

Top Photo Tips
To Sell Your Horses

Created By:



Introduction

In order to sell your horse online you need a good photo. Here are a few simple but effective tips to help you take a better photo to sell your horse.

Anyone looking to buy a horse will want to see a photo of your horse as this will show them what the horse is like and it will attract them to read more about them.

Here is a summary of the main points in this guide.

1. Time Of Day
 - When is the best time to take the photos to get the best light.
2. Neat and Tidy
 - You need to have your horse well groomed.
3. Frame View
 - Horse should almost fill up the entire screen of the camera with a little space left around each side.
4. Conformation Shot
 - Getting the horse to stand in an open stance to show all four legs.
5. Background
 - Best to have an uncluttered background so that there are no distractions for the buyer and all attention is focused on the horse.
6. Get Alert
 - Get your horse looking alert by using a few props that will grab their attention.
7. Camera
 - Avoid the zoom on a digital camera and read the manual for how best to use it.
8. Keep Clicking
 - Take as many shots as you can, for as long as you can.

Simple and Effective Photo Tips to Sell Your Horses

No photo, no sale. It is proven that ads with photos are viewed more than twice as much as ads with none. A quality photo is one of the most important factors in attracting buyers. Without one you will get less views, less clicks and therefore less offers for your horse.

Your photo is a buyer's first impression of the horse. When the buyer is browsing the search results pages, the photo has to sell all your horse's good traits in an instant. That image is the first way to hook a potential buyer, so make sure it is good.

Photographing horses is not easy and it will require a bit of patience from you and the horse. It is part art, part skill, part knowledge and part luck! With the right equipment, practice, and planning you can create good photos consistently, that show your horse the best way possible. All this will help you avoid making mistakes that turn potential buyers away.

There are several things you can do to get good photos. Some may seem simple but can often be overlooked and makes a big difference to your photo. If you neglect these tips you will make less of an impact and risk missing out on that one right buyer.

Here are our 8 tips to help you take better quality photos of your horse so you get the best selling price.

1. Time Of Day

The best time of the day to take pictures is normally between early morning and late afternoon. These times tend to provide softer lighting because the sun is at a lower angle then, which will help you produce better pictures.

Midday is not the best time as the sun tends to cast long shadows on your horse which does not look great. Eg. his ear would cast a long shadow over his eye. If you have to shoot at midday then you

should use a flash to get rid of shadows.

Slightly overcast days are great for photos and they tend to be even better than over-bright days. If it is a very dull day though, where you cannot see your own shadow, then it is not a good day for taking photos.

When you are outdoors it is best to keep the sun at your back. This is because the light will fall on the side of the horse. It is best if you shoot outside as the stables do not have good lighting for taking photos.

2. Neat and Tidy

Ensure your horse is clean, clipped and well groomed. This makes a big difference to how he will come across in the photos.

Make sure that you take the time to brush out the mane, tail and forelock so that there are no tangles.

Use clean tack but avoid colours that are too bright or distracting. Make sure it all fits well and there are no loose or bulky bits where there shouldn't be.

3. Frame View

Fill the frame with the entire horse. You do not want your horse to be a small percentage of the picture. Your horse should be taking up at least 50% of the photo.

Leave a little bit of space in front of the horse and on either side of him so there are no bits cut off. Even if there is too much space on one side you can always fine tune your photos later on your computer (or send them to us if you are unsure about how to edit them).

it is normally better just to simply walk closer to fill the frame instead of using the zoom as zooming will dilute the picture quality. However, do not go too close because if you are taking a head-on shot and you get too close, then the horse's nose and face will appear disproportionately larger than the rest of the body.

4. Conformation Shot

it is best to take the conformation shot before any action shots so the horse will not have any sweaty saddle marks. When they are fresh they tend to hold themselves better and show more presence compared to after having finished working. If you take your conformation shots in a show halter or a bridle, use clean tack that fits well and does not have any tabs hanging loose.

Getting the horse to stand in an open stance is best. An open stance is where the two legs nearest the camera will be a little more open compared to the two on the other side. This will ensure that the buyer will be able to see all four legs.

It is useful to have another person to stand in front of the horse so as to get their attention (see more in "6. Get Alert"). You also need a handler who can setup the horse properly so that he is putting equal weight on each leg. This will show how he is well balanced. If he starts to lift a leg up slightly, you should push on his chest so that he will step back and put his weight back on it.

