

Stables

Things to look for



- Are they large and airy?
- Do the stables look big enough for your horse to turn around and lie down?
- Are they well drained and ventilated?
- Do they look clean and well kept?
- Is the area around the stables well swept?
- Is there enough space to groom your horse?
- If a horse is the stable during your visit, does it look to have enough hay?
- Does the hay and haylage storage area look clean and regularly maintained?
- Is it clean in the feed-room? (*Remember: Spilt food and vermin go together*)
- Are the beds of sufficient depth?

Things to ask

- Which stable will your horse be in?
- Do you have a choice of bedding options?
- What type of muck out regime is used? i.e. deep litter vs full dig out
- How often are the beds skipped out per day?
- Can the hay be fed from the floor, haybar or haynet?
- How often do the horses get hay refills.
- What is the feeding regime, i.e. how many times a day, on what and are there any restrictions on brand?
- Are there any extras you'll need to buy yourself?

Notes

Paddocks

TIP - Look at the fields that would be used for your horse.

Don't just look at the first field on the yard as this may not be used for your horse.

Things to look for

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| Are the paddocks of sufficient size for the number of horses? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are the fences solid and horse friendly? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are they free from barbed wire, chicken mesh or other unsuitable materials? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are they free from dock leaves, thistles, ragwort and other plants that demonstrate poor field management? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do the fields have electric fences? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are the gates big enough with good fastenings? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do they look well maintained? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the grass in good condition for the time of year? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do the fields have a good supply of fresh water? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If there are horses in the fields, do they look content? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do the paths to the fields look safe and well kept? | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Things to ask

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| Are mares and geldings separated? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How big are the groups of horses? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How often the horses are turned out and are there a restriction on number of hours/day? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the summer and winter turn-out routine different? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there an option to do night turnout in summer? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| What time they get turned out in mornings and brought in winter/summer? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Can a field be sectioned off in summer to restrict grass? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| What is the poo picking regime? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| What is the paddock, regime, i.e. rotation and harrowing etc. to smooth after winter, what do they use for fertilizer (is it nitrogen-free?) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| What is the maintenance protocol? <i>For instance, if your horse was to break a fence, would you have to pay?</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there a worming or worm count programme in place? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ask to see the field that your horse would use and ask about who will be your horse's field companions? | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Notes

School / Arena

Things to look for

- Does the surface look level and clean?
- Is the construction of the school good and is the surface suitable for your needs?
- Is there evidence of a good poo picking philosophy in force?
- Is the school well-kept with safe easy to use gates?
- Is it free from deep tracks, ill-placed jumps, abandoned cups and other signs of lack of care and maintenance?
- Are there floodlights?

Things to ask

- How often is it harrowed/graded?
- Does it stays good in summer and drains in winter? Does it freeze?
- Is the arena hired out to non-liveries and if so how communicated to liveries?
- Is there any restriction on use or booking arrangements? *i.e. for lessons or schooling*
- What are the rules of the school? *i.e. do you have to pay extra for anything, such as to use the floodlights, what is the maximum number of people allowed in there at any one time?*
- If more than one, do they have specific uses, *i.e. show jumping, flat work or lunging?*
- What other options are there for schooling or exercising your horse?
e.g. is there a jumping paddock, cross-country course, lunging pen, horse walker, gallops, or off-road hacking?
- Ask about lessons from your own instructor.
- It is not unknown for yards to refuse to allow anyone but their "own" instructor to teach on site.

Notes

General

TIP - Have a good look round the yard. Talk to current livers, spot any potential dangers to your horse and see how other horses are treated. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

Things to look for	✓
Does the yard feel secure or is it open to people walking in unchallenged?	<input type="checkbox"/>
The tack space - if individual tack areas, can they be secured and is the space adequate for your needs? If communal, how the area is secured and is there a specific area for your equipment?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there clean toilet, kitchen, and social area facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the muck heap clean and tidy?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the Solarium, horse wash areas easily accessible and can your horse be secured safely in this area?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lorry and trailer parking. Is there ample parking and could you easily turn trailers round?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are Instructor and contractor qualifications and insurance displayed?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the horses look relaxed and healthy?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were any other horse owners around? Did they seem friendly and relaxed?	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you get the opportunity to talk to some of the horse owners and gauge their impression of the yard	<input type="checkbox"/>

Things to ask

Ask about the Livery agreement. Is it simple and clear?	<input type="checkbox"/>
What types of livers are offered? What does each one include and how much does it cost?	<input type="checkbox"/>
What exactly will you pay for and what is charged as an extra? Is it good value for money?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are security arrangements in force during the day and night? Is there CCTV coverage of the yard and tack areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the yard been broken into and if so when?	<input type="checkbox"/>
How often is the muck heap emptied?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask about any rules linked to the toilet and kitchen areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are personnel on site 24/7 for 365 days a year?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the staff BHS qualified and BHS teaching staff available for lessons?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask about the teaching routine are slots available and can visiting instructors come to the yard?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the yard hold small horse events, lecture demonstration or social gatherings?	<input type="checkbox"/>
If solarium, horse wash areas and/or rug wash are available do these attract extra costs and if so how much?	<input type="checkbox"/>
How many staff to how many liversies?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes

