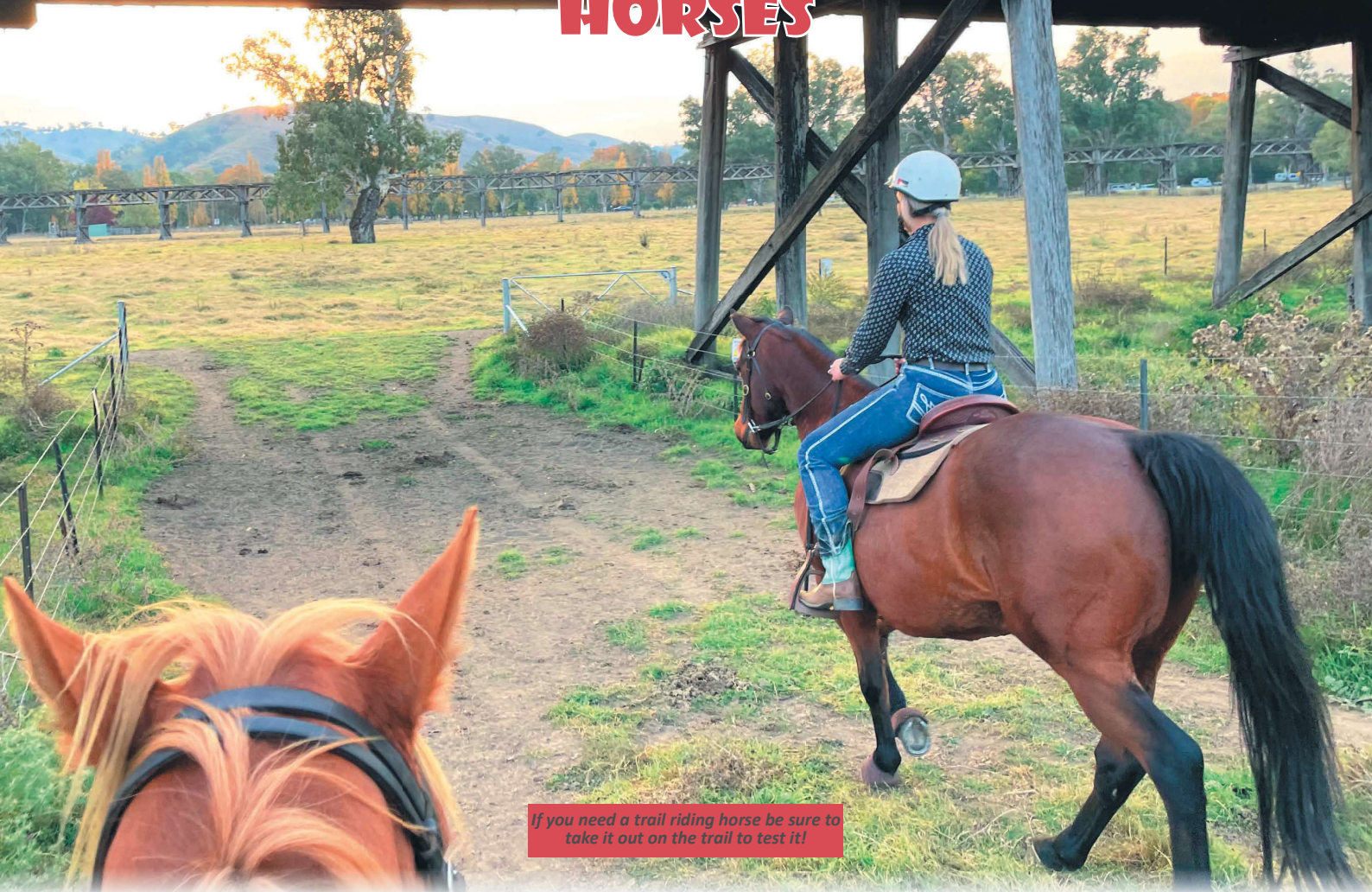


THE BEST (WORST) ADVICE I HAVE EVER HEARD ABOUT BUYING HORSES



If you need a trail riding horse be sure to take it out on the trail to test it!

