



CTRA Participant Handbook

Everything you need to know about taking part in CTRA programs!

Please keep this handbook “handy” so you can reference it when needed. It contains important information about safety, rules, requirements, billing, fundraising and more.



This symbol highlights really important items! Please read everything, but pay close attention to these boxes.

Receipt of this handbook is considered notice of the policies, procedures and information contained within.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association or **CTRA**

is a registered charity/non-profit with
Canada Revenue Agency
CRA Charity number 89172 3843 RR0001

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Social Media [@cowichantherapeuticriding](#) Tag us with **#CowichanTRA!**

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE NUMBER
CONTACT INFORMATION	3
WHO WE ARE	4
WHAT WE DO	5
HOW IT ALL WORKS	6
ILLNESS POLICY	7
WEATHER POLICY	7
FACILITY SAFETY	8
HORSE SAFETY	9-10
LESSON SAFETY	11
EMERGENCY MAPS	12-13
LESSON FEES	14
THIRD PARTY FUNDING	14
INVOICING	15
PAYMENT OF FEES	15
ATTENDANCE & CANCELLATIONS	16
THE CTRA CALENDAR	17
3 STRIKES RULE	18
ATTIRE (RIDING AND VAULTING)	19
GETTING INVOLVED	20
OPEN DOORS & FEEDBACK	21
CTRA FUNDING MYTHS	22
FUNDRAISING	23

WHO WE ARE

Since 1986, CTRA has been working to promote and facilitate access to horses as a therapeutic alternative for our community. We started out with a handful of volunteers, horses borrowed from the community, and a rented arena one night a week.



Now, CTRA has grown to include a permanent home, located on Providence Farm's property, which includes two riding rings, a full stable and office facility, a family viewing lounge, and the Jane James Used Tack Shop. Our community partnership with Providence Farm and the support of the Sisters of St. Ann are instrumental in our success.

CTRA strives to consistently achieve the current capacity of approximately 100 riders per week, utilizing a herd of 13-15 horses, supported by various office and stable staff, and around 100 volunteers per week.

* Please note that CTRA is a separate entity from Providence Farm! Although we have a great working relationship with VIPCA (Vancouver Island Providence Community Association), we are not the same non-profit, and are simply tenants on this beautiful property. This is important to keep in mind when promoting our program in the community and when we receive donations.

*Be sure to follow CTRA's own social media for program and information updates.



SISTERS
OF ST. ANN
PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Continuing the Legacy



WHAT WE DO

CTRA's programs offer a diverse range of highly individualized services intended to meet the unique abilities, skills, needs and objectives of each participant. Programs strive to support the journey from first-contact experiences to long-term achievements.

Clients, CTRA staff, and parents/guardians work together with professional therapeutic personnel to establish a personalized therapy plan designed to produce the most benefit for each participant. These plans are continuously reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure the best outcome.

Services intentionally intersect to form a continuum of participation, allowing for emerging circumstances and dynamic goals.

All CTRA Instructor Staff members are certified by the national body for therapeutic Riding—The Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association (CanTRA). Vaulting Instructors are also certified through the Equestrian Vaulting Association of BC.

Our facility is also a CanTRA accredited training and examination centre.



Each client is matched with a highly-skilled and dedicated instructor. CTRA Instructor Staff continuously upgrade their knowledge through professional development, and collaborate extensively to guarantee internal consistency. They are dedicated to constant improvement of their skills and knowledge. Many of our Instructors hold additional certification through the national body for Canadian Horse Sport — Equine Canada.



We are also proud members of the Provincial BCTRA, the British Columbia Therapeutic Riding Association.

BCTRA
BC Therapeutic Riding Association

HOW IT ALL WORKS

It takes quite a lot of people, horses, time and work to make a lesson happen at CTRA!

It all starts with a referral to our program. Participants come to us with a referral from a physician, occupational or physical therapist, or from another professional such as a teacher, case worker, psychologist, counsellor, etc.

Once all the paperwork is in, there is an intake interview with our staff in order to determine the best program placement for a participant. Only when a participant is accepted into our program will we then start the next part of the process: The Juggling Act!



There are many factors that determine a participant's spot in the schedule. First, we need to get to know the participant and their needs. Then we need to match that participant up with an Instructor, Horse and, up to three Volunteers. Having the right pony and team can make all the difference in how effective the lessons will be. Then we work on finding a spot in the schedule that works for everyone! Getting all these variables to align is really like a juggling act and can take some time. Once we confirm a spot, we generate an invoice, and payment for the upcoming session is due before the first lesson.

The Lesson Day

Well before a scheduled lesson, the therapy horse is brought in from his/her paddock to be groomed and tacked up with specialized tack chosen specifically for the participant. This process involves mostly paid barn staff, but can include volunteers as well. Each horse has its own suite of tack that fits it, and a variety of items that can be used depending on the needs of the participant. (ie. saddle, sheepskin, modified stirrups, etc)

At lesson time, everyone assembles at the mounting block—the instructor, the horse, the volunteers, and of course the participant.

Imagine how many hands and brains have been involved in getting everyone to this point!



