

Hunter Valley Riding Academy

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Lesson Horse Program

New Rider Introductory Lesson

\$130

All new students begin with this 2 hour introductory lesson. The first hour of instruction covers handling the horse on the ground, grooming and tacking. The student then will mount and ride for 30 minutes. After completing the mounted portion of the lesson the student will return to the grooming area and be instructed in the untacking and storage of the equipment, post ride care of the horse and returning the horse to the corral.

“Pay as you Go” Single Lesson Rate

\$100

Available for Students taking an occasional flat lesson.

*Payment is due at the time of the lesson, cash payment only.

LESSON PACKAGES:

By signing up for a package, clients will save \$20-\$40 per session when compared to the single session rate. Payment is due at the start of the month and may be paid by cash, check or online, upon receipt of your HVRA Quickbooks invoice.

4 Lessons Pre-Paid Package

\$320

8 Lessons Pre-Paid Package

\$560

Except for new clients starting lessons mid-month, we do not offer prorated packages, and all packages are intended to be used in the same calendar month. Please see the Makeup lessons policy page for information about missed and/or makeup lessons.

Jumping Lessons...

Jumping vs riding on the flat requires a lot more physical effort by the horse. It also increases wear and tear as well as the risk of injury. Because of that, good horse management practices limit the number jumping sessions per week that a horse should do. This limited workload makes it impossible for us to utilize them often enough in the school program to cover their monthly overhead.

Therefore, **any student wishing to jump must lease or own their a horse.**

Lesson Duration and Student Responsibility...

All students are asked to show up ½ hour before their scheduled lesson time in order to groom and tack their assigned horse and clean their cross tie area before leaving for the mounting block. Regularly scheduled private lessons include ½ hour of mounted instruction, semi-private (2-3 riders) will include 45 minutes of mounted instruction and group lessons (4 or more riders) will include an hour of mounted instruction. At the instructor's discretion, as in the case of inclement weather (ie rain, wind, excessive heat) or issues concerning the well-being of either the horse or rider, the duration of a lesson may be shortened accordingly. At the end of each lesson, students are expected to adequately groom their horse, return the equipment neatly to the tack room and **sweep the cross tie area when finished.**

Missed Lesson Policy...

The cost of riding lessons is significant because the cost of maintaining a string of school horses is astronomical. Each school horse cost an average of \$650 - \$900 per month for board, farrier, supplements, and staffing adds 35% more to the overhead. This means at a minimum, 12-16 lessons per month/3-4 lesson per week have to be taught on that horse to BREAK EVEN on its costs. Last minute cancellations and/or inclement weather means the horse(s) sits idle in the corral that day, and with overhead high and profit margins low it doesn't take much to actually lose money on our school horses.

Policies regarding cancellations and makeup lessons...

- **24 hour cancellation notice is mandatory for all students in order to be eligible for a makeup lesson.**

It is not feasible to fill the slot with another student on short notice, so the school horse earmarked sits idle that day. Students who utilize the "Pay as you go" option will be expected to pay for their late cancellation when they come for their next lesson.

- **NON-MOUNTED horsemanship lessons are substituted for days that the weather prevents us from safely teaching mounted lessons** (too hot, too rainy, too muddy, too windy). Non-mounted lessons sometimes will happen the same day the lesson was originally scheduled, but often we schedule the horsemanship lesson for a future day when conditions are more tolerable and/or allow for hands-on lessons. Our horsemanship lessons are very comprehensive, and students will be given a HV binder and printed pages of the lessons completed.

- **A maximum of 1 MOUNTED makeup lessons may be carried forward to the next month for riders enrolled in a once a week package, a maximum of 2 MOUNTED for riders enrolled in a twice a week package.** Riders with makeup lessons in excess of this limit will be offered non-mounted horsemanship lesson(s) for remaining balance. To carry over more mounted makeup lessons than this creates too much of a burden on the school horses.

- Clients are not allowed to use their mounted makeup lesson(s) in lieu of paying for a new package, (or drop down from an 8 package to 4 package), unless they pay the difference in the pay as you go rate and/or package rate.

- Clients pausing lessons for more than one month will lose any accumulated makeup lessons.

Absolutely no refunds or prorated packages will be offered for missed lessons regardless of why they were missed or cancelled.

Scheduling makeup lessons...

Regardless of the reason, ALL missed lessons (except those cancelled with less than 24 hours notice) are eligible for a makeup lesson of some sort, it just may not always be mounted. Please remember that while I do keep a record of all lessons taken, I do not keep a running tally during the month, so be proactive and request your makeup when texting me with your availability for that week. If you know ahead of time you are going to miss a week you can also take your makeup lesson ahead of time. The goal will be to schedule a mounted makeup lesson whenever possible, but it is at my discretion to substitute an unmounted lesson if:

- 1) The lesson horses are maxed out that week. For the health and happiness of the school horses, I do not ask them to work more than twice on the same day.
- 2) A prolonged inclement weather pattern is going to cause too many students to miss lessons, therefore creating situation #1 above.
- 3) A beginner student (or young student with parent helper) has taken 4- 6 lessons and is still struggling to correctly work through the tacking and untacking process. These students will be given a repeat of their first lesson on grooming, tacking and handling the horse.

