

Owning a horse is a unique and pleasant feeling. Once you start riding and spending time around horses, you may become addicted to this special feeling. Likewise, your friends and people who assist you in terms of horsemanship may encourage you to acquire a horse.

As in all facets of life and commerce, people experience many confidence shaking events while purchasing a horse both in our country and abroad. You will no doubt get into a dilemma when you learn that the horse that you have just purchased is suffering from an untreatable chronic condition. Many people have gone through the hardships of being forced to return a horse with whom they have formed a mutual bond, or to take care of an unrideable and unsellable horse until the end of its days or to sell the horse for a price far below the original purchase price.

Below are some striking actual stories and observations as related by numerous horse owners. Especially if you have never purchased a horse before, you may wish to read these stories carefully and benefit from the experiences of those who have been there and done that. What's more, by enhancing your knowledge on purchasing a horse and ensuring that a prospective horse is subjected to an extensive pre-purchase examination depending on the horse's intended use, you may also minimize any probable mishaps.

We would like to thank horse owners who related their own stories.

Bonding for life in just ten minutes

My ten-year old son has been riding for a year. Encouraged by his trainers, we decided to buy him a horse. This was a spur-of-the-moment decision taken in just 10 minutes. Our new horse arrived immediately. Unfortunately, the horse was suffering from a problem in his left front leg. We became aware of this problem through the warning of other horse owners three weeks after we purchased him. But my son has formed such a strong bond with the horse right at the first moment that he cried for days as he was unable to ride him. Our horse has been with us for a year and we intend to keep him for life. However, my son is constantly riding other loan horses and he will soon be competing. It seems that we now have to buy another sound horse for my son to compete but this will put us in a very difficult situation financially. I wish that we haven't attempted to acquire a horse without first being well-versed in purchasing and owning a horse. My only solace is that we will love and keep this horse for life regardless of his condition. He is one lucky horse 😊

Our gift horse

I would like to relate my experiences with our gift horse. My father is involved in trade. A business partner who is aware of my interest in horses told him that he wished to gift a horse to our family. I was on top of the world when my father came home and told us the news. Although we can afford it, I have never before dreamed that I could own a horse. Even before the horse arrived, I wanted to prepare myself by buying horse care books. And at long last, the lovely mare who was allegedly 11 years old arrived home. However, she started coughing just one week after her arrival and we called the vet. Before starting to examine her, the vet asked us about the horse's age, for how long did we know her and whether she has experienced a similar problem before. We told him that the horse arrived just one week previously, that we had no knowledge of her background and that we only knew that she was 12 years old. While examining the horse, the vet also checked her teeth to determine her age. After informing us about her state of health, he told us that he was sorry to say that the horse was actually over 20. I was flabbergasted while my father really lost his nerve and called the person who gifted the horse to us. However, the told my father that he bought the horse from another person and that he was entirely unaware of the situation. He also stated that he will call the seller. The horse went back the following day. Soon after, she was replaced by a gorgeous 21-year old gelding. Although he is also an elderly horse, this time we were told the truth about his age and other features. He has been with us for about a year and we are extremely happy. I take care of him whenever I find the opportunity and I spend wonderful time with him. The only reason for us to return the first horse was the feeling of being fooled. If only they told us about her real age in the first place, we would have gladly accepted her.

The horse who could not make it through the customs

I would like to tell you about an unfortunate event that one of my friends went through several years ago. He purchased a horse from abroad for the first time. The transport process was prolonged due to some incomplete customs procedures and lasted for about a week. After not stepping out of the lorry during this period of time, the horse was really tired and listless when she finally arrived in Istanbul. The 11-year old mare colicked the first night after her arrival and then had diarrhea. When she also started to suffer from laminitis only two days later, there was nothing left to be done but to have her put to sleep. Maybe, if only she was not kept in the lorry for so long, she would not have get ill and died. Good organization of customs procedures for imported horses is vital to prevent such events from happening again.

I have not been riding my horse for a year

Hello, I purchased a horse about two years ago. At the time, I had just started riding and I really enjoyed it. Instead of riding a different horse every time, I wished to continue my riding lessons with my very own horse and decided to purchase a horse. My trainer found a horse and we went to view it. Up until then, I only had 7-8 riding lessons and had no knowledge whatsoever on horse care and soundness. I was unable to detect whether a horse was lame or not. I saw the horse and really liked him. He was a truly laid-back, well-behaved, experienced and beautiful Arabian gelding. When I asked whether we should call a vet to examine the horse, both my trainer and the seller told me that the horse was in good condition and that the price was very reasonable. They also stated that it was not logical to pay a substantial vet check fee for such a horse. I believed in them and bought the horse. I was really full of zeal and riding my horse every day after work. Shortly after I bought him, one of my relatives who owned horses was watching me. When I got off, he asked me whether I was aware that the horse was lame. I was totally unaware of this. We then called a vet and asked him to examine the horse. Following the examination, the vet told us that the problem was in the fetlock and that he needed to take X-rays to examine the bones. Meanwhile, we met with the horse's former vet quite by accident and he said that he had the old X-rays of this horse still available and that he had a serious and untreatable joint problem. X-rays taken by our vet and the old X-rays tallied with each other. When the vet pointed out the problem on the X-rays, even I could see that the horse had quite a serious problem. After that, there was no way I could ride him knowing full well that he was lame. And trying to sell him in this condition would be trying to hoodwink some other unsuspecting person. To my regret, I have been unable to ride my horse for more than a year and I continue to care for him. I wish I had him checked by a vet before buying. If only I did this, then I would have been made aware of this major condition and avoided the horse. What's more, now I have to pay more than the amount of money that I originally refrained from paying for a vet check for the care of my horse each and every month.

Examination report

I have been riding and taking part in showjumping competitions for a long time. As I believed that the time has come for me to enter competitions higher than 100 cm classes that I have been competing in for several years, I decided to buy a horse. Accompanied by my trainer, I went to Holland and we started to view horses. Out of several horses that we tried, one of them seemed to be really suitable. Before buying him, we had a local vet check the horse. X-rays were taken and a report was written. The buyer declared that the horse was a picture of health and had no problems whatsoever. We returned home after completing the purchase procedures and paying for the vet check. Then, after riding the horse for a month without any problems, he went lame on his left foreleg. The vet examined him and detected a chip of bone in his left front pastern. When we told him that we bought the horse only a month ago, the vet asked if we had the X-rays taken in the pre-purchase examination. After examining the X-rays, he told us that the same finding has been present back then and asked us if we had been handed a written report for the pre-purchase examination. We showed him the report issued by the Dutch vet. At that point, we realized that it was the first time that we were examining the report closely as the report clearly stated that a chip of bone was observed in the X-rays. However, the buyer verbally claimed otherwise. As a verbal claim is impossible to prove, our vet informed us that we had no chance of returning the horse. As the report was written in Dutch, we didn't even really take notice of it. If only we had an idea on the scoring of X-rays and run an eye over the report, we would have then become aware that the scoring was pointing out to a serious finding. Our lack of knowledge in this department caused us to suffer from a substantial material loss.

If you have a similar story to tell and you would like others to benefit from your experiences, do not hesitate to contact us at info@atistanbul.com