



## **Riding Lesson Information Packet**

Thank you for choosing Springwood Station to accomplish your riding goals! Our purpose is to produce safe and confident riders using fun and creative teaching methods. In addition to riding, our students can learn general horsemanship and care thru our Equine Foundations Courses offered throughout the year and courses online – learn to groom, tack your horse, anatomy, conformation, and ground work skills. Some courses offer certificates and awards to track your progress.

We teach all of our students **Safety First** and apply principles from a horse training background with emphasis on “learning horse psychology” to become “one” with your horse.

In this packet you will find frequently asked questions, what to wear, pricing along with barn guidelines and liability waiver. Lesson liability waivers MUST be filled out and signed before your first lesson begins at Springwood Station.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns that are not addressed in this packet. Emails, texts or calls will be answered as soon as possible.

Happy Trails!  
Springwood Station Staff

springwoodstation@comcast.net  
804-746-4072



## **Lesson Program Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q. What types of lessons do you teach?**

A. Our lessons are based upon a “balanced seat” and a “secure seat”. We teach beginner, intermediate and advanced Western Lessons. Emphasis is placed on correct position in the saddle, control of your mount and safety through true horsemanship. Learning horse psychology and training techniques will also be discussed. Other areas include horse management, training, and riding to prepare you for ownership of your own horse. Consideration is given to the student in the very beginning to chart your own course of learning...However - we do so by practicing safety protocol for whichever learning path you wish to take. **All riding lessons are private** to help with your concentration and have the ability to ask all questions you may have.

### **Q. What is the dress code for riding?**

A. Helmets (ASTM/SEI certified) must be worn by all children 17 and under. Helmets are strongly suggested for all adults. Boots with a heel (atleast ½ or more) are required so your foot does not slip thru the stirrups while riding. Tennis shoes are not recommended. Jeans and/or riding breeches can be worn. No shorts, capri pants or baggy sweat pants. Hair should be pulled back out of your face. No dangling jewelry. No chewing gum while riding.  
Note - Bicycle helmets do not offer adequate protection as an ASTM/SEI Certified Riding Helmet does.

### **Q. Where can I purchase any of these items?**

A. Local stores that carry helmets, boots, and riding attire:

Champion Saddlery      [www.championsaddlery.com](http://www.championsaddlery.com)  
15225 Breedens Rd  
Doswell, VA 23047      804-227-3434

Changing Reins      [www.changingreinsinc.com](http://www.changingreinsinc.com)  
102 S. Railroad Ave  
Ashland, VA 23005      804-752-6782

Tractor Supply and Southern States may also carry a limited supply of helmets and boots.

Online Resources:

[www.doversaddlery.com](http://www.doversaddlery.com)

[www.smartpak.com](http://www.smartpak.com)

[www.statelinetack.com](http://www.statelinetack.com)

[www.sstack.com](http://www.sstack.com)

[www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com)

### **Q. What ages do you accept?**

A. Children must be at least 8 years old to start riding at Springwood Station.  
All adults are welcome.

**Q. Is there a weight limit?**

A. Yes – 220lbs for the rider only.

**Q. Can I leave my child during a lesson and come back later?**

A. We strongly discourage this – please stay for the 30 minutes your child will be riding. We do not allow children 17 and under to be left at the farm unattended for any reason.

**Q. How many lessons will it take to be a skilled horse person?**

A. There is no set limit for what you are willing to learn. The extreme basics can take as little as 5 lessons but you will not know enough to go and purchase a horse for yourself. Everyone learns at a different pace and all horses can be very different from one another. Horsemanship can take years or even a life time depending what you would like to learn and to what severity.

**Q. Do you teach anything other than Western?**

A. We teach primarily western and this is where all of our students start - however – you can switch riding disciplines to hunter, english, or dressage after riding with us for awhile. Some like to see what other types are out there and try them out. Our horses are well versed in several disciplines – not only western. We **do not** offer any **jumping** within our **lesson program**.

**Q. What type of horses do you use and how are they trained?**

A. All of our horses are purebred Arabians, ½ Arabian ½ Quarter Horse crosses and Quarter Horse. They all have had several years of professional training and showing. Many of them have won National and Regional wins. We use horses that have unflappable dispositions and can withstand the rigors of multiple daily riders and are forgiving of the beginning rider's learning curve. We use only the best equipment that is out on the market. We take great care in picking the best horse suited for our students. We align the abilities of the student and their level of riding to coincide with the level of horse used. Depending on length of time you ride with us – you may ride several horses with differing abilities.

**Q. When can I lease a horse from Springwood Station?**

A. We offer our riding students first choice of leasing when a horse becomes available. A minimum of 20 lessons is a pre-requisite to leasing unless you have previous riding or ownership experience.

