



Cottonwood Riding Club



Emergency Medical Information & Liability Release Form

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING, SERIOUS INJURY MAY RESULT FROM YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS ACTIVITY. COTTONWOOD RIDING CLUB, DENVER POLO CLUB, 5280 EQUESTRIAN AND YOUR INSTRUCTOR DO NOT GUARANTEE YOUR SAFETY.

Cottonwood Riding Club, Denver Polo Club, and 5280 Equestrian, ask that all students, boarders, guests, and visitors riding at our facilities have this form filled out and signed (by the parents if under 18), so that we will have information on your desires in case of an emergency. In addition to providing us with this information, we suggest that all persons who come to our Clubs regularly have inoculation to protect them against tetanus. Consult your physician for any other protection he may feel is necessary, such as allergies to hays, grasses, etc., and for his suggestions for the wearing of tags or medallions such as "Medicaid" tags pointing out any special conditions you or your children may have which would require special attention in case of emergency.

Rider's Name: _____ Sex: _____ D.O.B _____

Rider's Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Email _____

Nearest Relative or Friend: _____ Other Emg. Phone: _____

Physician's Name: _____ Physician's Phone: _____

If in the event of emergency, and we are unable to contact parents or physicians please give us your preference for hospital, ambulance, etc. Please list any special conditions allergies to drugs or any other medications, etc., which a physician should know about before administering treatment of any kind: _____

GRANT OF PERMISSION AND EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY

"Upon my acceptance of horse and equipment, I acknowledge that the use, handling, and riding of a horse involves a risk of physical injuries to any individual undertaking such activities; and that a horse, irrespective of its training and usual past behavior and characteristics, may act or react unpredictably at times based upon instinct or fright which, likewise, is an inherent risk assumed by a horseback rider. The undersigned agrees to hold harmless and releases Denver Polo Club Inc., Cottonwood Riding Club, its owners, officers, management, employees, instructors, and agents and Insurers of all responsibility and risk of injury to persons, horses, and equipment while on the grounds." **WARNING: Under Colorado Law, an equine professional is NOT liable for injury to, or death of a participant in equine activities resulting from inherent risks of equine activities pursuant to sections 13-21-119, Colorado Revised Statutes.** "I further agree that should emergency medical treatment be required, I and/or my own accident/medical insurance company shall pay for such incurred expenses. My insurance company is _____, Policy number _____." This agreement shall hereto acknowledge having read and understood this agreement.

Rider Signature: _____ Date: _____

(if under 18 Parent/Guardian signature needed as well)



Cottonwood Riding Club



Lesson Student Fee Agreement

Payment and Late fees

(Initial)

Each student is responsible for knowing how much to pay for each lesson

Private lessons paid at the time of the lesson are **\$60/hour**.

Group lessons paid at the time of the lesson are **\$50/hour**.

Group Monthly Package paid at the beginning of each month **\$190/month**.

Polo Private lessons paid at time of the lesson are **\$70/hour**.

Polo Group lessons paid at the time of the lesson are **\$60/hour**.

Polo Monthly Packages paid at the beginning of the month **\$225/month**

Monthly packages expire at the end of the month they were purchased. There is a \$5 discount if you pay for a month worth of Private lessons at the beginning of the month. You must pay for at least 4 lessons to take advantage of this discount.

Payment for lessons must be made no later than the day of the lesson, and packages must be paid for no later than the first lesson of the month.

Any student failing to keep up with payment will be assessed a late fee of \$20 per month that payment is overdue.

Cancellation Policy

(Initial)

Cottonwood Riding Club recommends that riders participate in a minimum of one lesson per week.

If you need to cancel any lesson for any reason Cottonwood Riding Club requires a **48 hour advanced notice**. If the lesson is not rescheduled within a 7 day period a \$25 cancelation fee will be charged.

If for any reason you cannot make a lesson, **you must call or email the main office to cancel or you will be charged the full price of your lesson.**

Schedule Changes

(Initial)

All schedule changes must go through the main office, NOT YOUR TRAINER.

