

The BHS Essential Horse Knowledge Certificate

This 'classroom' based certificate will teach you the principles of caring for horses. No practical or ridden work or experience is necessary to take part.

Who is it for?

- Anyone wanting to improve or test their horsey knowledge
- Potential or current horse riders and owners
- Parents of horse riders and owners

Where will the course be held?

You can complete the training for this certificate anywhere from the tack room to the pub. With no practical work involved, you don't need to be at a centre or club – you just need a qualified BHS Registered Instructor. Talk to your Champion or BHS representative to find out where this course will be held.

Is it suitable for beginners?

There are two levels: BHS Entry Level Award and Level 1 in Essential Horse Knowledge (30 guided learning hours each). You can take whichever you feel more suits your knowledge and ability. Speak to us if you're unsure which would be best suited.

Course overview

This certificate covers the following essential areas:

- Basic principles of health, safety and welfare when on a yard
- Points of a horse
- Signs of good and ill health in a horse and understanding basic horse behaviour and welfare
- How to feed and water a horse
- How to keep a horse in a safe grazing environment
- Care requirements for a horse to prevent ill health
- Rules for riding a horse on the public highway
- Buying a horse: factors to consider, why a horse should be vetted
- Costs involved with keeping a horse
- Reporting of equestrian incidents

The Essential Horse Knowledge Certificate also counts as one care unit within BHS Stage 1 should you wish to continue learning and develop your knowledge further.

GET THE LOWDOWN:

First Aid for Horses

This practical course will enable you to identify and react appropriately to a variety of common equine ailments and injuries.

Who is it for?

- Horse riders and owners
- Parents of horse riders and owners
- Anyone regularly around or working with horses

These courses will also be of benefit to those training for the BHS Stage Exams.

Where will the course be held?

These courses will be held at your local riding centre or clinic by a qualified veterinarian and can be run as a day course or over two evenings.

Is it suitable for beginners?

This course would be interesting for any level but with some technical information, it would be most beneficial to an intermediate, advanced or professional level.

This is ideal to improve your knowledge and confidence in dealing with an injured or unwell horse. You might want to develop your equine knowledge further with The Essential Horse Knowledge Certificate or by completing your BHS Stage qualifications.

Course overview

Part One:

- Pre First Aid – Prevention of Injury/illness
- Vital signs – Temperature, Pulse, Respiration
- The First Aid Kit
- When to call the vet
- Emergencies (Colic, Cast, Choke, Nosebleeds)
- Contagious and infectious diseases (Strangles, EHV, Ringworm)
- Isolation procedure

Part Two:

- Wounds
- Lameness (Laminitis, foot abscess, tendon injuries, fractures)
- Foaling
- Ophthalmic
- Isolation Procedure
- Miscellaneous

Riding and Road Safety

This practical and theory course will teach you how to minimise the risk involved when riding on the roads. It is probably the only test that any rider will undertake that has the potential to save not only their own life but that of their horse and other road users as well.

Who is it for?

- Horse riders and owners
- Anyone who leads or rides a horse on the road
- People working with horses

Where will the course be held?

It can be at your riding venue or if you have a group of 10 or more, you can organise to have a test from your own livery yard subject to passing a BHS Riding and Road Safety Risk Assessment.

What riding ability do you need?

The rider must be able to demonstrate competence in controlling their horse and dealing with vehicles and other hazards.

This is ideal to improve your knowledge and confidence in riding and leading horses in a potentially hazardous environment. You might want to develop your skills further by completing your BHS Stage qualifications or Progressive Riding Tests.

Course overview

It is not essential to own a horse in order to take the test – you may use a riding school horse if your test is run from a riding venue.

There are three parts:

The Theory Test

This is usually a written test with questions covering the Highway Code, the Riding and Roadcraft Manual, and the rules of riding on the roads.

The Simulated Road Route

This part takes place in off road conditions. It is designed to test the rider's ability to ride appropriately on the road. This includes observations, signalling, manoeuvring and negotiating a series of hazards that they may encounter on the roads.

The Road Route

Once the candidate has demonstrated an understanding of road safety in the first two sections they can attempt a set route on the roads to demonstrate their competence in dealing with vehicles and other hazards.

