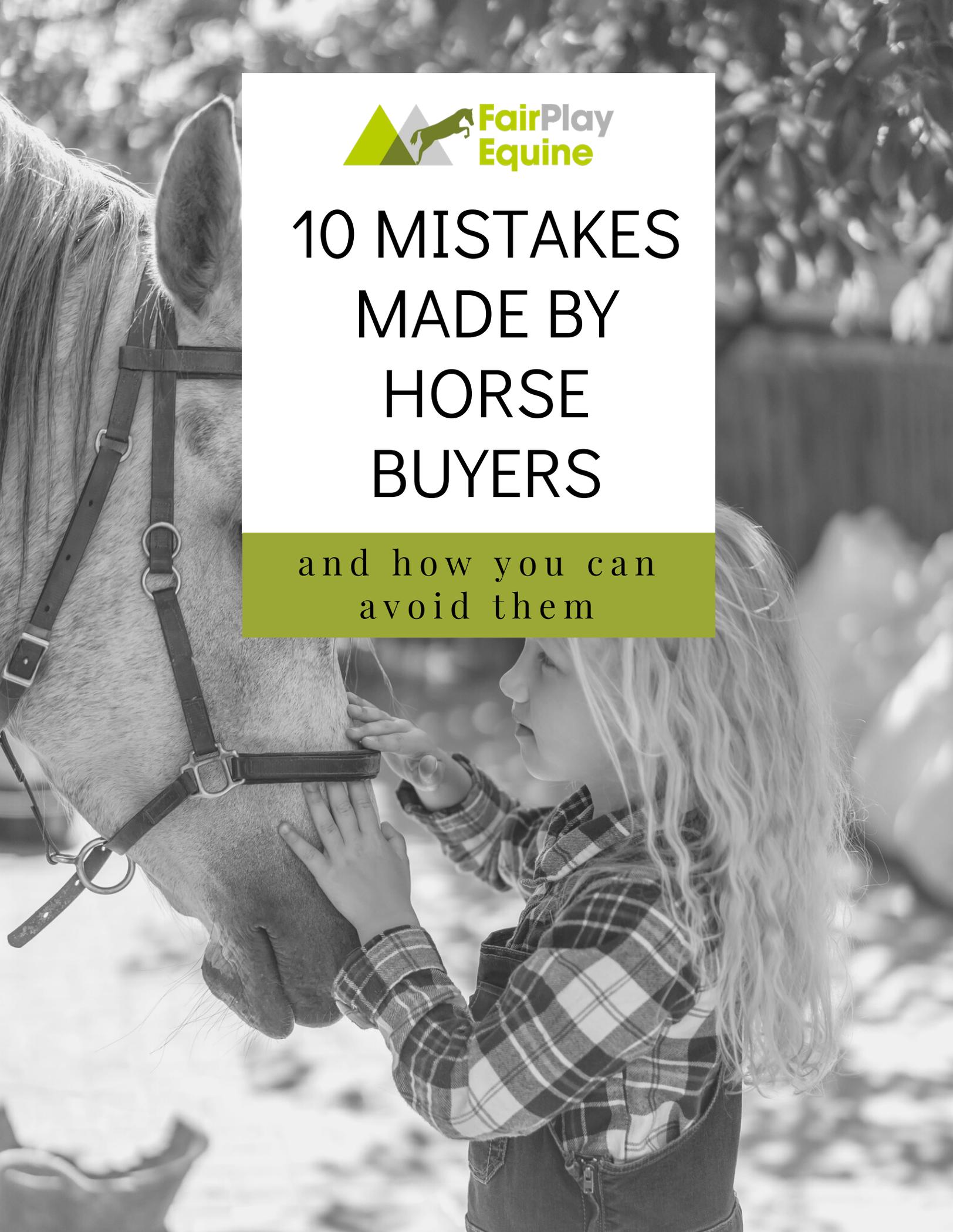




10 MISTAKES MADE BY HORSE BUYERS

and how you can
avoid them



The key mistakes you need to avoid

1. Not knowing the best horse purchase process.

Buying a horse is such an exciting time. You'll be thinking about how great it will be to have your first horse in the paddock and all the fun times ahead with riding and competitions and friends galore. Stay with the thrill and excitement but also make sure you choose the right horse by following sensible horse-purchase steps.