Please note that lessons and groups are always changing. The office will be in touch with you about schedule changes and lesson updates. Please keep your contact information up to date with the office.

By signing this you, as the student or the guardian of the student, agree to the full terms of this agreement and hold yourself accountable for any and all rules and regulations herein. Thank you for taking lessons at Cottonwood Riding Club. We hope that we will have a long and educational relationship.

Student or guardian name (please print) _____

Signature _____

Email (please write legibly) _____

Cottonwood Riding Club

Our Lesson Program Mission Statement

Welcome to Cottonwood Riding Club!!! We are very pleased to have you here taking lessons with us and we hope that we can be of great value to you and your future with horses. Cottonwood Riding Club started in 1982 as a small barn with one horse in the pasture. Since then we have helped hundreds of people fall in love with horses and to further their horse education. We are currently the largest privately owned boarding facility in the state of Colorado, however this does not affect the customer service you will receive. We take extra time to see that you have a wonderful experience here and we encourage you to come and talk to us if you have any questions.

When dealing with our staff you are dealing with an extension of the owners, John and Chris Gandomcar, who have tried hard to make this family operation one that has the feel of joining a family. We are not a “show barn” and we do not encourage kids to be competitive. We encourage fun and learning through horses. There is a place and a need for “show barns” and if that is something that you would like to learn more about please let us know. We will help you in anyway we can. Our goal is to encourage people to be involved with horses at all levels.

The Lesson Program

At Cottonwood we have a small group of school horses that we give our lessons on. **In the school program students are not allowed to ride the same horse every week**, and they may be required to ride very difficult horses. We do this so that we can better evaluate the rider on different levels of horses and so that our trainers know exactly what level the student is. As you begin your lesson experience you are evaluated and placed in a category of riders. As you improve you will be tested to see if you pass specific basic elements before you move into the next level (ready to canter, Jump or move into a group). In a group, you and your group will progress together therefore **lessons every other week are NOT allowed**. The most crucial stage of riding is when the student learns how to canter. Because cantering is a faster gait and has a slight jump to it, it can be very intimidating. **We do not allow a student to canter until they can safely trot around the arena without stirrups**. Once the student can canter on both leads (both directions) easily and safely, the next step is leasing and then Jumping*. **We do not allow our school horses to teach riders how to jump**. We feel that if the student is ready to jump they are ready to make the next commitment with horses and should either lease or purchase one of their own. We offer many programs to make this next step as easy as possible. Our instructors will inform you as to when you are ready for that next step.

The Leasing Program

Our leasing program is designed to encourage riders of all ages to become more involved with horses, and to have an opportunity to develop a one-on-one relationship with a single horse. When the student reaches a point where they can be safe around a horse without the constant guidance of an instructor, then they can benefit from riding on his or her own. This is why the leased horse is such a great opportunity for the student. The horses that we offer for lease are not the school horses, but other horses that are boarded at Cottonwood whose owners do not have enough time to ride. All the horses here are members of our family and we do everything we can to make sure that the well being of the horse is considered during the entire lease. We start by evaluating the student and looking for a horse that would be the best fit. We then talk to the owner, and set up a time for the student to ride the potential lease horse. Usually this can be done during a lesson so that all parties know that the rider is supervised and safe. It also gives our instructors a chance to evaluate the match. If all goes well we contact the owner and give them the information that they need to contact the student. From that point on, all communication regarding the lease is done between the student and the owner. **Most leases are \$250 a month, which allows the student to ride the horse 3 to 4 days a week**.

