

ALICE BRUNO

horse + rider matchmaker



MAKE HORSE SHOPPING ENJOYABLE

6 TIPS TO TAKE THE STRESS OUT OF BUYING A HORSE

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1: ASK YOUR NETWORK FIRST

The best place to find horses for sale is within the equestrian network you already have.

If you have a trainer, ask them which other local trainers they like. If your trainer doesn't have time to make calls for you, reach out to those recommendations through social media or by phone. Even if the other trainers aren't advertising any horses for sale, they might still have some available or know of someone who does.



Other contacts to check with are your horsey friends, their trainers, or riders you have met at horse shows that you like or admire.

2: KEEP AN OPEN MIND

Keep an open mind about the type of horses you are willing to try.

It's fine to have a "wishlist" of the size, breed, age, color, etc. you are hoping to find in a horse, but don't rule out a solid candidate because he or she doesn't check all of your dream boxes.

Remember: there are no perfect horses, and you will probably have to make some concessions when you pick your equine partner.



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3: HAVE A LIST OF QUESTIONS

The devil is in the details! When you talk on the phone to sellers (which you **MUST DO**--please don't go visit a horse if you have only emailed or texted with the seller) have a list of questions to ask, and check them off as you go.

It is easy to get distracted or lost in small talk and forget to find out what you need to know about the horse. At the bottom of your list, write yourself a reminder to ask for competition and veterinary records.



If the horse is a fox hunter, trail horse, lesson horse, or has worked in any capacity where other people would have seen or ridden him, ask for references so you can get other perspectives on his personality and abilities.

4: TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS

Safety first--ALWAYS.

Be clear when you schedule a visit to meet a horse that you expect the seller to either ride or have someone to ride the horse before you or your trainer do.

Make sure you wear your helmet, and if you have an air vest or body protector, this is probably a good time to use it. If you see anything that makes you leery of getting on the horse yourself, trust your instincts.



Don't be embarrassed to tell the seller you don't think you and the horse are a good fit. You don't have to blame the seller or the horse--just say you don't want to waste their time.

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5: BE UPFRONT + REALISTIC

Don't be a "difficult buyer."

Trainers and sellers talk amongst themselves, and if you develop a reputation for being a tire kicker, a time-waster, or unpleasant to deal with, good professionals will be reluctant to show you their horses and horse shopping will get much harder.

Don't try a horse you can't afford and hope the seller will negotiate the price.



Be honest with sellers about your budget, and be realistic with yourself about what you can really afford. There are great horses in every price range--some just take longer to find than others!

6: DO A PREPURCHASE EXAM

Buying any horse is an enormous investment of time, money and emotional energy.

A pre-purchase exam (PPE) is the single biggest thing buyers can do to mitigate the risks inherent in this type of purchase.

PPEs dramatically reduce the risk of buyer's remorse, and will empower you to make confident choices about which horse to buy.

A good PPE = peace of mind.

