

Riding a Rental



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One need not be prepared for the best riding horse and most comfortable saddle, but instead, one that rides like a truck with out springs and a steel seat. Also, some rentals have little, or worse yet, no experience with dogs running along side them.

Rentals can pose a variety of problems for the rider, but if you're equipped with the right attitude and a little knowledge you can overcome a few of these obstacles and turn what seems to be a potential disaster into a positive, fun experience.

First, be truthful of your riding experience and discuss your riding in-abilities with the rental owner so they can best match the right horse and saddle for you. Taking your horse for a quick test ride will help you determine if a horse or saddle change is necessary.

Also, because each horse handles differently, simply ask what best steers and controls it so you keep the ride productive and fun.

Keep in mind though, some barns are limited with available rentals, you simply get what they give. Keeping a positive attitude will help overcome any inconsistencies and from personal experience, some of the roughest rides have been the easiest horses to handle. Some stables also allow the option to use your own saddle.

Secondly, once paired with your ride, resist the urge to hop on and take off riding with your dog. Instead, with your dog on lead, walk with the horse to slowly introduce the team to one another. Stop, Treat and Repeat. Any negative reactions or disobedient tendencies can be better controlled with both feet on the ground.

Once you feel comfortable the duo is happy with one another, mount up, and continue at a walk with your dog on lead. Remember, Stop, Treat and Repeat. A few minutes of this exercise, with words of reassurance in a happy voice, will help to keep the attitude positive and have a calming effect.

When you're ready, remove the lead so Spot can move about freely, but in verbal control, you should now be able to practice your obedience commands and prepare yourself for the trial. Happy Trails.