

Riding Instructor

Riding instructors teach people to ride horses. They work with a wide variety of people, including children, people with learning support needs and people with disabilities.

The Work

You could be:

- working with students one at a time or in groups
- showing beginners how to get on a horse and how to control it
- improving the riding techniques of more experienced learners
- leading groups of riders on treks
- coaching advanced riders and helping them prepare for races or show jumping events
- teaching riders how to care for horses and how to look after equipment
- making sure horses are fed, watered, groomed and exercised, and that stables are mucked out (cleaned)
- breaking in horses and training them
- carrying out other duties, such as planning riding lessons, supervising staff, ordering supplies and keeping accounts.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Salaries for riding instructors in the UK vary, but tend to be in the region of £12,000 to £18,000 as an assistant instructor rising to between £25,000 and £30,000 as a fully qualified and experienced instructor. Pay rates will vary according to which qualifications you hold, and whether accommodation and meals are included.

Some riding instructors are self-employed. Their income depends on how much business they attract.

Conditions

- You could work for a riding school, a trekking centre, private stables or centres offering riding holidays.
- Working hours can be long, including early starts, late finishes and weekends.
- The work is mostly outdoors and takes place in all sorts of weather.
- Some work might be in an indoor training centre.
- The conditions can be dirty, muddy and smelly, especially when mucking out stables.
- There is a risk of injury if a horse bites or kicks you or if you fall off.
- There might be less work in winter and some jobs are therefore seasonal.
- You might have to live at the riding school, trekking centre or stables.
- You would usually wear specific riding clothing, such as jodhpurs, boots and a hard riding hat.

Getting In

- Most employers expect you to have relevant qualifications from the British Horse Society (BHS) or the Association of British Riding Schools (ABRS) before you can give lessons.
- Some riding schools run part time courses leading to these qualifications. A good standard of general education is useful for entry.
- You could do a full time college course, which prepares you for the BHS exams, and gain an NC (SCQF Level 4-6), HNC (SCQF Level 7) or HND (SCQF Level 8).
- You normally need up to 3-4 subjects at National 5 for entry to the NC and 1-2 Highers or BHS Stage 2 for the HNC or HND.
- The [BHS](#) now offer a 6 stage coaching pathway. Stage 1 Complete Horsemanship 1; Stage 2 Foundation Coach in Complete Horsemanship; Stage 3 Coach in Complete Horsemanship; Stage 4 Senior Eventing Coach; Stage 5 Performance Coach BHSI; and finally Stage 6 Fellow.
- The [ABRS](#) offers the Certificate in Equestrian Coaching, endorsed by UK Coaching.
- You may need a full, clean driving licence.
- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- able to handle and ride horses well, and enjoy working with them
- able to calm nervous horses
- able to talk to a wide range of people
- pleasant and approachable
- patient and tolerant, when giving lessons or training horses
- good at explaining and demonstrating techniques
- confident and able to take control in an emergency
- willing to do some hard physical work when working with horses and cleaning out stables
- able to work well in a team and alone.

Training

- You can do further training on the job to gain qualifications to teach advanced riding and show jumping.
- You must also have an emergency first aid certificate, a riding and road safety certificate and a safeguarding and protecting children certificate.
- If you have completed BHS Stage 5, you could study for BHS Stage 6 Fellow. This provides Fellowship status, and is the highest level of BHS teaching qualification.

Getting On

- With experience, you may be able to become a senior or head instructor, first in a small riding school then in a larger stable.
- You could set up and run your own riding school or trekking centre.

- You might be able to ride in competitions.
- It is also possible to become a competition judge or to become a BHS examiner.
- There may be opportunities to work abroad.

Contacts

Association of British Riding Schools (ABRS)

Tel: 01403 790294

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Website: www.abrs-info.org

X: @ABRS_1

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Association-Of-British-Riding-Schools-341385065972241/?ref=hl

British Horse Society (BHS)

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Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.