Over the years I have heard so many different ideas about buying horses that I could write a book! But instead I have picked the best (or should I say worst) ones I have ever heard and listed them here for you!

But of course I am not listing them here to be funny; I am listing them so that any of you who are looking at buying a horse in the future can be sure to not make any of the mistakes listed here. And to anyone selling, hopefully this will be something you can think about when you talk to your horse's potential new owners.

When buying a horse (as I am sure many of you know) there is a lot of time and money that goes into finding a good one, so it makes economic and practical sense to do the job correctly the first time. Getting stuck with the horse that isn't for you is a waste of time, money and (if your partner/parent/significant other isn't horsey) emotional and relationship stress.

So here is my list of the best (worst) advice ever

1. We Can Grow Together

People have been saying this as long as the horse has been domesticated!

The idea is that a young and green (and usually cheaper) horse can be purchased for a young or inexperienced rider and they two can learn together as they gain age and experience.

This is the shortest and quickest route to both heartbreak and bone break; a young or green horse can react quickly to the environment around them and unless their rider is experienced enough to handle these reactions, accidents can happen easily.

The idea behind spending time with horses is to, beyond all else, have fun. This is especially important for children if they are to stay involved with horses their entire life. It only takes a couple of bad experiences and suddenly your child will not be interested in riding or horses anymore. So it is worth the time and effort to buy an older more experienced horse that they can enjoy.

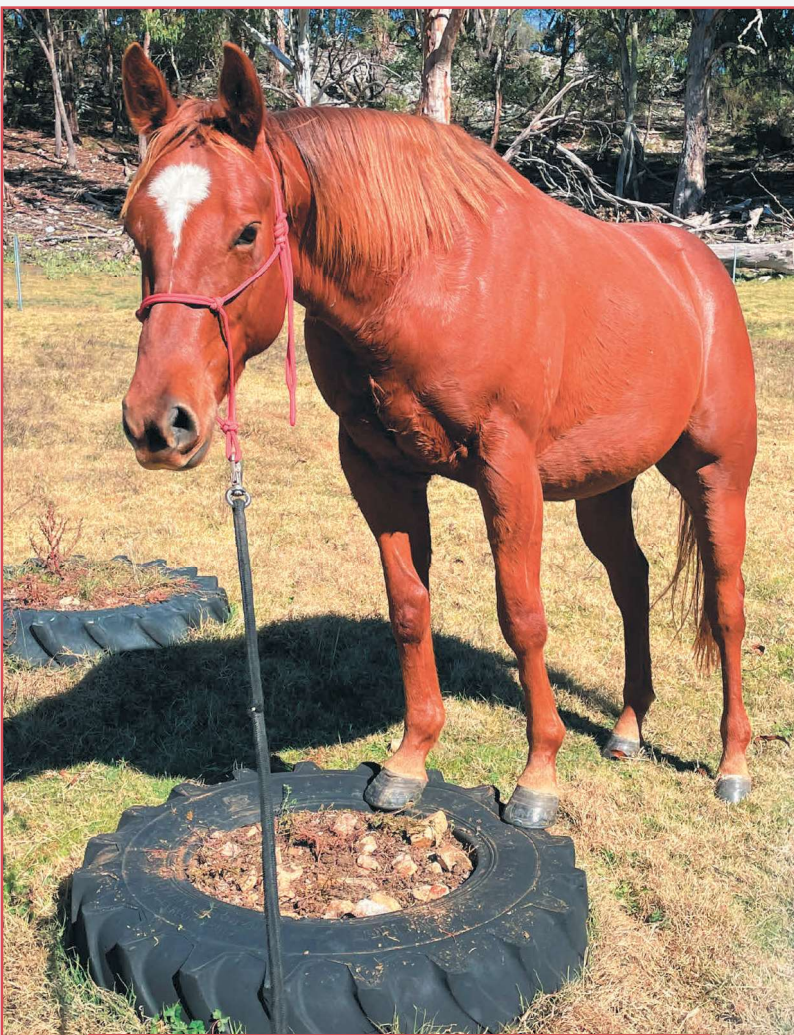
2. "He Has Never Done That Before"

You turn up to inspect old Dobbin at the agreed time and chat to the owner. All is going swimmingly. You and the owner ride the horse and half way through your time riding him he suddenly launches into a freewheeling, leg lifting, head throwing series of airs above the ground (alternatively he may do a small pig root or shy).