The lesson might technically start at this point, but the actual benefits really start at the stable door, or even before. The whole process of arriving, greeting the horses and staff, getting ready in the rider room and moving to the mounting block is part of the therapeutic program. AND, the benefits most often extend well beyond the end of the lesson. Improved behaviour, mood, function and physical effects have been reported by many participants (and their caregivers or therapists) for extended periods of time after a lesson.



Don't let all these precious resources go to waste!

Please give us as much notice as possible if you aren't going to make your lesson or are going to be late.

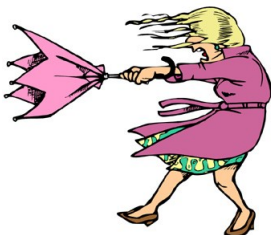


ILLNESS POLICY

Got a fever? Got snot? We don't want it! Stay away!

Illness among staff and volunteers means cancelled lessons. Illness among vulnerable participants can mean serious health implications. Although we don't want you to miss out, it is important that you consider everyone else when illness is around. Please use your best judgement as to whether you should come to our facility. When in doubt, please stay out. Give us as much notice as possible and then concentrate on getting better so you can get back to your lessons.

Likewise, if an instructor or staff member is ill, we encourage them to stay home and keep their germs to themselves because of the potential cascade of illness that can result.



WEATHER POLICY

We hate cancelling lessons. But, sometimes weather or staff illness can get in the way and we have to cancel. We never make this decision lightly and we always keep health, comfort and safety in mind.

We will do our best to notify you at the earliest moment possible, but sometimes we are waiting to see what the weather will do. Whenever possible, Stable Management Lessons will be offered in lieu of riding. Declining Stable Management lessons will NOT result in refund or rescheduling of the lesson.

The biggest threat to lessons are snow, cold and wind. Because of our location, snow or ice can make it difficult and dangerous for staff, instructors, volunteers and participants to get here. If we feel it is too risky, we will cancel.

Cold can make it just too uncomfortable and possibly a health risk for many of our more vulnerable participants. Because the arena and stable act like a freezer in cold weather, it is usually even colder in there than outside!



Wind is really tricky. Horses can get quite spooky when it is windy, especially in an old facility where there are lots of creaks and bangs. Spooky horses make for unsafe lessons, so in really windy conditions we may cancel.




Lessons cancelled by CTRA will be credited. Please keep in mind that we only cancel when safety is a concern.

FACILITY SAFETY

Maps of the facility follow this safety information. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with where the exits, safety equipment and washrooms are. Staff are trained in many emergency procedures but it is good for everyone to be prepared as there can be many people in the facility at any one time, and there are many animals to account for too!



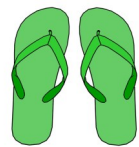
 CTRA (and most of Providence Farm) strictly prohibits smoking (including e-cigarettes) in all areas. Any barn, let alone a heritage structure like ours, is at high risk of fire. If you see anyone smoking, or see any sign of fire, please report it immediately to staff.

Any dogs on the property must be leashed at all times! No dogs are permitted in the barn, arena or bleachers at any time. This includes well-behaved dogs, quiet dogs, dogs who are used to horses, small dogs, large dogs, brown dogs, green dogs, dogs with three legs and dogs with only one eye. **NO DOGS** in these areas. If you must bring your dog to the facility, please adhere to common sense safety practices regarding dogs in cars during hot weather. We don't want to have to call the authorities! However, barking dogs in parked cars can also disrupt lessons when on a trail ride, so it is usually best to leave your furry friends at home. Service dogs are exempt from these rules, but it helps us to know in advance if they will be accompanying you at CTRA.



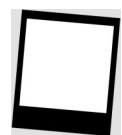
Please avoid driving or parking around the arena while lessons are in progress. Vehicles moving can be scary to some horses and are distracting to our participants. Parking is available near the roundabout at the entrance to the stable.

Open toed shoes or heels in a barn? **BAD** idea! Please wear close-toed footwear in our barn. No sandals or high heels permitted. Just think about how much a horse weighs and how much of that is being directed down one hoof. Not something you want on top of your toes!