Some horses need more riding than others and this is determined by the owner. It is up to the owner and the student to schedule how many days a week the horse is ridden, and on which days. **All leases require 30-day notice to cancel and most require that the student remain in weekly lessons throughout the lease.**

The Resale Program

For those of you who are ready to purchase a horse, Cottonwood offers several programs to make the purchase of a horse as easy as possible, financially and otherwise. We do this so that you and the horse you choose will have a long and enjoyable life together. **Cottonwood offers several horses for sale at all times during the year.** Most of these horses are “performance” horses, trained toward showing. A majority of the horses are Thoroughbreds that we have purchased from friends that breed horses for the track. We know these horses very well and will recommend only the horses that we feel are a good match for you. **We also offer all of our school horses for sale.** If you find you have fallen in love with one of our school horses and are interested in purchasing him/her let your instructor or the office know and we will let you know the value of each one. You can view and learn about all of our resale horses on our web site (www.cottonwoodridingclub.com), so that you can look up any horse at any time. If you would like further information on any horse please contact us.

Horse prices start at \$4000, however, most horses are going to be priced between \$5,000 and \$6,000. Most people find it hard to commit to spending such a large amount of money at one time. At Cottonwood we have solved this problem by **offering a payment plan for any of our sale horses.** It requires that \$2000 be put down up front, and you will then need to make minimum payments of \$200 a month for a maximum of a year. This way more people can afford to purchase their dream horse. Here you will also be able to afford a better quality horse than you might elsewhere. **This program is offered without any additional fees or interest to further assist you in your first purchase.** During the time you are paying off the balance of the purchase price the horse must stay at Cottonwood, and you will be responsible for board and all medical expenses. In everyone’s eyes the horse is owned by you, however we will keep the paper work (the title so to speak) until the horse is paid off. This is a wonderful program that allows many people who at first felt they could not afford a horse, to purchase the “perfect” horse.

We encourage all first time buyers to lease before they purchase a horse so that they can make sure that the horse is the right match. All of our resale horses are available to “lease with the option to buy” program. **This program is a maximum of 30 days and the cost is \$250.** The \$250 does not get applied to the price of the horse, but allows you time to make a decision. We still feel that it is a great program and will ensure that you are making the right decision. **We do not lease our school horses before we sell them because we cannot afford to remove them from the school program for 30 days.** However, you will have ample time to get to know any school horse during lessons. Please talk to us if you are interested in any of our programs.

We are always here for you and we encourage you to ask as many questions as you wish, so that you feel comfortable about any phase of your riding. Thank you again for choosing Cottonwood Riding Club and we will try to make this the best riding experience possible!

Homework for the New Rider

**This packet is designed to walk the new student through the process of getting a horse ready. It will also offer a few helpful hints and tricks that other students have learned along the way. You will also find diagrams of the horse, saddle, and bridle to provide a visual aid and help with learning terms. **

Catching your horse:

- Always approach your horse slowly on his left side, and make sure they see you coming. If you approach too quickly or surprise your horse they may kick or run off. This could hurt you and make it difficult to catch your horse.
- Slowly slide the lead rope over your horse's neck and grab the end of the rope under the neck to hold them still. (This is very important. Without the lead rope your horse could wander off before you have a chance to put the halter on.)
- Your instructor will demonstrate how to lead your horse.
- Please make sure that there are no other horses blocking the gate when you bring your horse out. Even though all the school horses are friends **they can still kick each other!!** You can swing the end of your lead rope and wave your hands to ask the horse to move. If they still won't move ask someone for help. This also applies to putting your horse away.

Tying your horse:

- The reason it is so important that we tie our horses to the twine loops is that in case our horse spooks or pulls back the loop will easily break and free the horse. If the horse is tied directly to the pole and they pull back, they could seriously injure themselves or you. If a horse spooks or pulls back while attached to the twine, step back and let the horse go.
- It is also very important that we **never** tie our horses using the reins. If the horse were to pull back, the bit could cause serious damage to their mouths.
- Please be aware of how close you are tying your horse to others. To prevent kicking all horses should have at least two ties between them.
- Your instructor will show you how to tie the particular quick-release knot that we use. When tying this knot make sure the length is about the distance from your hand to your elbow (for adults) or from your hand to your armpit (for kids). This prevents the horses from wandering, eating, or tripping over the rope while we are getting them ready.

