

# THE PERFECT HORSE

What is the Perfect Horse? I think most of us have daydreamed of it-- images of a majestic black stallion with a flowing mane and tail, or golden palomino mare with a perfect blaze come to mind. But I don't think that is the Perfect Horse. I think the Perfect Horse is more like the one that I rode as a kid, a horse that is less of a fantasy and more of a teacher and trusted friend.

The Perfect Horse isn't necessarily stunningly beautiful; In fact, he's probably gotten a few scars and dings from life. He's probably been hurt but lived through it, been scared but learned to overcome it, and ready to teach his rider to do the same.

The Perfect Horse is not just arena-ridden. He will let you feel what it's like to gallop into the ocean waves, chase a neighbor's cow or play tag on horseback.

The Perfect Horse will buck you off when you deserve it, but wait patiently for you to get back on.

The Perfect Horse has problems; He will teach you to deal with them. The Perfect Horse knows that you can't learn to be a skilled horseman if everything goes your way.

The Perfect Horse will challenge you, but only as much as you are ready to handle. He will teach you that you still have more to learn.

The Perfect Horse is tough; He will gallop when he's too tired, jump obstacles that are too high, and go up hills that are too steep. He can handle the results of your ignorance or youth. He will make you, years later, look back and shake your head in amazement, and think, "I can't believe he did that for me".

The Perfect Horse is not, however, a super horse. He may go lame, go blind or colic. He will teach you there is more to horsemanship than just riding.

The Perfect Horse will forgive you when you make mistakes, and will expect you to do the same. He will try to ignore the tack that doesn't fit right, the confusing signals, and will do his best to please.

The Perfect Horse will not live on air. He will need food and water daily and a clean shelter to live in. He will teach you to work, but it will be worth it.

The Perfect Horse may not be the prettiest or the fastest, but he has the most heart. When he wins a ribbon, you know he really deserved it.

The Perfect Horse loves a good carrot and a pat on the neck. In fact, that is his greatest reward; a treat, some love, and appreciation are what the Perfect Horse lives for.

