

Future Camp Families,

We are excited by your interest in our Horsemanship Program here at YMCA Camp Ernst. We can't wait to share our passion of horseback riding with you and look forward to helping you achieve your riding goals!

Our lesson program is different than most in that we are not focusing on more than merely the element of riding. Our Horsemanship Program is designed to not only develop into confident riders but confident horsemen and women. This is accomplished by progressing through our four structured levels. Each of which has a set of riding skills as well as unmounted skills that will help students to naturally progress and increase confidence. By the end of our program we hope our riders will have a solid foundation to pursue whatever path they choose, whether that's a weekend trail rider, a 4-H drill team member or even a hunter/jumper! For those students 18 and over, we modify our program slightly to better suit adult learners.

Enclosed in the packet you will find the following:

- Rider Profile
- Horsemanship Program Agreement Form
- FAQs sheet

Please return the Rider Profile and the last page of the Agreement form to us so we can begin to set up the perfect time slot for your lessons. Once we receive the Rider Profile we will set up your introductory/evaluation lesson so we can acclimate you to our facilities and assess your current skill level.

We currently have availability in our program on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, from 10am to 5pm and limited spots on Sunday from 10am till noon. All lessons are approximately one hour in length, so please plan accordingly.

If you have any other questions please call or e-mail us and we will be happy to assist you!
Ernst Love,



Natalie Hamilton
Ranch Program Director
nhamilton@cincinnatiymca.org

YMCA CAMP ERNST HORSEMANSHIP PROGRAM STUDENT PROFILE

YMCA Camp Ernst
7615 Camp Ernst Road
Burlington, KY 41005
(859) 586-6181 (P)
nhamilton@myYcamp.org (E)
www.myYcamp.org (W)

STUDENTS NAME _____ BIRTHDATE _____

HEIGHT _____ WEIGHT _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

IF UNDER 18 PLEASE FILL OUT PARENT INFORMATION:

PARENT/GUARDIAN 1 _____ HOME PHONE _____

ALT PHONE _____

HEALTH INFORMATION

INSURANCE CARRIER _____ POLICY NUMBER _____

NAME ON PLAN _____

PREFERRED DATES: Please provide 3 date and time combinations so that we can schedule the best time for your lessons.

YMCA Member? Branch: _____

\$ _____
 CHECK # OR AMERICAN EXPRESS MASTERCARD VISA# EXP DATE AMT

CREDIT CARD BILLING ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT FROM HOME ADDRESS ABOVE)

POLICIES AND PARENT STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

I understand that my child won't be allowed to leave the program with an unauthorized person or anyone appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. I understand that the YMCA is mandated by state law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities for investigation. I understand that the YMCA staff are not allowed to babysit or transport children at any time outside of the YMCA program.

We (camper and parent) understand that it is the responsibility of each camper to participate in the whole program including activities of work, play, value sharing, and living together.

We understand and support policies prohibiting campers from possessing and using tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, and nonprescription drugs while at camp. We recognize that campers must follow safety instructions, remain in areas set by staff, and refrain from behavior that is harmful to oneself or others. We understand that the victim defines sexual harassment and bullying, and action will be taken accordingly. Failure to adhere to camp policies will be cause for the camper's dismissal without refund of camper fees.

I am aware that my child will have the opportunity to participate in, and I approve of his/her participating in, camp activities involving a degree of risk, recognizing that the camp will do its best to ensure a safe experience. I understand that accidents may occur. I hereby release the YMCA of Greater Cincinnati from any and all responsibility and liability of any nature resulting from my child's participation in any camp activities.

As parent or guardian, I understand that my child may be photographed and such photographs may be used for future camp promotion. I understand and agree to abide by the restrictions and policies of camp.

X _____

Horsemanship Program Agreement Form

Please carefully review these policies before committing to taking lessons. Failure to abide by these policies may lead to termination from the Horsemanship Program.

