

Riding FAQ

Q: What style of riding do you teach?

A: We teach primarily Western, with one-handed rein a la Vaquero style.

Q: What should I wear for a riding lesson?

A: Riders should wear long pants and riding/cowboy boots. Hiking or fashion boots are not permitted for safety reasons. Boots should have no tread on bottom and a small flat heel. We offer boots for the rider to borrow at no additional charge.

Q: Do I have to wear a helmet?

A: All riders under 18 years of age MUST wear a helmet while riding. The helmet must be a riding helmet, not a bicycle helmet. We offer helmets for the rider to borrow at no additional charge. Cloverleaf Ranch encourages all riders to wear a helmet, but adults 18 and over may opt to ride without one.

Q: At what age do you start lessons?

A: We start riding lessons at 4 years of age. Children ages 4 to 6 can do lead line lessons, which provide one-on-one instruction for 30 minutes. For safety, children this age are on a lead line with the instructor, but they are still receiving full instruction on riding. Children ages 7 and up, as well as adults can do one hour private, semi-private, or group lessons as well as trail rides.

Q: Do lessons include instruction on tacking and grooming.

A: Lessons may include a minimal (5-10min) amount of instruction on tack and groom. The main focus of the lesson will be riding. If you are interested in having more of your lesson cover tack and groom, please communicate this to our office and we can make accommodations.

Q: Is there a weight limit?

A: Yes, we have a rider weight limit of 200lbs. This is based on the fact that horses can only safely carry a certain percentage of their weight.

Q: What forms of payment do you accept?

A: We accept cash, check, or credit card (MC, Visa, Discover, Amex). Payment is due at the time of your lesson.

Q: Do I have to sign up for a minimum number of lessons?

A: No. We do not require a minimum number of lessons. Some clients opt to come on a weekly basis in the same time slot. Others simply book when they want a lesson. There is no commitment required.

Q: What is your cancellation policy?

A: Appointments are unique time slots reserved for you. Last minute changes affect our other clients and our riding instructors. You will be asked to pay the full cost of your lesson if the courtesy of at least 24-hour notice is not given. Lessons scheduled Saturday through Monday must be canceled by 4pm on the Friday before the lesson. We also reserve the right to cancel lessons if the client is more than ten minutes late. These late arrivals will be considered "no-shows" and the full cost of the lesson will be charged.

Q: At what age can one participate in a trail ride?

A: The minimum age for trail rides is 7 year old. All riders will complete a safety check prior to heading out on the trails. Riders must exhibit adequate control of their horse before being able to set out. It is up to the discretion of the instructor if a rider can safely go out onto the trails.

Q: Can I jog or lope on the trails.

A: Trails are walking only. NO exceptions. This is for the safety of both our horses and the rider. Jogging or loping on the trail presents an unnecessary risk to the horses and rider.

Q: Will other riders be on my trail ride?

A: Multiple groups of guests may be on a trail ride together.

Q: How far in advance should I book my lesson?

A: We do not offer same day appointments or walk-ins. Rides must be booked at least one day in advance. For best chance of availability we recommend booking at least a week in advance of your desired riding day.

Q: Do you offer group lessons?

A: We do offer group lessons. A group lesson consists of at least 3 riders, all age 7 and up. Most group lessons will be arranged by the rider themselves if they have others they want to ride with. We are also happy to match interested clients up with other clients looking for a group lesson when ages and riding levels are compatible.

Q: Can I request which horse I would like to ride?

A: No, we do not take requests. Though we understand that people often bond with or have favorite horses, there are many factors that are taken into consideration by an instructor before choosing a horse for a student to ride on any given day. Riding a variety of horses is beneficial to the student's learning.

Q: Can I bring a dog with me to the ranch?

A: No. Absolutely no dogs are allowed on the premises.

Q: Do you ride when its raining?

A: Yes, most of the time! Arena lessons will occur in our covered arena if it is raining. Trail rides may be canceled. Arena lessons will only be canceled if the weather is stormy, extremely windy, or if there is thunder and lightning. ***Please be courteous and careful with umbrellas when around horses. Do not pop open umbrellas. Move slowly to avoid startling the horse.***

Q: Can I watch my child or family member's lesson?

A: Yes! We love to have spectators! Please sit only in designated areas, the picnic benches by arena, the bleachers, or the chairs in the corner of the covered arena. Do not enter arena during lesson. ***Do not hang out in the hay barn or allow children to climb the bales of hay.***

Q: Anything else we should know?

A: Do not approach or touch a horse that is unattended. Do not approach a horse without instructor permission and supervision. This rule is true even if you have experience with horses. As with any animal that belongs to another person, you should not interact with that animal without the owner's permission. This is for your safety as well as the horses. This also applies to other animals you may encounter on the ranch like chickens, goats, or our sweet ranch cat Zeus. ***Please do not approach these animals without permission. Do not allow your children to approach or chase the animals.***