Brushing your horse:

- It is important to take your time when grooming your horse. This is a time to clean them, but also a time to check for any cuts, bumps, or abnormalities. If you notice **anything** out of the ordinary please notify the instructor.
- Grooming is also a time to get to know your horse and bond with them. Handling a horse on the ground is just as important as in the saddle.
- The three primary brushes that we use in grooming are a rubber curry comb, hard dandy brush and soft dandy brush.
- The rubber curry is the brush that we use first. This comb gets up the loose and caked on dirt so that we can then brush it away with the other two brushes. When using the rubber curry, you brush in the direction of their hair growth using a circular motion. This brush can cover every part of the horse except for the face and legs.
- Next we use the hard dandy brushes. This brush gets off the dirt that the rubber curry comb brought up. Brush the horse in the direction of their hair growth using a flicking motion with your wrist to really sweep off the dust and dirt. This brush is o.k. to use on the horse's legs.
- Finally, the soft dandy brush is used to sweep off the remaining dirt and dust and to give your horse that extra shine. This brush is used in the same way as the hard dandy brush. This brush is o.k. to use on your horse's face.
- Please make sure that dirt is removed from **all** areas of your horse (including their legs). Most importantly, make sure to clean where the saddle and saddle pad will go. If these are put on top of dirt,

it can irritate the horse's skin and cause sores.

***If your horse is kind enough to carry you around on their backs, please be kind enough to groom them thoroughly and gently.**

Picking your horse's hooves:

-It is very important that we pick out our horses hooves **before and after** we ride. This removes any rocks that may hurt our horse's feet, and also prevents an infection in our horse's feet called Thrush.

This is caused from the horse having moisture and mud stuck in their feet.

-Start with a front foot first (doesn't matter which). Stand next to the foot facing the rear of your horse. Slide your hand inward and down the horse's leg until your hand is cupped around your horse's hoof.

- If your horse won't lift its foot, use your body to lean into your horse's shoulder. This will shift the horse's balance; making it easier to lift. Squeezing the tendon on the back of the horse's leg will also help.

-Once your horse has lifted its foot it is important to **really** hold on. Most horses will try to set their foot down after a few moments, but keep a good grip and don't let them set it down. It will make it easier to hold the horse's foot if you let the leg rest on your thigh (especially the back feet, they can get quite heavy).

-Do not squat down or kneel by a horse. If the horse makes a sudden movement while we are kneeling we will not have enough time to move aside.

-Always keep your feet positioned to the side of the horse. It has happened more than once that a horse has set its foot down on a rider's foot. As you might have guessed, this hurts! Be aware of where your feet are.

-When picking the feet hold the pick backwards and pick away from yourself. This will help you get more leverage, and will also avoid hitting you if the pick slips.

-Don't be afraid to really dig in there! Most debris is really packed in. You will know when you've reached the bottom when you can see the 'V' shape of the horse's frog. (Your instructor will explain this)

Saddling your horse:

-After your horse has been brushed and its feet have been picked out you can get your blanket, saddle and girth from the tack room.

-Start with the blanket. From the left side, slowly and gently place the blanket on your horse. If it is one of the newer blankets with the patches of black vinyl, the front of your blanket is the side with the black patch (this side goes toward the horse's withers). Make sure your pad is even on both sides, and as a rule of thumb, the front of the blanket should be in line with the center of the horse's shoulder.

-Next, gently place the saddle on top of the pad. It's good to make sure that the pad sticks out at least six inches in front of the saddle so that it doesn't slide back during the ride. I also like to wiggle the pad up into the pommel of the saddle (that's the front part of the saddle that is shaped like a hump). This also helps to hold the pad in place and provides the horse with an air pocket.

- Finding a girth that fits your horse can be tricky. Ideally, you should find your girth in its designated section (small, medium, or large), but with so many students, the girths often get mixed together. You may need to check all of the sections.