Lesson Policies

- Lessons will average 1 hour in length. Lesson time includes time to tack and untack your horse.
- All students will be assigned a 'homework' packet each month that they will return to encourage continued education and reinforce information taught in classes.
- We are able to give lessons to children as young as 7 years of age; however, 7 and 8 year olds **MUST** be in private lessons. Students ages 9 and up may participate in group lessons. Our recommended age for our program is 10 years old and up.
- All students will be expected to tack and untack their horse during their lessons. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that all tack fits appropriately. If the student is unsure about something, it is also their responsibility to ask. All of this will be taught during the student's first few lessons. All horses must be well groomed before and after riding as well.
- Part of the Horsemanship Program involves ground lessons (no riding). Be aware that **students will not be riding during every single lesson**. Our program is based on overall good horsemanship, not just good riding skills.
- Trail riding will also be a part of our horsemanship program.
- A boot with a minimum of a ½ inch heel **MUST** be worn in order to ride. Full length pants **MUST** also be worn in order to ride. We have a small number of spare boots that students may borrow temporarily until proper foot wear can be obtained.
- Helmets are required and will be provided. However, students are welcome to use their own as long as the helmet is **ASTM-SEI** certified riding helmet and is dated within the last 5 years. **SORRY, NO BICYCLE HELMETS.**
- A horse will be designated per the instructor's discretion and may change depending on abilities and lesson goals.
- Upon enrollment in our Horsemanship Program, students will complete 1 private introductory/evaluation lesson for proper placement within our program. This lesson will take the place of the first lesson of the month.
- Limited availability of lesson in June and July and December – February.

Barn Policies

- No tobacco products, alcohol or drugs are permitted on YMCA property.
- YMCA Camp Ernst reserves the right to amend this lesson agreement form at any time. All decisions made by YMCA Camp Ernst staff are final.
- Parents are allowed and encouraged to watch lessons. However, they may not interrupt the instructor or the student during instruction periods. The Welcome Center will also be open for parents to wait in.
- You are welcome to bring treats, apples and carrots, for you horse. Treats are to be fed after the lesson has concluded and only in the horses feed buckets. **DO NOT** feed any of the horses by hand.
- No students or visitors are allowed in pastures or stalls without prior approval by YMCA Camp Ernst staff.

Payment Policies

- Riding lessons are \$25 per lesson for groups (up to 4 riders) and \$35 per lesson for privates. YMCA members will receive a \$5 fee reduction per lesson.
- Lessons are billed on a monthly basis and all lessons must be paid for prior to the first lesson of that month. You can pay with cash or check in person **PRIOR** to lesson being received or call the office to pay with credit card. Any returned checks will result in a \$25 fee.
- We require a **15 day notice of discontinuation of lessons**. We understand that situations may arise that may prevent you from continuing the program. Please communicate these needs with your instructor or YMCA staff as quickly as possible.
- To cancel a lesson, you **MUST MAKE CONTACT WITHIN 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE**. Makeup lessons may be available depending on instructor's schedule but cannot be guaranteed. If a makeup lesson cannot be scheduled the lesson will be credited towards the next month's bill. No call/no shows will not be refunded or eligible for make ups.
- Due to lesson schedules, anyone who is ten or more minutes late may not be able to have their instruction time. Lessons cancelled or forfeited due to tardiness will not be refunded.
- Rain: Lessons are scheduled for specific dates and times. In the event of rain or severe weather a lesson will either be: A ground lesson following our horsemanship program, held at an alternate facility, or be canceled. This will be at the discretion of the instructor. We will do our best at being prompt in lesson cancellations in the event of any unfavorable weather.
- If **you** choose to cancel a lesson due to weather, you are choosing to forfeit that payment for the missed lesson.
- If at any time an instructor is not available for your scheduled lesson, you will be notified in advance and that lesson will either be credited towards the next month or be rescheduled for another day.

Lesson Agreement Form

Students Name: _____

Please fill out this page and return along with Student Profile.

- I have read and understand all of the requirements as outlined above and agree to adhere to YMCA Camp Ernst's Horsemanship Program Policies.