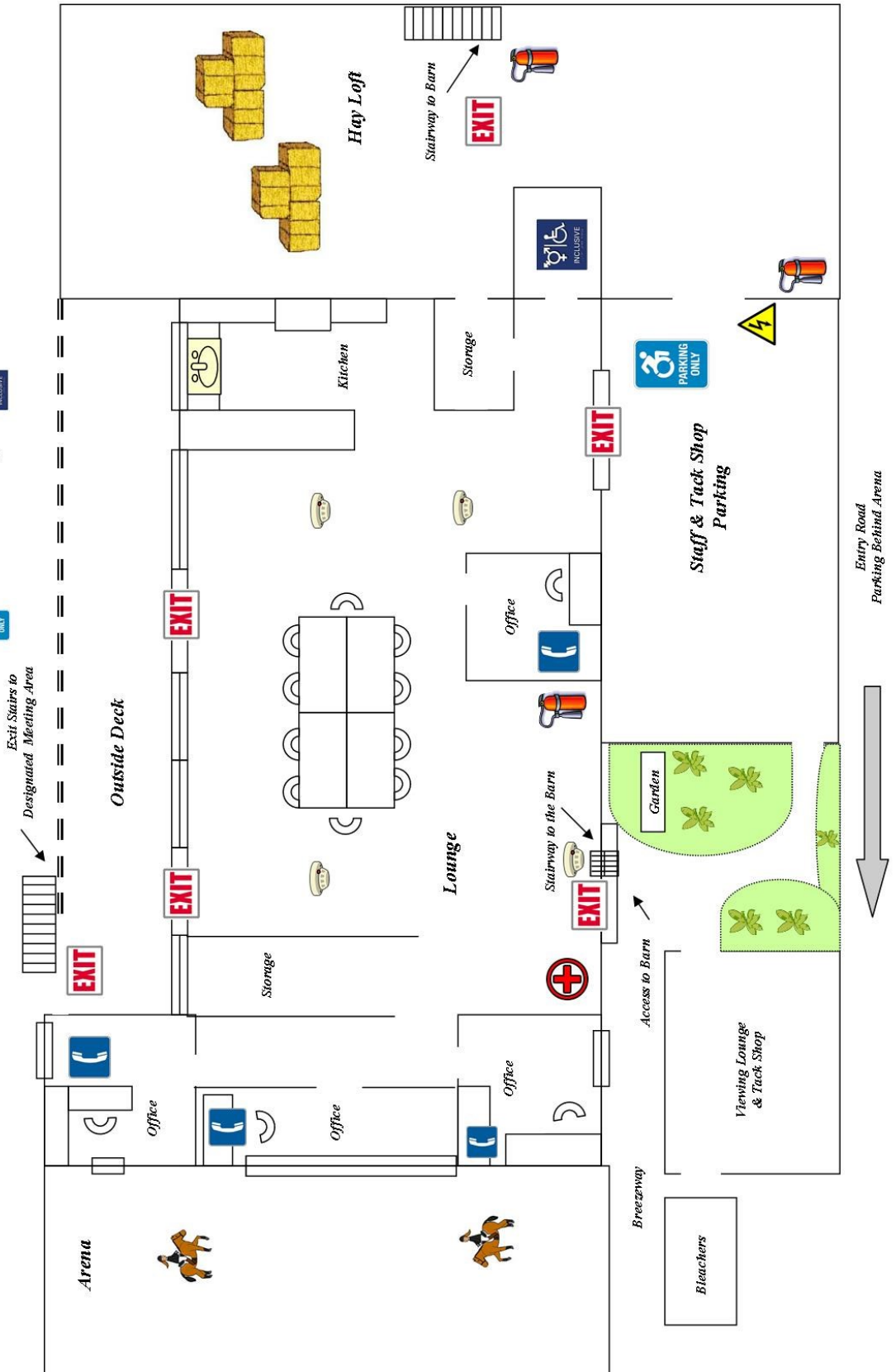
Watch out for electric fencing on the paddocks! These can deliver quite a shock! Please supervise all children around the fences.

No photographs of riders/participants, apart from your own. Please respect our riders' privacy and confidentiality needs.



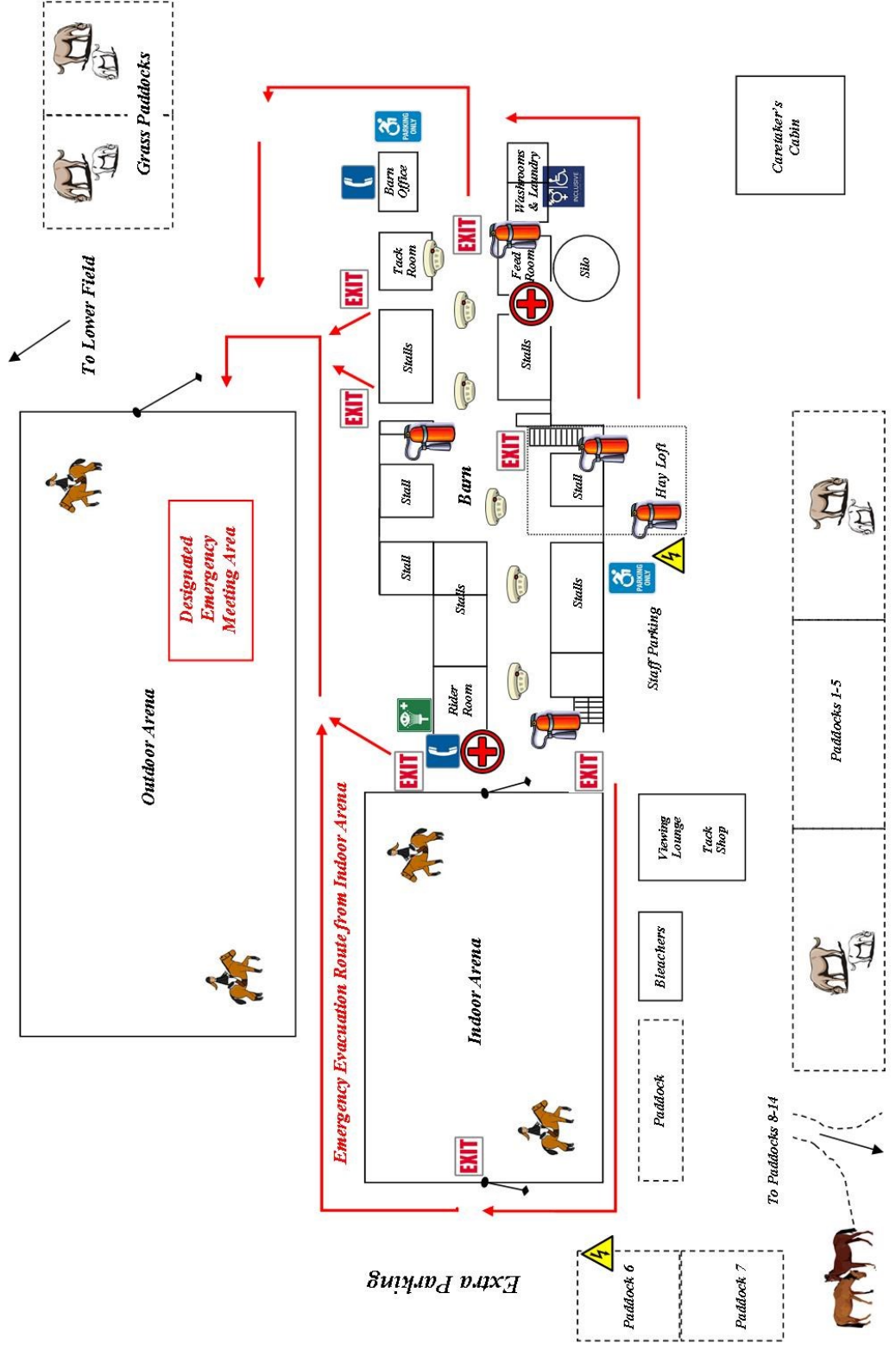
CTRA Emergency Map Upper Floor & Grounds