**Q. Can I come early and saddle my lesson horse and return him to the barn when done?**

A. Our horses do multiple lessons back to back – so this is already done for you when you arrive. If you would like to take part in the grooming/saddling – we also offer a **One Hour HorseManShip Riding Lesson** that addresses grooming/saddling/riding and after ride care. These require **2 lesson credits** as they are 2 lesson slots. (Please inquire – as we don't always have enough time in the schedule). We also host a 3 hour HorseManShip 101 group class that covers many of these points in a one-time class.

**Q. Do you offer group riding lessons or just private riding lessons?**

A. Springwood Station only offers private lessons so you can focus exactly what you would like to learn without any interaction or distraction from anyone else. Our lessons are catered to what you would like to learn and plenty of question/answer time throughout the lesson. You learn at your pace and not someone else's. This also is done as a **huge safety precaution** to our younger riders and less confident riders – so we can stay close to them while in the saddle with no other student interaction.

We also offer select group type lessons throughout the year on specific subjects however these are generally non riding classes – please check the website on subjects and timeframes.

**Q. What kind of fitness level do I need to have - in regard to riding horses?**

A. Fitness level for beginner riders must start with:

- 1 - have average arm strength
- 2 - no shortness of breath
- 3 - must be able to mount the horse without hesitation

\*\* Please let us know of any physical issues, allergies, or limitations you may have before purchasing lessons.

**Q. Are there opportunities to ride outside of the ring?**

A. All of our riding lessons will take place in the riding ring – we do not do anything outside of the ring such as trail riding within the lesson program. We also have inside barn lessons with grooming, saddling, nutrition etc. thru our HorseManShip 101 class, Mane Event Clinics and specific group programs sponsored by Equine Foundations.

**Q. Do you offer trail riding for anyone?**

A. We **do not** offer any kind of trail riding or horse rentals for anyone other than our boarding/leasing clients.

**Q. Can I do barn work in exchange for my lessons?**

A. Unfortunately not – our insurance does not allow this.

**Q. How do I schedule a lesson?**

A. Please email or call for our current availabilities as they can change quickly. If you are a first time student – you will be asked to pay for one lesson before your lesson time can be scheduled. This confirms your commitment to the time provided and prevents us from “no shows”. All lessons are scheduled on a first come first served basis with priority to lesson package purchasers – however most students keep a standing time slot for each week with us.

If you do not plan to ride weekly – which is perfectly ok with us, but we may not always have the same lesson slot available for you.

\*\*Keep in mind our schedule remains full most of the year so it may take 2-4+ weeks to schedule a new rider into a time slot – as we usually have a waiting list.

**Q. How do I cancel a lesson?**

A. Please email/text or call at least 12 hours ahead of scheduled ride time to be able to reschedule without a fee involved. Any lessons not cancelled 12 hours ahead or failure to show up for your lesson will be charged/billed as is - since we cannot fill an empty slot that late of notice. Please reschedule your appointments as soon as you know you may not be able to attend - to be considerate to others trying to book a lesson slot.

**Q. What are the lesson days and times?**

A. Current time frames :

Monday – Thursday evenings 6:00pm – 8:00pm in ½ hour increments.

Saturday/Sunday afternoons starting at 2pm in cooler weather (October-May)

Saturday/Sunday mornings starting at 9am in warmer weather (June-September)

Our online calendar will show open timeframes available – if no dates are present, we do not have any current openings – however this can change daily due to cancellations. Email us directly if you are looking for certain timeframes.

**Q. At times of inclement weather – how will I know if we will be riding or not?**

A. You will be contacted either by email, text or phone if the weather is too bad to ride. Most are cancelled by 1pm day of the lesson (weekdays) – the remainder being by 5pm at the latest during quick changing weather patterns. Weekend lessons will be cancelled as soon as possible within a 2+ hour range preferably so you can make alternate plans when necessary. See [Weather Policy](#) on the next page.

**Q. Do you offer lesson packages?**

A. Yes – please check our website for all packages and their pricing. You may purchase these on the website using Paypal, by mailing your payment or by arranging a visit to pay in person via cash, check or credit card. Please note that our lesson packages must be used within 6 months from date of purchase or they will expire. We do not give refunds on any lesson package– so please make sure you have had any questions answered or doubts discussed before you purchase.

**Q: Do you offer horse showing/coaching/training to lesson participants?**

A: We offer this to leasing clients and clients with their own horse. Lesson participants usually do not have as much time in the saddle that it takes to begin horse showing – so we suggest leasing when you get to this point.

**Lesson Pricing**

1 Lesson	\$45
3 Lesson Package	\$125
6 Lesson Package	\$225
10 Lesson Package	\$335
HorseManShip 101 Class	\$100 3 Hours + Handouts

All other programs, events, clinics will be priced separately on the website.