-The leather girths have the size (in inches) marked near the buckle. 52" is the longest that we have, and should fit the largest horses.

-All of our girths, aside from the string ones, have one side with elastic bands. This side should attach to your saddle on the horse's left side. This makes it easier to tighten when you are preparing to mount. When attaching your girth, attach the non-elastic side first to the right side of the saddle.

-The girth should generally be buckled to the outside two billets of the saddle, unless there are only two billets.

-We generally like to leave the girth loose as the horse walks to the arena. This gives the horse a chance to relax their belly and breathe. **Always check that your girth is tight before mounting!!!**

Bridling your horse:

-This can be the toughest part of getting your horse ready when you are first learning, but the more practice you have the easier it gets.

-It is a good idea, the first few times, to have your instructor assist you with this part.

-First, unbuckle the halter and without letting go of it, rebuckle it around your horse's neck.

-Next, hold the top of your bridle in your right hand, facing it forwards as it would go on your horse.

-Then place the reins over your horse's head. This keeps them out of the way and prevents your horse from tripping on them.

-It is important to hold your horse's head as you guide the bit into its mouth. There are two ways to do this; between the ears or over the nose. Your instructor will demonstrate these both for you.

-As you are holding the bridle and steadying your horse's head with your right hand, your left hand is free to help guide the bit in.

-Your horse has an area in the corner of their mouth where they have no teeth. Sliding your right thumb into this area and pressing down on your horse's bottom gums will ask the horse to open its mouth.

-Using the fingers of your left hand, position the bit between your horse's lips. As the horse opens its mouth gently push the bit between his teeth. Congratulations! The hardest part is over.

-Next, grab the base of each ear and pull it forward through the top of the bridle. When you are finished, the very top of the bridle should be behind the horse's ears and the brow band should be in front of their ears (pull the forelock over the brow band).

-We are now ready to buckle the noseband and the throat latch.

-The noseband is the bottom piece of the bridle. Before buckling, slide it under the cheek pieces of the bridle on both sides. The noseband is buckled fairly tight. You should be able to fit about two fingers underneath.

-The throatlatch is the piece of the bridle that buckles under the horse's jaw. It also comes across the area where the horse breathes, so it is important that this one is **loose**, otherwise it will affect our horse's breathing. Make sure you can fit your whole hand sideways under the throat latch.

After you have finished riding, it is now time to untack your horse. **Your horse cannot go back home**

until it has been untacked!

Untacking your horse:

-After you have exited the arena, walk your horse back to the rail where you had him tied while you were tacking. Take your halter and buckle it around your horse's neck (like you did when you were bridling).

-Once your horse is secure, unbuckle your throat latch and nose band (only unbuckle what you buckled), and then gently slide the bridle back over the ears and off the horse's head and let the bit drop out of the horse's mouth. After you have taken the bridle off, make sure that you **put the halter back on the horse's head.**

-Next, before you take off the saddle, make sure to put your stirrups up. To do so, grab the stirrup iron and slid it up the back of the stirrup leather, then tuck the stirrup leather behind the iron.

-Now you can undo the girth. Undo the left side first and then the right. Once the girth is off you can take off your saddle and blanket.

-After your horse is untacked, take all of your tack back to the shed. After your tack is put away, go back and brush your horse and pick out its feet. If your horse worked up a sweat, chances are there will be sweat marks where the saddle was and on the horses neck and chest. Make sure you brush out the sweat marks. Also, make sure your horse is dry before you put him/her away!

-Once all that is done, you can untie your horse and take him/her back to the pasture or stall where the horse came from. Always make sure you close the gate behind you when you enter or exit the paddock, this is so the other horses do not get out. Finally, make sure you lock the gate before you leave.

For the parents:

-It is important that you are around to help out your child, but make sure you let your child do as much as possible; after all it is they who are taking the lesson and need to know what is taught to them.

-We know that most of our students don't have the strength to lift the saddle and hold the horse's feet;

this is why we appreciate your help when we can't be around

Be safe and have fun!!!