2. Not getting an equestrian expert on board.

Your riding coach, pony club instructor, or knowledgeable friend is vital for helping you make the right match. They often know of great horses that aren't even for sale. Its amazing to be put in touch with an equestrian who, with all of life's unexpected twists and turns, isn't needing the horse they own anymore. And your coach will want to find a wonderful new home for that horse, because they love horses themselves. So, go and book horse riding lessons with at least one coach and that will enable your coaches' help.

3. Didn't work on improving their riding.

Most sellers want their horse to go to great homes with great riders that are the perfect match for their horse. Sadly, sellers often speak of purchasers turning up to trial their horse and they are "terrible" rider's. But it's not hard to be a kind rider with a light hand and a good seat. Also know that a rider's weight has nothing to do with how good a rider they are. So, invest in some riding lessons with a reputable coach or coaches because it will pay dividends down the track.

Sellers will be looking at you as much as you are looking at the horse. They are not selling a car; they are selling something they love, so you need to show you are going to give that horse a lovely life being cared for well and ridden kindly.

4. Buying a horse "to last"

Parents often fall into the trap of buying a pony for their 8 or 10-year-old that they intend will last their child until they need to transition to a horse. Or adults buy a horse for how they see themselves some years into the future. "Why not do that and save me all the hassle of repeating this process in say two years' time?", they say. Because... everything may have changed in two years' time-you or your child may have become a lot more confident. Or you may have decided jumping is not for you and you want a show horse. By buying for the distant future, people often over-horse themselves or their child. Riding then becomes a fearful activity because the horse is too much for them at this time in their lives. Its not a bad horse-its just not the right horse.

The key mistakes you need to avoid

5. You thought you understood your or your child's horse needs.

Before deciding it's the right time to purchase a horse, you are likely to have had riding lessons and/or leased a horse at a riding school. Don't be shy about asking your coach to assess your riding level—for example are you a confident beginner, an anxious advanced beginner, or an intermediate level rider? Go on to ask your coach if you would be best with a “more go than whoa” horse, or a “more whoa than go” horse. This phrase tends to describe the basic way most horses go. Your horse purchase process is all about finding the right match for you or your child at this point in your riding career.

6. You rushed the process.

It's incredible how many people buy a horse after seeing an ad, phoning the seller, and then just purchasing the horse without seeing it. They don't even go and trial the horse or ask someone they know in the area to go and trial it for them. Unless you are very experienced or very prepared to take the risk of the horse turning out to be a nutcase, buying without trying is generally a road to disaster. Therefore, don't rush the process. And allow about 3 weeks to buy if a vet check condition is included.

7. Weren't brave enough to ask for a vet check

I strongly recommend a pre-purchase examination – or vet check- This should be done before every purchase—even one for a 'cheap' horse under say \$1,000. I really mean this because it's no good buying the horse and then finding it has some condition that you can't deal with or can't afford to treat. We absolutely love our four-footed friends but there isn't a horse born that doesn't have one or two little things to be aware of, so buy some peace of mind by having the horse checked over by a vet before you purchase. At least have the basic check which is usually under \$500.00. If it puts the seller off, then maybe you need to ask yourself if there was something you weren't being told about...

8. Didn't include the right conditions

Don't be afraid to ask the seller if you could have a trial period before you commit to buying the horse. That means the horse comes to your grazing. It's such a good way to find out if the horse is the right one for you. If you can get a one-month trial at your own property that would be amazing but you are probably only going to be allowed one or two week's at most.

The key mistakes you need to avoid

9. Didn't negotiate the price

I remember buying the first pony for our daughter and it was a much-loved animal. I know it sounds weird but I did wonder whether it was appropriate to bargain over the price of something that was part of the seller's family and going to become a part of ours. I thought it might put the seller off selling to us and that was not what we wanted. Luckily the seller offered to drop their price so I was very happy to immediately make the purchase. The upshot is- you can definitely negotiate the price and by doing so you shouldn't upset the seller. It is expected that there will be some bargaining so go ahead and make your offer.

10. Didn't get a quality agreement in writing

People have bought horses from sellers that don't own them, amazing as it may seem. It even happened at the pony club grazing I was managing. And of course, people have bought horses that they don't pay for. So, in a basic way, a legal agreement in writing is a no brainer. But more than that, it's very important that the promises each side is making to the other, are clear. You can't rely on what is said in an advertisement because those statements are likely to be 'puffery' - made to catch your interest in a general way. By contrast, the important sale and purchase terms can be included in a written agreement and then the deal is clear.

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to enjoy that horse, make new friends, and
have some adventures.

*Warmly,
Megan*