-  Exits
-  Fire Extinguisher
-  Accessible Parking
-  First Aid
-  Phone
-  Washrooms
-  Smoke Detector
-  Elec. Fence Shut Off



CTRA Emergency Map Barn & Grounds

-  Exits
-  Fire Extinguisher
-  Smoke Detector
-  First Aid
-  Eye Wash
-  Phone
-  Elec. Fence Shut Off
-  Washrooms
-  Accessible Parking



HORSE SAFETY



Horses are prey animals, which means when something scares them it can send them into “flight” mode. Our therapy horses are chosen for their calm natures, but for the safety of everyone, please adhere to the following suggestions whenever in our facility.

Horses in the Arena

Please avoid:

Sudden, loud noises such as barking dogs, stomping feet or tires spinning on gravel.

Unexpected or fast movements, such as running on the bleachers or in walkways.

Objects they have not seen before can be scary, such as umbrellas, balloons or bicycles.

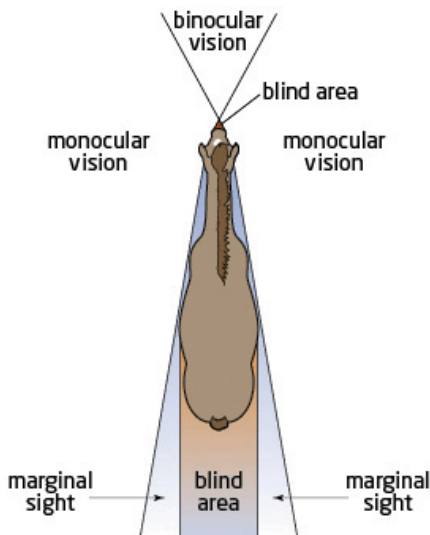
Being over top of a horse, such as hanging over the walls of the arena.



Horses in the Hallways

Horses do not like tight spaces. If passing a horse in a hallway, give as much space as possible, and do not move suddenly. Because they cannot see directly behind them, always avoid following a horse any closer than approximately “two horse lengths” or about 8 m behind.

Never touch a passing horse. Please do not pet horses in the cross ties.



Feeding Horses

Our horses at CTRA are NEVER hand fed by anyone, for several reasons:

CTRA horses are on special diets and some can have serious reactions to certain foods, especially those high in sugar such as apples, carrots and even grass. Our barn staff monitor every horse’s feed intake very carefully.

Once a horse has been hand fed, they begin to think every person might have treats and can get nippy or pushy with people. This can cause many problems in the barn and in the arena.

We encourage people to bring treats such as apples or carrots for their favourite horses, but they must be given to a staff member to be appropriately fed within the limits of their diet.

HORSE SAFETY CONT'D

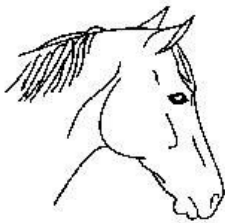
Petting Horses

The horses at CTRA are very friendly. However, there are some things to keep in mind when saying hello.

Like many humans, horses usually prefer a pat on the neck or shoulder rather than the face. Petting near their mouth should be avoided as they may mistake fingers for tasty carrots!

Horses have a blind spot directly in front of them. Always approach them from the side so they can see you.