Full and Half Lease Program

We have a number of wonderful horses available for lease. Leasing is a great opportunity for any level of rider to improve their skills quickly, as riding the same horse every time really improves the learning curve. Lease riders also get more experience in horse husbandry, and get to spend extra time loving and caring for that special horse! It is a great stepping stone to owning your own horse, or a great option if horse ownership is not in your budget. Leasing gives you the experience of owning without the responsibility and expense beyond the lease term. Leasing can be the most cost effective way of advancing a student to the next level in their riding, before they consider purchasing their own horse. Additionally, you pay a **reduced rate for your lessons when in a lease.**

There are 2 components to most lease situations: the lease fee and the cost of care.

The lease fee varies from horse to horse, depending on their athletic ability, training and demeanor. This is a fee you pay to the owner of the horse over and above the cost of care.

The cost of care also varies from horse to horse. While most things such as board are relatively consistent, the cost of shoeing, additional feed/supplements, and training needs can differ from horse to horse.

Leases are Full or Half. A Full Lease entitles you to full access to the horse, a Half Lease entitles you to limited access to the horse - up to 3 days a week.

HVRA Horses lease horses – level 1-3 horses are horses that are utilized in “school string” as well as being available for lease.

Level 1 horse – This horse is suitable for flat work only – no jumping

Level 2 horse – This horse is suitable for riders from the crossrails – 2’0 level.

Level 3 horse - This horse is suitable for riders from the 2’0-2’3 level. Riders wanting to jump higher must do a Show lease.

In Barn Show Lease/Out of Barn Show Lease – These 2 types of leases are considered show horses and are not utilized in the “school string”. Depending on in-house horse availability and riders goals, an outside lease may be needed. The lease fee varies depending on value and skill level of the horse. In Barn Show Lease fees typically range between \$500-\$1000 per month and Out of Barn Show Lease fees are \$1000 and up per month.

Lease Fees for HVRA Horses – Full and Half Leases

	1 year contract	6 month contract	3 month contract	30 day trial contract
Level 1 horse full	\$2000	\$1250	\$750	\$300
Level 1 horse half	\$1300	\$750	\$450	\$200
Level 2 horse full	\$4000	\$2500	\$1500	\$400
Level 2 horse half	\$2500	\$1650	\$950	\$300
Level 3 horse full	\$5000	\$3500	\$2000	\$500
Level 3 horse half*	\$3000	\$2000	\$1250	\$400

**To prevent excessive wear and tear on the horse, riders wishing to jump 2’0-2’3 and over must be in a full lease. It is at HVRA’s discretion to allow 2 riders to share a lease on a level 3 horse.*

Cost of Care Estimates

Basic Monthly Items	Full lease	½ lease
Board (24x24 1/2 cover vs full cover)	\$450-\$500	\$225-\$250
Tack Room Rental	\$20	\$10
Farrier Services - every 5-7 weeks (approximately)	\$125-\$300	\$62.50-\$150
Additional feed/lunch (approximately)	\$70-\$100	\$35-\$50
Supplements/medication (approximately)	\$30-50	\$15-\$25
AVERAGE cost of care range	\$700-\$875	\$350-\$435

Semi Annual/Annual Items

Wormer every 6 month	\$20	\$10
Semi-Annual vaccinations	\$60-\$100	\$30-\$50

When needed Items

Body shaving (1 or 2 times season)	\$200	\$100
Blanketing in winter	\$75	\$37.50

Tack Estimates

In time, you may want to purchase your own equipment (especially a saddle), but we will provide the following items as part of your lease. In most lease situations (other barns, outside lease horse) you are required to purchase your own tack, so not having to buy all your own equipment dramatically offsets the HVRA lease fee. Should any items be broken during use you will be expected to replace them. You will need to purchase your own consumable goods such as fly spray, shampoo, horse cookies and such.

Sheet/fly sheet	\$60	Saddle pads	\$200
Winter blanket	\$150	Girth	\$100
Saddle	\$1200-\$3500	Split boots	\$75
Bridle with bit	\$300	Bell boots	\$30
Total value of tack provided	\$1650-\$4150		

Trainer Commissions on Outside Lease, Purchases and Sales of Horses

Aside from teaching their clients to ride, trainers also play a vital role assisting clients in finding suitable horses when it comes time to purchase or lease their own. As with many industries you hire a professional for their expertise as well their contacts in that industry - both of which most riders/parents won't have. I came across an article in Practical Horseman magazine that states it well and plainly. *"The purpose of commissions is to reimburse agents (trainers/dealers serving as intermediaries for buyers and sellers) for their time and expertise in helping you select a horse who will suit your goals. Many trainers have devoted years to developing their skills in assessing horses and riders, and they strive to work in good faith for their clients. On a practical note, because trainers generally experience high overhead in the form of staff and facility costs and a low return on the time they spend on lessons and at shows, sales commissions ensure their ability to earn a living"*. Industry standard is anywhere from 10-15%. We charge a 10% commission on the purchase/sale prices or lease fee price of the horse, with a \$750 minimum commission for all sale, purchases or leases. Clients will be asked to sign a commission contract and pay a \$500 deposit which will be applied toward commission on purchase or lease of horse. If we negotiate a lease on client owned horse and another client, a flat fee of \$500 will apply, to be split between the 2 parties.

When purchasing/leasing a horse it is always best to negotiate a trial period if possible. This gives you the ability to ride the horse on your "home turf" and allows us multiple rides in order to help decide if the horse is suitable. During this trial period you will be financially responsible for hauling to/from the barn, board/care while the horse is at our facility, and lessons and/or professional rides and a pre-purchase exam. If the horse does not work out or pass a vet check, which can be disappointing, consider it spending a little to save a lot.