**Weather Policy for Lesson Participants**

Weather with horses can cause a great deal of havoc at times. Horses are just like dogs – they can be intimidated by weather patterns that we don’t always see. We consistently check weather conditions for Springwood Station to make the best possible judgment before you leave home for your lesson. We use

[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) as our main go-to source for weather information.

We always side with the weatherman and their predictions – even though they are wrong quite a bit of the time. Here are the main weather patterns that we cancel lessons for the day:

**In extreme heat –**

We do not ride if the temperature is 95 degrees or hotter - AT STARTING RIDE TIME (6pm on weekdays)

**In extreme cold –**

We do not ride if the temperature is 45 degrees or colder – AT STARTING RIDE TIME (6pm on weekdays)

Rainy conditions – muddy conditions – standing water

Lightning strikes/Impending Storms

Windy Conditions

## **Lesson Rules**

- No running, screaming or any horseplay around the horses either in the barn or near the riding ring. Supervision is required for all children (whether riding or not) is the responsibility of the parent while on the premises.
- No smoking on Springwood Station property.
- Pin back all hair from your face – use ponytail holder for long hair. No loose jewelry.
- No chewing gum or candy while riding.
- Helmets must be worn by all children – see our riding attire policy in FAQ area.
- Never wrap the lead rope or reins around your hand while handling any horse.
- No riding back to the barn.
- Never stand directly behind any horse.
- Please be on time for your lesson – they run back to back. If you show up late – your time will be deducted from your lesson.
- Please help us by adhering to all rules and act as safely as possible while visiting Springwood Station. We aim to teach you a “safe” way to interact with and around horses. Be advised - you may be asked to leave the premises if you do not conduct yourself in a safe manner.

Please review the following Rider Liability Waiver on the next page – this form needs to be filled out and brought back with you when you arrive for your first lesson.



## **RELEASE OF LIABILITY OWNER/RIDER**

WITNESS THIS AGREEMENT by and between Springwood Station and the aforesigned, hereinafter referred to as MANAGER and RIDER. For consideration received, and in return for the use, today and on all future dates of the property, facilities and services of Manager, Rider, Rider's heirs, assigns, and representatives, hereby agree as follows:

1. **Inherent Risks and Assumption of Risk.** The undersigned acknowledges there are inherent risks associated with equine activities such as described below, and hereby expressly assumes all risks associated with participating in such activities. The inherent risks include, but are not limited to the propensity of equines to behave in ways such as, running, bucking, biting, kicking, shying, stumbling, rearing, falling or stepping on, that may result in an injury, harm or death to persons on or around them; the unpredictability of equine's reaction to such things as sounds, sudden movement and unfamiliar objects, persons or other animals; certain hazards such as surface and subsurface conditions; collisions with other animals; the limited availability of emergency medical care; and the potential of a participant to act in a negligent manner that may contribute to injury to the participant or others, such as failing to maintain control over the animal or not acting within such participant's ability.

Rider acknowledges that horses, by their very nature are unpredictable and subject to animal whim. Rider assumes all risks in connection therewith, and expressly waives any claims for any injury or loss arising there from. Rider agrees to abide by and follow Manager's rules and regulations which, shall be posted and/or available from time to time. Rider further acknowledges that the behavior of any animal is contingent to some extent upon the ability of Rider. Rider assumes all risks therefore and warrants a full and fair disclosure of Rider's abilities has been made to Manager.

Rider expressly releases Manager from any and all claims for personal injury or property damage, even if caused by negligence (if allowed by the laws of this State) by Manager or its representatives, agents or employees.

**Warning**

**Under Virginia Law, an equine activity sponsor or an equine professional shall not be liable for an injury to or death of a participant engaged in an equine activity resulting from the inherent risks of equine activities pursuant to Va. Code Ann. §3.1-796.132.**

2. Rider agrees to hold harmless, indemnify and defend Manager against, and hold harmless from, any and all claims, demands, causes of action, damages, judgments, orders, costs or expenses, including attorney's fees, whether actually incurred or not, which may in any way arise from or be in any way connected with Rider's use of or presence upon the property of Manager and the facilities located thereon.
3. In the event Rider is using Rider's own horse, or a horse(s) not owned by Manager, Rider warrants said horse(s) shall be free from infection, contagious or transmittable diseases. Manager reserves the right to refuse access or use of any horse upon the premises that does not appear to Manager to be in good health, or is deemed dangerous or undesirable.
4. Any action brought under this agreement shall be brought within three (3) months of the incident or accident giving rise to said claim. Rider agrees that damages shall be limited to \$250 for property damage, actual expenses incurred, and a maximum of \$2500 for damages such as pain and suffering.
5. Rider agrees to waive the protection of any applicable statutes in this jurisdiction whose purpose, substance and/or effect is to provide that a general release shall not extend to claims, material or otherwise, which the person giving the release does not know or suspect to exist at the time of executing said release.

Rider Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian for child)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_