Horses cannot speak so they communicate with their body language. They will use this to tell you if they want to visit or not.



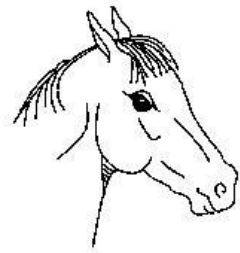
Ears pricked forward

Horse is alert and interested.
Horse is safe to pet, but be aware he may move his head suddenly.



Ears sideways, head lowered.

Horse is relaxed/napping. If he has his head out in the hallway he is safe to pet. If he is napping at the back of the stall, he would prefer to be left alone.



Ears pinned back.

Horse is annoyed. Please give him space. He may bite if provoked.

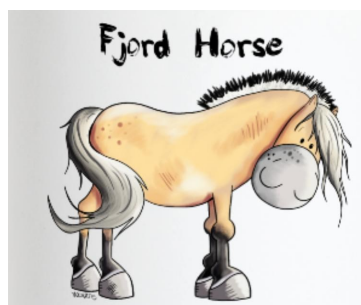
Fun Horse Facts

An adult male horse is called a “gelding”. An adult female horse is called a “mare”.

Horses are herd animals, meaning they communicate well with each other, form close bonds, and do not generally like to be alone.

The average life-span of a horse is 25-30 years. The oldest horse in history lived to be 62!

There are over 350 breeds of horse. Some common ones in the therapeutic riding are the Norwegian Fjord and the Quarter Horse.



LESSON SAFETY

During a lesson, please help keep distractions to a minimum. Most participants actually do better in their lesson if they cannot see their parent, guardian, siblings or friends. This isn't always the case, and we fully understand if a participant wants someone to stay close. Please discuss this with your instructor to determine the best course of action.

Distractions can be as simple as:

- A sibling, friend or family member within sight or sound of the participant
- Someone tapping their foot or playing nearby
- A conversation among viewers or on a phone
- Music or phone sounds
- Coughing, throat clearing, whistling or humming

Generally, to ensure an effective lesson, parents and/or guardians are not permitted to participate in the lesson as a volunteer. If a regular caregiver acts as a sidewalker but this changes, please notify the office and where possible have the regular caregiver orient the new caregiver to the program routine. Failure to provide notice may result in lesson cancellation.

Please don't loiter in the cross-tie area or in front of the arena gate. For safety at all times, and especially in an emergency, these areas need to be kept clear.



A viewing lounge is provided to offer a warm, dry, safe space for viewing, quiet time or play while a lesson is happening. There are also bleachers along the side of the arena for safe, quiet observation of lessons. All children under 16 years of age are to be supervised at all times while on the CTRA property.

Avoid sudden movements, loud noises or other sudden disturbances, including flash photography. All of these things can spook a horse and potentially dismount a rider.



The arena, horses' stalls and paddocks are all OFF LIMITS without permission from CTRA staff. Only participants, some volunteers and staff are to be in these areas. The authority of the Instructor must be respected at all times during lessons. Seek permission from the Instructor before interacting with the participants or horses in the lesson.



Please keep doors, gates and hallways clear. Do not leave strollers, walkers or other equipment unattended in the barn. Walkways and doorways must be kept clear at all times for safety!



Please be sure to notify us of any changes such as medical conditions, medications, behaviour shifts, new triggers or physical changes. These can dramatically affect the safety and efficacy of a lesson—help us to adapt or accommodate any changes.

Feel like a visit? Please feel free to visit the barn at times other than your lessons. We encourage participants to get to know the barn, horses, people and routines to make their lessons even more comfortable and familiar. Plus, the bond between a participant and the horse can change a bad day into a good one. However, please limit visiting to normal operational hours and ensure that everyone is following the safety guidelines. And always remember that feeding our horses is strictly forbidden.

FEES & FUNDING

LESSON FEES

Fees are payable per session, in advance of the Session unless otherwise arranged with the office.



Participants with outstanding fees may be prohibited from participating in future sessions until the account is settled. If you need to discuss a payment plan, please contact our office.

THIRD PARTY FUNDING

If you will be applying for third party funding, please ensure that your application is in and accepted well in advance of the start of session. Some funders will not pay retroactively. If your funding is not in place by the start of session, you will be expected to pay up front until the funding is sorted.

For example, if you will be accessing funding from the Autism Funding Unit, you will need to submit a Request to Pay Service Provider form which includes the dates, rate and other details so that we can invoice them directly.

At the end of each session, any applicable payments and possible credits are reconciled. If you have a credit amount on your account, it will be applied to the next invoice. If you have a balance owing on your account, we ask that you take care of it before the next session begins.

*Note: Some funders do not pay for our annual admin fee. In this case, we ask that you pay this fee directly.

Once in place, funding generally needs to be renewed once a year. Please allow plenty of time to complete this process so that there is no interruption in the flow of funds.

INVOICING & PAYMENT

INVOICING

Invoices are issued for each Session (Winter, Spring 1, Spring 2, Fall 1 & Fall 2) and for camps. Payment is due prior to the start of each Session.

Please make sure you provide the information we need in order to invoice the correct party, with the correct address. If you move, let us know!