If you want to prove that your horse is a good mover you could take a trot shot. it is best to stand in the middle of the ring and keep clicking. You want to try get a shot of him when his front inside leg goes forward with a slight bend in the knee. A small bit of practice and you will get the timing right.

To get a good jumping shot you should try get one where he has both his knees up together as he is jumping the flight. Again this is down to timing and practice so keep taking as many shots as you can and move around a bit if you are not getting a good angle. The best position is to stand a couple of feet to the front of the jump and point the camera so that you can see the front of the jump and the front of the horse as he jumps. If you have a sports/action mode in your camera it will help you to get a sharp in focus photo.

Examples of good pictures:



Note: You can see all four legs, horse looks alert, there is good lighting, no distractions, you can see their full conformation. Buyers can use the zoom button on ParadeRing.ie to make the photos bigger.

Above images: Papal Bull from Coolagown Stud and Zafran Sunshine from JJ Harty

5. Background

It is best to have an uncluttered background so that there is no distractions for the buyer. There shouldn't be anything taking their attention away from the horse (especially not other horses).

It is also good to have a contrasting background as having a dark background behind a dark horse will not show him in the best light. In a field or on a road on the farm are normally good places to stand them.

It is best if you can avoid including the handler in the picture. If they can stay a bit back so that their hands are not in front blocking any part of the horse.

6. Get Alert

The best way to get your horse looking alert is to have a few props that will grab their attention. You should have a person standing back from the handler so that the horse will be looking at them. You want the horse looking straight ahead if possible, with their head up, neck arched a bit and ears pricked.

There are many ways of achieving this, like using a feed bag, a mirror, whistling or even just waving your arms can work. Whatever works for your horse.

Whatever creates that element of surprise without scaring him as otherwise he will move out of position. It normally just gets them thinking whether it is something they should be afraid of or something they could get to eat.

7. Camera

If you are using a digital camera, it is better to avoid digital zoom and move closer instead as it keeps the quality of the photo up. With our zoom button on the website (www.paradering.ie) buyers can zoom in as close as they want to the horse to see them in more detail.

To find out the best way to use your camera you should read the camera manual. You will come across a few features that will make it a lot easier and help you take better quality pictures. If you know all of the features of your camera you will get much better results.

You can also take photos with your phone and send them on to us at our contact details below. Check the manual of your specific phone for a guide to show you how to do it.

8. Keep Clicking

The simple rule is: click as many shots as you can, for as long as you can. If the horse is trotting or jumping you need to take even more. It only takes one good photo to sell your horse and show their best features, but to find that will take a lot of clicking.

A lot of horses do not like standing still for too long so you will have to act fast. Nearly every photo you take will have something wrong with it – ears not pricked, legs not showing properly, eyes closed etc. But if you take enough shots you will find that one that has it all. It is better to have plenty to go through later and you can delete the less quality ones.

Conclusion

Yes it takes a little practice, time and effort but it will be worth it when buyers see what your horse is like and knows what is on offer. A buyer needs more than a few lines of text to make a decision on your horse. A quality photo, with a quality ad, on a quality site, will give you some quality buyers and hopefully a sale at a good price.

If you include good photos, you will greatly increase your chances of making the sale at a higher price. We cannot over-emphasize the importance of good photos.

Choose the best location to take it and move around the area. Try not to have any distractions in the background. Make sure you talk to the handler so they know what you want as they cannot see what the horse looks like in the camera. Then start clicking when the horse is looking good.

Practice. This cannot be over stated. When you understand your camera and its features, you can experiment a little to see what works and what does not. Take photos from the side showing all 4 legs with ears pricked looking alert and that should serve you well.

On ParadeRing.ie, we offer unlimited photo ads so you have no excuse not to add at least one photo. Each good photo you add will increase your chances of enquiries and ultimately a sale. I hope this has helped you with your horse photography and if you have any question please feel free to contact us on the details below.

So if you have a horse for sale, don't just tell people about it - show them.

To create your FREE Horse Ad simply log on to www.paradering.ie or email info@paradering.ie if you have any questions. For further information please contact:

ParadeRing.ie,
3003 Euro Business Park,
Little Island, Co. Cork.

Tel: 021 2348252
Mob: 087 2136360
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