

Ready for Riding?

At Havendell Farm, we recommend that a student be at least nine years of age before starting independent riding lessons – these are lessons where the rider is in complete control of the horse. Children under the age of nine often lack adequate large muscle skills, dexterity and strength needed to control an animal as large as a horse. Formal horseback riding instruction also requires the mental ability to focus for extended periods of time and follow multiple instructions simultaneously. To avoid any unnecessary frustration or danger for the student, parent/guardian, or horse, carefully consider the above before pursuing riding lessons.

Students too young or too small to handle a horse by themselves may still have riding lessons. Even though an instructor will lead the horse for their lessons, these sessions will be more than what is typically thought of as “pony rides”. The students will be building on a foundation that will help them become ready for future independent-style lessons. These lessons will focus on confidence, good balance and fun. Grooming, riding, and basic horse care will be included.

The safety of each rider and those around him or her is of highest priority. Therefore, at Havendell Farm the instructor reserves the right to evaluate a prospective student’s physical, mental, and/or emotional suitability to ride one of our horses and make the final determination as to whether anyone will ride or not. Every prospective student should have a complete physical examination by a doctor before undertaking any new sport or physical activity. If pregnancy is a possibility, please seek a physician’s advice before undertaking riding lessons.

We also must take into consideration the safety and long-term care of our horses. A rider that is too large for a horse puts the horse’s health and longevity at risk. Please understand that it is not our desire to discriminate in any way.

At this time, Havendell Farm does not offer therapeutic riding sessions intended for those with disabilities. We do not wish to exclude anyone. As stated before, we take each student’s safety seriously. If the riding instructor determines that an extra staff person is needed to walk beside any horse and rider, an extra fee above the cost of the riding lesson may be charged to cover the cost of that service. If you have any questions regarding our policy, please ask *before* scheduling a riding lesson.

If you would like to enroll a student in the Certified Horsemanship Association curriculum program, the student needs to read at a minimum of the third grade level. This is a wonderful program that allows the student to progress at his or her own rate through four levels of horsemanship competency. Following or completing the curriculum is optional but will greatly enhance the student’s skills.