

## Safety Considerations

For all participants and parents or guardians of participants at the Texas A&M Summer Horsemanship Schools.

1) Parents or guardians are expected to ensure that their child or children attend the school on a horse that can reasonably be relied upon to be safe for that rider and safe around other people and horses. Please use reasonable care in matching horse and rider.

2) Horses with a known history of bucking, rearing, falling, kicking, running away, biting and any other serious behavioral problem should not be brought to the school.

3) Use reasonable care to provide safe tack and equipment.

- a) Check before the school to be sure saddle blankets are somewhat clean and free of anything that could irritate the horse.
- b) Be sure the saddle fits the horse and rider. Check all girths, cinches, latigo straps, breast collars, fender straps, etc. to replace any worn or potentially dangerous equipment.
- c) Be sure the bridle (headstall, bit, chin strap, etc.) fits the horse, is free of worn materials and that this equipment allows the rider to adequately control the horse at all times.
- d) Check stirrups to be sure they fit the rider's foot. Overly large stirrups that allow a boot to go all the way through a stirrup present a serious safety hazard, as do extremely small stirrups that could bind the rider's foot and boot. A large stirrup, even if let down below a rider's foot, is still very dangerous. An inexperienced rider, trying to ride without stirrups, could slip off and get a foot caught in a dangling stirrup.
- e) For young and/or inexperienced riders, saddles should be free of anything tied on hard and fast, such as a lariat rope, or halter and lead rope that could allow a rider to become entangled while riding, mounting or dismounting. If a youngster wishes to carry a rope on the saddle, that is certainly acceptable, provided it is tied with a breakable string or band that will guarantee it will break loose.

4) All participants must wear boots or English style jodhpur riding shoes. **Tennis shoes cannot be worn when riding.**

5) The use of protective headgear is acceptable and encouraged and is the optional choice of the participant. If protective headgear is worn, ASTM/SEI helmets are recommended. It is the responsibility of the rider and the parent or guardian to see to it that the headgear worn complies with appropriate safety standards for protective headgear intended for equestrians' use, and that the headgear is properly fitted and in good condition. The instructors are not responsible for checking that headgear worn is in compliance. The Summer Horsemanship school program, Texas AgriLife Extension, its faculty, staff, employees and instructors, make no representation on warranty, expressed or implied, about any protective headgear, and caution riders that death

or serious injury may result despite wearing such headgear, as all equestrian sports involve inherent dangerous risks and as no helmet can protect against all foreseeable injuries.

6) Participants should wear clothing appropriate for riding and that will provide protection from weather conditions such as sun and heat.

7) Parents or guardians and/or volunteer leaders should be on hand to assist youth riders when not actually involved in a session. Many young riders will need some assistance at breaks and at other times throughout the day with such things as:

- a) Saddling and bridling
- b) Mounting and dismounting
- c) Haltering, watering and tying horses up
- d) Holding a horse momentarily

8) When riding, standing, or leading a horse around or with other horses, always maintain plenty of space between your horse and other horses. Always maintain at least one-horse length, and more if possible, between your horse and others.

9) When going into the riding area or leaving the riding area, please be careful. Horses should always be in the rider's control. For this reason, please walk your horse when leaving a riding session (ex. during a break) or dismount and lead out. This is the optional choice of the participant.

10) During the horsemanship school, all participants will have an opportunity to practice a variety of drills, maneuvers and exercises. Some participants may feel uncomfortable with a certain drill, maneuver or exercise. If at any time, a rider feels unsafe, scared, confused or in danger, that rider is expected to:

- a) Communicate with the instructor and request that they not attempt the particular drill, maneuver or exercise.
- b) Make their own decision about whether or not to continue the remaining part of a particular drill, maneuver or exercise.

Instructors will work to help all riders improve their horsemanship abilities and the performance capabilities of the horses. Instructors will continually strive to create and maintain as safe of an environment as is possible regarding drills, maneuvers or exercises. However, each participant is expected to employ items 10a and 10b above. All participants are attending the horsemanship school of their own free will. Instructors will expect and encourage all participants to actively participate to the extent that a participant feels capable and willing from a safety standpoint.

The purpose of the horsemanship schools is to help riders learn-by-doing and also to have fun, while interacting with others of similar interest. There are certain inherent risks associated with any equine activity. All participants must recognize that there are certain dangers that exist when riding or being around horses. Safety is important, and with every person's help the horsemanship school can be a positive, rewarding experience for everybody in attendance.

## ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

In consideration for receiving permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Summer Horsemanship School Program, I or I/we, the parent/parents or legal guardian/guardians of \_\_\_\_\_, if participant is under the age of 18 (hereinafter referred to as "RELEASORS"), hereby RELEASE, WAIVE, DISCHARGE AND CONVEYANT NOT TO SUE Texas A&M University, The Texas A&M University System, the Board of Regents, the State of Texas, their officers, servants, agents, volunteers or employees (hereinafter referred to as "RELEASEES") from any and all liability claims, demands, actions, causes of actions, whatsoever arising out of, or related to any loss, damage, or injury including death, that may be sustained by the participant or to any property belonging to the participant, WHETHER CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES or otherwise, while participating in such activity, or while in, on or upon the premises where the activity is being conducted.

Releasors are fully aware that there are inherent risks involved in the equine activity. Such risks may include, but are not limited to:

- 1) The tendency of an animal to behave in ways that may result in injury, harm or even death to persons on or around them.
- 2) The unpredictability of an animal's reaction to such things as sounds, sudden movement and unfamiliar objects, persons or other animals.
- 3) Certain hazards such as surface and subsurface conditions.
- 4) Collisions and contact with other animals or objects.

Releasors hereby elect to voluntarily participate in said activity, and to enter the above named premises and engage in such activity knowing that the activity may be hazardous to the participant and its property.

Releasors VOLUNTARILY ASSUME FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY RISKS OF LOSS, PROPERTY DAMAGE OR PERSONAL INJURY, INCLUDING DEATH, that may be sustained by the participant, or any loss or damaged property owned by them, as a result of being engaged in such an activity, WHETHER CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE OF RELEASEES OR OTHERWISE.

Releasors further hereby AGREE TO INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS THE RELEASEES from any loss, liability, damage or costs, including court costs and attorney fees that may occur due to participation in said activity, WHETHER CAUSED BY NEGLIGENCE OF RELEASEES OR OTHERWISE.

Releasors acknowledge that Texas A&M University or other sponsors of this event do not provide any sort of insurance should injury occur.

Releasors have read the attached "Safety Considerations," understand them, and agree to comply with them fully.



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IN SIGNING THIS RELEASE, RELEASORS ACKNOWLEDGE AND REPRESENT THAT they have read the foregoing Assumption of Risk and Hold Harmless Agreement, understand it and sign it voluntarily as their own free act and deed; no oral representations, statements, or inducements apart from the foregoing agreement have been made. Releasors execute this document for full, adequate and complete consideration fully intending to be bound by the same.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I/we have hereunto set my/our hand on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

*If participant is 18 years old or younger:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature