

HORSE BOARDING CHECKLIST

As horse owners who aren't able to keep horses on their own property, we've all had to find a place for a new horse or move a horse from their current barn to another. Here's a checklist of things to keep in mind when finding a new barn for your horse.

Our [Horse Boarding](#) section has a new look! You can easily find any horse boarding location on a clickable map with links to all the information you need. Find your barn then check it out!

HEALTH RELATED:

1. **Veterinarian** – Who do they use as a vet? Does your vet service this new barn?
2. **Feet** – Who do they use as a farrier? Does your farrier service this new barn?
How are the feet of the other horses in the barn?
3. **Horse Weight** – Do the horses look well fed or are they skinny?
4. **Water** – Do they have an automatic watering system? If so, are the dispensers clean? If not, is there ample water and are the buckets clean?
5. **Feed** – Do they carry your brand of feed? Is the feed and hay high quality? If not, will they order it for you or do they have something comparable. Is it stored in a clean and dry place?
6. **Medication** – Does your horse require special medication or supplements? Is there an additional charge?
7. **Turnout** – How are the paddocks? Are they well maintained? Will they without broken boards or nails? Will have a paddock buddy or turned out alone – or with many horses? Is there a run-in shed? Are the paddocks cleaned? How long will they be turned out every day? Are they turned out at night or during the day? Does your

horse have issues with being turned out next to mares or geldings? What type of fencing do they use and is it secure? Is turnout grassy or muddy?

8. **Bedding** – Do they use shavings, sawdust, straw or something else? Are you satisfied with the depth of the bedding?
9. **Stall Mucking** – How many times a day do they muck stalls? Can you pick out the stalls if you choose to help?
10. **Coggins** – Do they require a Coggins test prior to shipping in? (They should!)
11. **Owner Information** – Is there a sign outside each stall with the name of the horse, veterinarian and other information in case of emergency?

BARN RELATED:

1. **Ventilation/Cleanliness** – Are the stalls/barns well ventilated? Are they clean? Are there lots of cobwebs? Are the isles blown or washed? Is there a foul odor or does the barn smell clean?
2. **Wash Stalls** – Are the wash stalls available and clean?
3. **Tack Room** – Is there ample place for your tack and tack trunk? Are people respectful or does everyone “share” and use each other’s brushes, fly spray, etc.? Is there an identification system so people know what belongs to whom?
4. **Indoor Arena** – Is it well lit, ventilated and maintained? Do you like the footing?
5. **Stalls** – Which stall will you be assigned? Is it big enough for your horse? Is it clean and well ventilated? Are you happy with the location in the barn and the horses next door? If there is a runout, is the outdoor space maintained? Is the ice issue addressed in the winter?
6. **Location** – Is it close enough for you to see your horse?
7. **Access** – Is it easy to drive in? Are there potholes in the summer, ice in the winter and is the driveway appropriately plowed when it snows?
8. **Warning Signs** – Are the paddocks near the road where the public can access the horses? If so, are there signs not to feed the horses or give them treats?

OPERATIONS & CULTURE RELATED:

1. **Hours** – Does the barn have set hours? If so, are they in line with your riding or visiting schedule?
2. **Drama** – Is the barn free of drama and pettiness?
3. **Cost / Value** – Can you afford to board at this new place? Is the money they are charging matching the value of what they are offering?
4. **Barn Rules** – Are you happy with the barn rules?
5. **Security & Safety** – Is your horse safe? Do you feel safe going to see or ride your horse?
6. **Kids** - Do you have kids and enjoy seeing them ride, especially during times of “summer camp?” Do you want to escape kids and ensure that it is an adult only barn?
7. **Horse Profile** - Do they like your type of horse? Do they have issues with some colors or breeds, i.e., chestnut Thoroughbred mares?
8. **References** – Do people you know and respect recommend this facility?
9. **Lessons/Training** – Do they offer lessons or training? Do you want/need them? Is there a schedule to know when the arena may be crowded/off limits? Is there an online sign up or notifications? Is it possible to take a lesson with the trainer on site to see if you fit well together? Otherwise, do they allow outside trainers in?
10. **Events** – Do they host events, clinics or horse shows? If so, do you want to participate? If not, does that impact you visiting/riding your horse? If it is a show barn and you don't show, do you have to pay a fee? (Yes, this actually exists!) Does the barn often go to shows together or have events, like barn happy hours or holiday parties? Do you want to come socialize or just ride and leave?
11. **Communication** – Are they receptive to your questions or are they defensive? Do they offer text or email alerts? How do they communicate in case of emergency?

12. **Staff** – Are there enough people working there or is the owner/manager completely overwhelmed? Is the staff experienced, especially if it is related to your discipline?
13. **Number of Horses** – If you have more than one horse, is there a multiple horse discount? Do they require a minimum number of horses per boarder?
14. **Trailering** – Do they have a trailer if you want to go on a trip? Or, if you need to go to a clinic for an emergency?
15. **Trailer Parking** – Is there a place to park your trailer, and if so, do they charge a fee for it?
16. **Level of Riders** - Are they like you? Are there beginners and you are experienced?
17. **Discipline of Riders** – Do they ride in the same discipline as you? If not, are you OK (and are they OK) if you have a different discipline?
18. **Owner/Manager** – Do they have experience? Do they live onsite or offsite? If offsite, how much time do they spend at the barn?
19. **Trails** – If you trail ride, do they have trails? Are there other people who may be available to ride with you?
20. **Night Check** – Is there night check? Are there security cameras to see anything suspicious or alert someone when there is a sick horse?
21. **Payment** – What is the board amount? What are the terms (beginning/end of the month)? Is check best or do they prefer Venmo, PayPal , or other methods of payment? Do they have a late fee for payments and if so, can you meet the terms? What is there policy if you choose not to stay long-term? Do you need 30-day notice to leave? Some barns state on contracts that if the boarder defaults on payment the horse can be held for collateral.

If anything needs to be added, please let us know! Email your suggestions to info@equineinfoexchange.com