When you regain your now lost composure and return to the owner, she states with dismay "Oh he has never done that before!!!".

Get off the horse, thank the owner for their hospitality and time and drive away.

Horses never do things without a reason! We once had a horse that I had been competing on for some years with limited success so decided to sell as a pleasure horse. Two people (both of whom are heavier riders than me) came to ride him and on each of them he took off at the canter (there is no way I could make this up). After some time the horse (still in my ownership) became ill and had to be put down. A post-mortem revealed the horse had two fractured vertebrae right under where the saddle sat....there was a very good reason those other riders made him bolt...he was in a world of pain (you can also read this to say that vet checks can be helpful!). So whilst he had never bolted on me the fact he bolted on others was a warning sign there was something seriously wrong.



If you need a trail riding horse be sure to it's nice to see photos of horses doing cool stuff when trying to buy, but make sure that you can get them to do the same things; it's no good if the old owner can get them to do it but you can't!



3. I Have Hurt Myself and Can't Ride

You find the horse of your dreams and go to inspect him. He hasn't had a lot of work for a while and when you arrive he seems a little tense. The owner seems a little nervous or oblivious (these two things can be hard to tell apart sometimes).

When you ask the owner to hop on the horse so you can have a look at them riding before you get on, she suddenly becomes the walking encyclopaedia for medical conditions that you are quite sure even your doctor would not understand (or else she tells you she has a sore back or leg or little toe etc).

Unless the owner has organised another rider to get on the horse for you (who is hopefully not the reigning Australian Saddle Bronc Champion) I would be seriously asking why she is not willing to ride. If someone is selling a started horse, they should be able to ride it for you so you can see what it is like.

I once did this...bought a horse that the owner refused to ride....I still have scars on my arm where my wrist had to be wired back together after he finally did get rid of me.

4. I Can Change Him

The horse has had seven owners, been to three different trainers and is only five years old. But is okay, cause you have been to lots of horsemanship clinics and you can change him.

And yes you may be able to!

But you also better be prepared to put a lot of time and effort into this lost soul. You had also better make sure your resilience cup is overflowing, cause a horse like this can drain it pretty quickly.

Whilst I love the idea of saving the world and all the horses in it, not all of us are cut out to do this, so have a good look at your circumstances before you put on your superwoman cape!

5. My Gear Will Fit Him

You have ridden the horse you hope to be your next best friend, but you have reservations. You are not thrilled with how he rode or maybe he is not really the size/shape/style/temperament you were dreaming of.

You were smart enough to bring your own saddle and bridle with you and it all fits him perfectly and your old horse wore

the same size rug, so you decide that close enough is good enough and you pay for him and take him home.

This is when buyer's remorse kicks in.

Your new horse isn't at all what you wanted and you have now spent a large amount of money to purchase a horse that will give you little joy when you are around him. The fact is that you bought a horse purely for the convenience of using the gear you had and you forgot the reason we all get into horses to start with; enjoyment.

It would have been cheaper (and ultimately more enjoyable) to have purchased the real horse of your dreams and then worked towards the new gear that you needed.

