist



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Louisiana 4-H is an educational program of the LSU AgCenter.