Signed (must be signed by parent/ legal guardian if under the age of 18 years).

Participant signature _____ Date

Parent/Guardian signature _____ Date

We appreciate your eager desire to learn and grow your horsemanship skills and we look forward to meeting you!



Natalie Hamilton
Ranch Program Director
nhamilton@cincinnatiymca.org

Frequently Asked Questions

Q) Do we teach English or Western?

A) Both! We believe in developing well-rounded riders who are respectful of all disciplines. We also believe that by exploring multiple disciplines and riding in various tack, riders become more confident in their abilities and can successfully ride a wider variety of horses. Our students will primarily ride Western through the first level of our program. In our second level students will begin to ride English and even bareback to further broaden their knowledge and skills. Once they reach our third level students can then choose to focus their time in the discipline of their choice.

Q) What are the levels?

A) Our Horsemanship Program is divided up into four levels loosely based off of the Certified Horsemanship Association's (CHA) program. These levels are designed to help riders develop a solid foundation and then progress their skills in a way that is easy to understand. Each level has a set of mounted and unmounted skills that our students will work on and progress at their own pace. Levels one and two focus on the basics, the four natural aids and how to apply them through all the gaits while maintaining a balanced seat and quiet hands. Levels three and four become discipline specific and allows riders to continue to develop their skills while focusing on the mechanics of the horse.

Q) What is the homework packet?

A) Each level has specific ground lessons that coincide with the riding lessons. Our horsemanship program is different than most as we strive to not only develop great riders but great horsemen and women. There are so many things to learn out of the saddle: When should I deworm my horse? Why is a farrier important? What do I do if my horse has colic? These are just a few of the many important questions you should know how to answer before you look into horse ownership. These homework packets simply help to reinforce the information taught in your lessons and, just like our riding levels, gives you a foundation expand your knowledge upon. If students return the completed packets, they will earn the opportunity to go on a 2-3 hr. trail ride in addition to the weekly lessons.

Q) Do you have to have previous riding experience?

A) No! Our program is designed for beginner to intermediate riders that want to learn at their own pace and have fun while doing so. Our instructors will work with you to set your riding goals no matter what experience level!

Q) Do I have to have my own horse?

A) No. We provide all of the lesson horses for our program. If horse ownership is in your long term goals, we will gladly assist you in the search for that perfect mount, but we highly suggest waiting until you have reached the third or fourth level of our program before making that investment.

Q) Are lessons only for kids?

A) Absolutely not. We are happy to teach anyone, kids to adults, who want to learn! Our insurance requires riders to be at least 7 years old to participate in lessons, though our program is best suited for those 10 and up. For our adult riders we will customize our program to help you achieve your specific goals.

Q) What types of horses do you have?

A) We are lucky to have a wide selection of lesson horses to choose from. We have a variety of ages, breeds, sizes and training levels to fit everyone's needs. From our trusty old school horse deluxe, to our athletic jumpers and barrel horses, and even some gaited horses, we have the perfect mounts for you to learn and grow on regardless of your experience level!

Q) Is there a weight limit?

A) Yes. Most of our horses are older and smaller to accommodate our summer camp needs. Therefore based on our current herd availability our weight limit is set at 230lbs. If you have questions regarding this please contact us.

Q) Who will be teaching lessons?

A) Currently our 2 instructors are Natalie, our Ranch Director, and our Head Wrangler Emily. Both of our instructors have a passion for teaching and experience in many aspects of the horse world. They bring a wealth of knowledge and experience and believe that above all you should be safe and have fun while learning to ride!

Q) Do you go to shows?

A) If you are looking for a facility that you can go to shows every weekend and compete then we are not the program for you. Our goals are not to turn out show riders, but well-rounded horsemen and women. We want to share our passion of riding with you in a stress free, relaxed setting where you can solely focus you and your horse. Once you reach our higher levels, you will have the foundation to pursue whichever discipline you choose and if the time comes that you decide you would like to compete, we will gladly help you in the search of the perfect facility for you to continue to grow at!