



ACT Endurance Riders Association Inc.

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IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST RIDE...

If this is your first ride, you may have a lot of questions. The answers to most of them will be found in the publication *Getting Started in Endurance Riding* that you can download from the NSW Endurance Riders Association (NSWERA) website (www.nswera.asn.au). There is also other information under the Starting Out button at left of the screen on that site, and in the ride preview. Some other questions may be:

What do I wear on the ride? You must wear a helmet meeting the Australian, US or European standard for equestrian helmets, and must not wear spurs or carry a whip (or anything that could be used as a whip). Apart from that, you can wear what you like as long as it's safe and comfortable. Layers that can be adjusted as conditions change are best. Don't forget to bring a raincoat, and something to attach it to your saddle if you need to take it on the ride. Footwear must be safe for riding (boots with a heel are recommended) but should also be appropriate for walking as you may need to lead your horse. Remember to use sunscreen.

Are there any restrictions on horse equipment? No, except that there are some particular requirements for stallions. But it is your responsibility to make sure your horse is under control and does not pose a danger to other horses or people either at the ride base or on the course. It is a good idea to practice riding in company and to make sure your horse is comfortable and well behaved in the equipment you intend to use during the ride. If your horse is likely to kick, plait a red ribbon into its tail. At the start of the ride, you can leave a few minutes after the other riders if you wish. You should also accustom your horse to the vet check procedures (e.g. to stand quietly while having its temperature taken and to trot out nicely on a loose lead). Your horse need not be shod.

How long will it take to get to the ride base? The ride base at Brookvale is about 40 minutes from Parliament House for a vehicle towing a float. Allow plenty of time to find a suitable spot to park once you arrive. Ride base at Equestrian Park is about 10 minutes from Parliament House, and Kambah pony club is about 20 minutes.

Are there yards available? No. You will need to be self-sufficient. If you are camping overnight (necessary for the 40 km and 80 km rides at Brookvale but optional for the 20 km), horses must be kept in portable yards, either steel or electric. See guidelines on horse containment under Starting Out on the NSWERA website.

Which ride will I enter? Before entering an 80 km ride you must successfully complete two training rides. If this is your first ride, you will only be able to enter the 40 km training ride or the 20 km social ride. Before deciding whether to enter the social or training ride, think carefully about how fit your horse will be at the time of the ride. The 20 km ride would be suitable for most sound horses in

light work. Horses in the 40 km ride would need a few weeks training to be fit enough to complete successfully.

How old does my horse need to be? The minimum ages are: 20 km – 3 years; 40 km – 4½ years (corner incisors erupted but not necessarily in wear); 80 km – 5 years (corner incisors in wear).

Do I need to be a member of ACTERA to ride? No, but ACTERA members receive \$5 off the entry fee (not available in addition to the discount for Snowy Zone members).

Do I need to be a member of NSWERA? To enter the 40 or 20 km rides, you need only be a Day Member of NSWERA (this is necessary to cover insurance). You can join as a Day Member when entering the ride. Day membership costs \$5 for the social ride (20 km) and \$10 for the training ride. (Before entering an 80 km ride you will need to become a full member of NSWERA and your horse will need to have a logbook – for details see Getting Started on the NSWERA website).

How do I know where to go without getting lost on course? The ride course will be clearly marked. The marking will be explained at the pre-ride talk, which you must attend. The pre-ride talk for the 80 km and 40 km riders will be held around 6pm on Saturday. For the 20 km ride, it will be shortly before the start of that ride.

What if I have a problem during the ride – for example, my horse goes lame? There will be radio checkpoints at several points around the course to keep track of each rider's progress. If you find you are not able to continue, you can send a message from a checkpoint (or ask another rider to take a message for you to the next checkpoint) and we will send someone to pick you and your horse up. If your horse is shod, it is a good idea to carry an 'easy boot' to enable you to continue if your horse loses a shoe during the ride. If you have not reached a particular checkpoint within a reasonable period of time we will send someone out to look for you.

How long do I have? The maximum time for each ride will be announced at the pre-ride talk. There will also be minimum times set to ensure that novice horses and riders do not travel too fast. Minimum times for the 20 km and 40 km rides are based on speeds of 14 kph or less. There will be distance markers at regular intervals around the ride course to help you pace yourself.

How many vet checks will there be? For both the social ride and training ride, there will be a vet check before the ride and another 30 minutes after you cross the finish line. The training ride is one 40 km leg.

I'm interested in endurance riding but don't have a suitable horse yet. Helping out at the ride base is a great way to learn more about endurance riding by watching and talking to other riders. Running the ride takes a lot of people and ACTERA always welcomes helpers.

Where do I find the rules? The national rules for endurance riding are on the Australian Endurance Riders Association website (www.aera.asn.au), with recent amendments under 2009 AERA Rule Changes on the NSWERA site. We recommend you read these rules before coming to the ride.