Riding School Assistant Certificate of Competence

This practical certificate will give you all the skills required to assist at a riding centre involving aspects of horse handling and care, assisting the instructor, client and rider interaction and customer care.

Who is it for?

- Anyone wanting to help out at a riding centre
- Those wanting to volunteer at a centre

Where will the course be held?

The course will be held and assessed at your local BHS Approved riding centre.

Is it suitable for beginners?

You will be required to have confidence around horses on the ground. This certificate does not contain any ridden assessments so riding experience is helpful but not essential.

This is a great way to get more involved with horses, helping others to enjoy their hobby as well as to see if a career working with horses might be for you. You might want to develop your knowledge further with The Essential Horse Knowledge Certificate or complete your BHS Stage 1 qualification.

Course overview

You must hold sufficient knowledge and learn to carry out the following:

- Basic grooming
- Tack up and un-tack the horse correctly
- Lead a horse safely in and out of the stable
- Assist riders to mount, alter stirrups and hold their reins
- Correctly lead a mounted client on a horse/pony in a riding lead rein session
- Walking helper next to horse and rider without leading
- Correctly assist a coach/instructor in a riding lesson
- Basic understanding of accident procedures
- Customer care
- Knowledge of Health & Safety
- When to wear Hats and Gloves*
- Follow the policy of the centre

*The British Horse Society strongly recommends that hats and gloves are worn at all times when mounted and for turning out and bringing in.

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The BHS Progressive Riding Test series

All six tests have riding and stable management sections and all of these can be taken separately. Each section has a number of elements that need to be signed off by the instructor as you are ready to be assessed.

Who is it for?

- Anyone wanting to improve or test their horsey knowledge
- Anyone wanting to set a goal or challenge for themselves to progress their skills
- Potential or current horse riders/owners – suitable for all levels

Where will the course be held?

As this is a practical course, it will need to be held at either your livery yard with your local BHS Registered Instructor and your own horse or one that you have access to. Alternatively, you can go to your BHS Approved Riding Centre.

Course overview for each test

Progressive Riding Test One:

You will need to demonstrate your ability to safely handle a horse/pony on the ground, recognising signs of good health and be able to identify points of the horse and different colours of the horse.

Equitation

- Check the girth and stirrups on and off the horse/pony
- Walk and trot in a balanced position
- Mount and dismount

Progressive Riding Test Two:

You will need to show your knowledge in naming parts of and maintaining a saddle and bridle, mucking out, grooming equipment and rules of watering.

Equitation

- Walk, trot and canter in a balanced position
- Make turns, circles and changes of rein
- Sitting trot, walk without stirrups and walking over ground poles

Progressive Riding Test Three:

Possess basic awareness of feeding, watering, bedding and forage, signs of good/poor health and be able to tack up correctly.

Equitation

- Turns, circles and other school figures
- Work over poles in walk and trot
- Work without stirrups in walk

Continued overleaf...

The BHS Progressive Riding Test series

Progressive Riding Test Four:

You will need to show your ability to name types of rugs, take care of the horse after exercise, know about shoeing and hooves and rules of watering/feeding.

Equitation

- Work over poles at walk and trot
- Canter on both reins
- Work without stirrups at walk and trot

Progressive Riding Test Five:

You will need to show knowledge of feed and worming, feeding plans for a grass kept and stabled horse through the seasons, herd/natural behaviour and fire precautions on a yard.

Equitation

- Trot a horse in hand
- Ride school figures in walk, trot and canter
- Work over ground poles at walk and trot and in a balanced light seat



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Progressive Riding Test Six:

You will be required to demonstrate skills in knowing poisonous plants to horses, daily paddock checks, caring for a hot horse after work, different tack and rules for taking horses on the road.

Equitation

- Ride without stirrups at walk, trot and canter
- Ride two different horses on the flat and/or over ground poles
- Show harmony and rapport with the horse

On passing all sections of The Progressive Riding Test Series, you will have the equivalent to your BHS Stage 1 and will be able to progress on to achieving your BHS Stage 2 should you wish to continue learning.