Invoices are either emailed or mailed. (we prefer email!)



At any point, you can request a statement to show your account balance, charges and payments. At the end of the year, you may wish to request a copy for your taxes.

PAYMENT OF FEES

Fees may be paid by cash, cheque, credit card or etransfer.

Credit cards may be called in over the phone or done in person.

Cheques should be made payable to CTRA or Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association.

If using an etransfer, please send to **payment@ctra.ca**.

If you are paying in person, we will write you a receipt for your payment. Otherwise, you can request a paid invoice or statement at any time.



The fees you pay cover only about 25% of the basic costs to put on a lesson. Not only do we have to feed and care for the horse, but we also have staff to pay, a stable and rings to maintain, tack to purchase, administrative costs, etc. Lessons are heavily subsidized by our fundraising and other sources of income such as grants and sponsorships.

ATTENDANCE AND CANCELLATIONS

A **Term** is the 6-7 week set of sessions, committed to and paid for all at once at the beginning. You are securing your spot for the whole Term, which means we cannot likely or easily put another rider in that spot.

CTRA generally has 5 Terms: Winter, Spring 1, Spring 2, Fall 1 and Fall 2, plus a variety of Spring and Summer Camps

A **Session** is the 30-60 minute time with the instructor, horse and (usually) volunteers. The therapeutic benefits don't just happen on the horse. They often starts at the entrance to the barn and go right to putting a pony back in the stall.

A **Missed Session** is one that the rider missed for something other than a medical reason with a doctor's note. Things like school events, parties, vacations etc are considered Missed Lessons and will not be credited.

A **Break Week** is the time between Terms where everyone gets a rest and we can catch up on paperwork and training.

So...

If you miss a lesson, and do not have a doctor's note for it, you are still required to pay for the lesson and will not be credited. There is not an opportunity to make up that lesson (since our schedule is already full)



If we cancel a lesson, ie. due to weather , horse issues or instructor illness, we will credit the lesson to everyone for that day.

Can't make the rest of your session? Drop outs are also considered missed lessons unless accompanied by a doctor's note or by special arrangement with the Program Coordinator. The remaining lessons will not be credited.



Horses get sick too! Horse health is a high priority for us. We keep careful watch over our ponies and are in constant consultation with our vet(s). That said, sometimes they just get sick or have an injury and we have to give them rest.

THE CTRA CALENDAR

The CTRA Calendar is your go to for all the lesson dates. Post a copy on your fridge! Stash one in your vehicle! Have it printed on a t-shirt! This can be found on our website at all times.

www.ctra.ca

Each session is colour coded to help identify the weeks included. Some sessions have a break week at the end where we catch up on rest and training so there are no lessons. The calendar also contains information about holidays, special dates, camps and more.

See below for a SAMPLE (DO NOT USE)

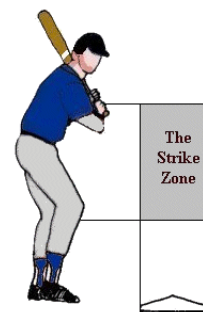
April '20							May '20							June '20						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27 picnic
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
							31													

REMEMBER, you are responsible for knowing your lesson dates! Of course, you can call or email us any time to confirm, but please take the time to look at each session and know when your dates are to avoid missed lessons and confusion. “No Shows” are costly and frustrating.

Facebook and Instagram are also great places to find reminders, announcements and notices. Follow us to stay up to date! @cowichantherapeuticriding



3 STRIKES RULE



1

The first time you miss a lesson without giving us notice, we are worried. Are you ok? Was there a problem? Did we mix up the schedule? Did we miss a message from you? OK. Mistakes happen, life happens, and we understand.

2

The second time, we are a disappointed—the pony has been brought in from his paddock, and barn staff have groomed and tacked him. The volunteers have arrived and are waiting. The instructor is ready and on the clock. Time and money have been spent to get everything ready for this important lesson, and we don't know if you are coming or not.



Perhaps a pony could have had more much-needed paddock time. Perhaps a volunteer gave up going to a birthday celebration to do their sidewalking. Perhaps an instructor had the ring and activities carefully set up for today. A lot goes into preparing for your lesson! We wish you had called or emailed ahead of time to tell us you weren't coming.

3

The third time, we are frustrated. We gave you the benefit of the doubt and we want you to get the therapeutic benefits of your lesson, so we did all of the preparations expecting that you would arrive. But again, we are all standing here without you.

After three no-shows, the horse will no longer be tacked up unless you call to confirm the day before or morning of your lesson. If you arrive without notice, you will have a Stable Management Lesson or forfeit the lesson.

Sorry, but there are likely riders on a wait list who could use your spot. After three strikes, you will need to meet with the Program Coordinator and talk about whether you are committed, or able, to make use of your spot on the schedule. Otherwise, we will do our best to fill it with someone else so the remaining lessons do not go to waste. If things have changed and you need to cancel the rest of your session, we understand, but you do still have to pay for it.

While this system may seem harsh, it is necessary because our resources are limited and valuable. It is unfair to everyone to waste them.