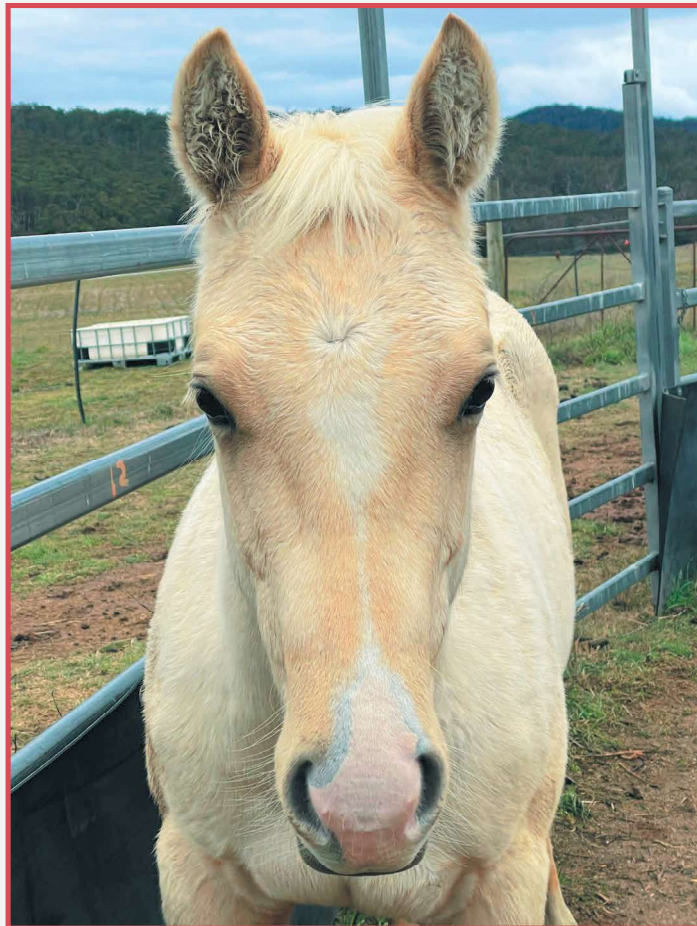
6. He Is A Pretty Colour

Colour is only something you can look at; it will not change how a horse rides, or his temperament, or his heart.

If you are keen to enter the show ring, then colour may be important. But if all you want to do is know that each time you ride out, you are going to ride back home at the end of the ride, then colour is pretty unimportant.

And you will always pay more for a coloured horse, cause people just love them and smart sellers have worked this out and make the most of it!

I hope you have gotten a giggle and maybe learnt how to avoid some of the most common pitfalls on buying a horse. Good luck in your horse search!



Sure he looks cute and he won't cost as much as an older version, but he won't be ready to ride for three years and he will cost a lot to look after between now and then!



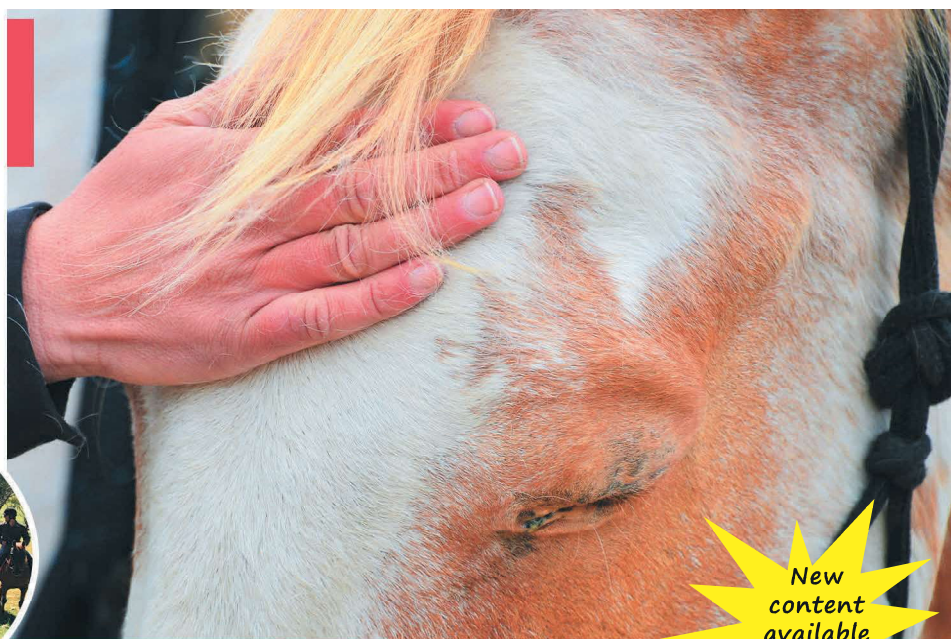
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