



UNWANTED HORSE
COALITION

Alternatives to Buying a Horse

Horses have a lifespan of 25-30 years or more. When the annual cost of care runs in the thousands, horse ownership takes a significant financial commitment. How else can you bring horses into your life without breaking the bank?

Did You Know?

There are many ways horse enthusiasts can spend time with horses, learn about horse care, become better riders, and test the waters before jumping into ownership. Here are some ideas.

Volunteer

No matter what your age, volunteering is a great way to learn about horses and what it takes to keep one. Tasks often start with mucking stalls, scrubbing buckets, and cleaning tack, but can lead to learning horse-handling skills, feeding, grooming, and more. Some private barns welcome volunteers, whereas most non-profit rescue and re-homing facilities are always seeking volunteer help. Find a rescue in your area by searching the links at <http://www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org/facilities-that-accept-horses/>

Take Lessons

It is a good idea to become a confident and experienced rider before purchasing a horse. Lessons are offered in every discipline and are available to people of almost any age. Group lessons are usually less expensive, and even if you sign up for a month-long package, the investment is far less than the cost of owning a horse. In fact, if you are considering your first horse, the cost of lessons should be part of your budget.

Go to Camp

Camps are usually geared toward youth and can be pricey, but they offer full-day experiences rather than just an hour a week. Lessons and camps are two great ways for horse-loving kids to get experience and have fun without the worries of what to do with a horse after graduation or when interests change (and they often do).

Consider Leasing or Co-ownership

Leases vary from part-time to full leases and typically require a monthly fee and a portion of the monthly expenses. The benefits are that owners retain the responsibility for major medical care and you don't worry about re-homing the horses when the lease is complete. Leases differ from Co-ownership, which allows you to split the costs of purchase and ownership. In both cases, having a detailed contract outlining the responsibilities of all parties is critical.

Time To Ride

If you are a newcomer and want to find places to interact with horses near you, check out the Time to Ride website at <https://www.timetoride.com/riders/>. The page includes an interactive map showing locations of camps, lessons, dude ranches, trail rides, shows, races, horse clubs, and more. It's a great place to get started!