Can't make it? Please **PHONE ASAP** to tell us! Follow up by email if possible, but please PHONE! We are not always on our computers—making email unreliable for receiving first notice of an absence. The more notice you can give, the better, since preparations for a lesson begin well in advance of your start time.

ATTIRE

Proper attire will not only make you comfortable, but it also keeps you safe!

RIDING ATTIRE

Clothing: Please wear layered clothing appropriate for the weather. In winter, the barn and arena can be very cold. Ensure adequate warm clothes and gloves so no one gets too chilly. Neck warmers are ok but scarves can get tangled or in the way so they must be tucked in well. In summer, things can be hot, but shorts are never ok to ride in! Avoid loose or flappy clothing or jewellery that could be caught or tangled. Hair is best tied back.

Footwear: Sturdy, closed-toe boots or shoes are mandatory for all activities. *except vaulting

Boots with a heel are necessary for riding activities (otherwise they slip from stirrups). For those who cannot wear boots (for example due to AFO's), special stirrups can be used. Your instructor may advise you on the best footwear for your particular tack/set up.

Helmets: All participants interacting in close proximity to horses must wear an ASTM approved helmet. Helmets are available for use during lessons in the riders room on a first come, first serve basis. For those participants borrowing a CTRA helmet, the appropriate helmet waiver must be signed*. As using individual helmets is hygienically preferable and usually more comfortable, participants are encouraged to purchase their own new ASTM approved helmet. (Never buy a used helmet as you cannot be sure of its condition or history.)

* We ask every participant to sign a helmet waiver upon registration. This way, we don't have to worry about it if you forget your helmet and have to borrow one of ours. The waiver also serves as a release of liability and assumption of risk agreement, so it is important you read and understand this document.

VAULTING ATTIRE

Clothing: Please wear comfortable, stretchy pants or leggings (capri length ok). No shorts allowed. Ideally, sweaters/jackets should not have a hood. No spaghetti strap tops please.

Footwear: Vaulting footwear needs to be low profile and flexible. Water/beach shoes are ideal! However, vaulters must also bring sturdy shoes or boots for grooming and stable work.

Helmets: Helmets should not be used for vaulting. The straps of a helmet are designed and tested to not stretch or break, which makes them a hanging hazard in a vaulting environment for all but the most basic positions, or any time multiple people are on the horse. Helmets with break-away straps (if such a thing even existed) would still not be safe for vaulting as a dislodged helmet could turn an otherwise minor fall into a severe neck injury. No helmet manufacturer today makes a helmet that is designed or certified for vaulting. However, all persons riding a horse, instead of vaulting, must wear a helmet since riding occurs near walls and other hard objects, and not on a consistent circle. Please ask if you need more information about vaulting and helmet use.



**NO OPEN TOED SHOES IN THE BARN
AT ANY TIME!!!**

GETTING INVOLVED

There are many ways to get involved with CTRA.



Ambassadors

Be a CTRA Ambassador! Tell anyone who will listen about our programs, our horses, our volunteers and our success stories! Spread the word that we are always looking for financial support as well as volunteers. Encourage your own community to become part of ours. Being familiar with CTRA and our programs makes you invested and credible.

Community engagement is something funders always look for when considering applications. They like to see that a non-profit is connecting with the people and other agencies in their area, and that they have the support of the general public. Your help is always appreciated as we strive to stay connected.

Be a Volunteer (or recruit one!)

We are always on the lookout for volunteers to help in the program, the barn and elsewhere in our facility. Don't have time yourself? Encourage your friends, family, coworkers and others to take part! We rely on our community to provide the many helping hands needed to put on lessons, maintain our heritage facility, care for our herd and keep things looking good. Plus, our volunteers will attest to the wonderful therapeutic benefits to being here and helping!

Take Part

Get involved with CTRA beyond your lesson times! Come to our events. Help raise money during Ride-a-Thon and other initiatives. Come to our Annual General Meeting. Donate silent auction items for events or connect us with possible donors. Bring us your returnables and encourage others to do the same. Getting involved helps us financially and helps us get to know you better.

Social Media

Social Media is one of our best tools for getting the word out about therapeutic riding!

Tag us in your posts! Use **#CowichanTRA**

Tag our ponies! Each of CTRA's horses has a their own hashtag!
Check their stall door or the CTRA herd page on our website at **www.ctra.ca**.

Use our horse hashtags to find your favourite horse(s) on Instagram!

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram **@cowichantherapeuticriding**



OPEN DOORS AND FEEDBACK

CTRA serves as a hub of inclusion and catalyst for human potential, enriching the lives of countless individuals and supporting key social determinants of health in our community.

Inclusion means that we welcome people from all walks of life and of all abilities. Our goal is to provide equine-assisted interventions, whether it is traditional therapeutic riding or other related programs.

Everyone who comes to CTRA, whether to take part, volunteer, work as staff, visit or just look around, is enveloped in a welcoming embrace. This is a place of acceptance, community, and achievement in the face of adversity. The therapeutic benefits of working with horses reaches far beyond just the participants.

We want you...

