The Adoption Process

by Emily Heggan

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After you have taken all these factors into consideration, you have found the horses that might be suitable for you, now you must go through the adoption process.

Almost all rescues have you fill out an application before they even allow you to come and look at their available horses. They will ask you general questions such as you name, address and where you will be keeping the horse. Sometimes the rescue will also ask what type of riding you will be doing, your experience level, and what you plan on doing with your new horse. This is done so they can see if they have any horses available that suit your needs.

Catherine Dunkin-Larose, owner of Second Chance Farm in Newfield, New Jersey says they go through a certain adoption process to make sure the adopter and horse are a good match for each other.

â€œAs for the adoption process,â€• says Dunkin-Larose, â€œwe require an application with three referen We prefer vets, farriers and trainers as references. We also inspect the facility where the horse will be boarded and we do a background check as well.â€•

You should also visit more than one rescue. It is important to keep your options open so that you can find the right horse for you. When you do go to visit the horses you are considering, make sure you spend time with them. Groom, tack them up and watch their reactions to the things going on around them. Their temperament and attitude should match what you are looking for. Make sure you ride the horse â€“ you need to get a feel for the horse and make sure that you are comfortable with them as well. It is like buying a new car; you have to try it before you buy it.

So now you have been approved for adoption, you found the right horse, and now you are ready to take them home. But before you load the horse on the trailer and take them to their new home, there is usually another form in which you must fill out. It is the â€˜Adoption Agreementâ€™. This form is a contract that states you are the new owner of the horse and that you adhere to the terms of the rescue. For example, the agreement might say that you cannot sell or give away the horse, but if you are unable to care for them, you must return it to the rescue.

Some rescues do allow you to sell or give away the horse, but only under certain circumstances. For example, the MidAtlantic Horse Rescue in Chesapeake City, Maryland, who specializes in off-the-track-thoroughbred adoptions, allows this under their contract. Their agreement specifically states that â€œIn the event Adopter decides to sell, assign, or transfer ownership of Said Horse, Adopter will notify MAHR in writing of this intent. Upon sale, assignment, or transfer, Adopter will provide MAHR in writing with the name, address, and phone number of new owner within 14 days of sale, assignment, or transfer of Said Horse.â€•

A lot of rescues do this for the safety of the horse so that the horse does not end up at an auction or in the wrong hands. Once this form has been signed, you have paid the adoption fee, papers are transferred, you are now able to get on the road and head home with your new horse.

Adopting a horse might seem like a lot of work and can be time consuming, but in the long run it will pay off. The horse has a new home and you have a new companion.

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