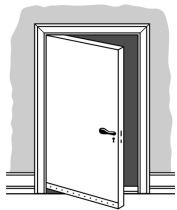


to give us your comments, suggestions and feedback. Have a success story? We want your testimonials and quotes. We want to know what a difference we have made or how we helped. We welcome your photos and films and tags on social media.

Why?

Because we are proud of what we do! And, our funders want to know that their support is helping with your success. The more evidence we can collect, the stronger our applications for funding and the more engaged we are with our community.

You may have noticed that we have lot of participant art hanging on the horse stalls around the stable. We love how our participants connect with their ponies!



Our doors and ears are always open for your comments, concerns, criticism and kudos. Please don't hesitate to share with us via phone, email or in person.

We regularly do surveys and collect data to help gather evidence of what we do at CTRA. Your participation is essential in showing our funders why these programs work and why they are important. Your feedback and survey data is vital to our grant application processes. Please, please, please take time to fill in surveys or answer questions if asked. We really appreciate your honest feedback and accounts of our programming.



CTRA FUNDING MYTHS

Myth: The fees I pay cover the lesson costs

Fact: The fees you pay cover only about 25% of the basic costs to put on a lesson. Not only do we have to feed and care for the horse, but we also have staff to pay, a stable and rings to maintain, tack to purchase, administrative costs, etc. Lessons are heavily subsidized by our fundraising and other sources of income such as grants and sponsorships.

Myth: CTRA receives lots of government funding

Fact: CTRA does not receive lots of government funding. In fact, CTRA receives very little government funding. The majority of our funding comes from community foundations, grants, private donors, and fundraising, which is why we hold Burger & Beer Nights, Parties, Paint Nights, Sales and our big Ride-a-Thon Fundraiser.

Myth: Volunteers do most of our labour

Fact: CTRA has a huge and phenomenal group of volunteers to keep us going. However, we still require a certain number of paid staff to run, just like any other business or agency. We are super careful to keep staff costs at a reasonable level, but a facility and program the size of ours simply cannot operate on volunteers alone.

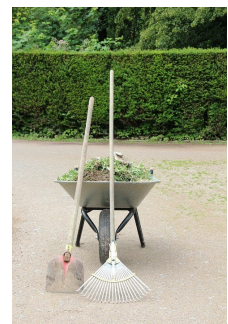
Not a myth: Horses are expensive!

Fact: Yup, they are. They eat a lot and they are costly to keep. But it is absolutely paramount to us that our hard working therapy horses receive the BEST care available in order for them to live well and perform their important duties. We work hard to make every dollar go as far as possible, but we never compromise on the care of these precious beasts. It takes a lot of money to keep our herd fed and healthy.

Myth: I've done my part — someone else can fundraise or help this time

Fact: We need everyone to help with fundraising, every year. Our staff and volunteers spend countless unpaid hours putting on fundraising events, especially the Ride-a-Thon. These events not only directly raise funds for our programs, but they also build community and show off what we do here. Whether you are a new participant or have been with us for years, we want you involved! Sometimes that means helping us obtain silent auction items or bringing friends to an event. Sometimes that means helping a participant knock on a neighbour's door to raise pledges for Ride-a-Thon. Sometimes that means holding a bake sale or getting together your coworkers to raise some money. Every little bit helps and we love it when families get involved.

We also often need a helping hand with simple things like weed whacking or shoveling snow, painting fences or pulling weeds. There are lots of little jobs that we simply don't have the time or budget to tackle, but they still need to be done. Your help can make a big difference.



FUNDRAISING

Ride-a-Thon

This is the big one! Ride-a-Thon is our big fundraiser of the year and is special because it is “participant driven”, meaning our participants are the ones hitting the streets and knocking on doors to collect pledges. It is a chance for them to get involved with supporting the organization that supports them! We encourage all of our participants and their families to take part.

Here’s how it works:

Each year, CTRA sets a theme for the Ride-a-Thon. In the past, we have done Pirates, Knights, Steeplechase and Rodeo themes, among others. A special obstacle course is set up in the outdoor ring and in the last week of Spring 2 Term, each rider gets to ride the course and complete the challenges! What a fun way to end the year! Families are encouraged to attend this final, exciting ride and cheer (quietly) their rider on!

Everyone is invited to a big celebration picnic, held on the final weekend of the Session, to enjoy hot dogs and cake, hand out prizes and have some fun! A final total for the fundraiser is announced at this happy event, giving everyone warm and fuzzy feelings to carry them through the summer.



Jane James Used Tack Shop

For years, CTRA has had a small used tack & riding apparel shop on site. This great little social enterprise not only helps generate funds for CTRA, but it also helps keep used tack out of the landfill and allows participants and the public to outfit themselves at a fraction of the cost of new. A few years ago, we expanded the tack shop and moved it to a new, larger location next to the arena. This expansion has been a huge success and we encourage everyone to check it out! Tell your friends and family too!

Tack Donations

We accept almost any tack in any condition (no helmets, nothing broken please). Tack that can be used directly in our programs is sidelined to reduce our operating costs. Tack that can be sold goes into the Jane James Used Tack Shop. Tack that doesn’t sell or is just a bit too used for the Tack Shop goes into the Free Store. We love the recirculation of tack—it helps the community and keeps it out of the garbage!

