

## Jockey

A jockey rides horses in races for a licenced trainer. There are two specialist kinds of jockey: flat jockeys, who race on flat ground without obstacles, and jump jockeys, who race on tracks where they have to jump over fences, ditches and hurdles.

### The Work

You could be:

- tacking up the horses you're going to exercise
- taking the horses through a series of exercises (walking, trotting, cantering and galloping) and then reporting back to the trainer on the horse's level of fitness for the race
- discussing the characteristics of horses and races with the owner and trainer – working out strategies to help you win the race
- on days when you are racing (most days in summer) accompanying horses to and from races
- getting weighed 30 minutes before the race
- riding the horses at flat races or at jump races (most specialise in one or the other)
- afterwards, discussing the race with the owner and trainer
- training at a gym in addition to riding horses, to ensure peak physical fitness.

### Pay

Pay for professional jockeys vary. You might work for a trainer. Alternatively you might work on a self-employed basis, earning a 'mount' fee plus, if you are one of the winners, a percentage of the prize money for each race. Some jockeys also get sponsorship deals.

The British Racehorse Authority and the Professional Jockeys Association riding fee agreement rates for 2017 are:

- flat jockey – £120.66 per ride
- jump jockey – £164.74 per ride.

### Conditions

- Hours would be long, with an early start and a late finish. In summer you might be racing seven days a week.
- You would be outdoors in all weathers, exercising horses.
- The work is very physically demanding.
- You might have to stay overnight at the stables, in a hostel.
- You might have to travel around the UK and possibly abroad, spending overnights away from home.
- There is a high risk of injury through falls and kicks.
- You must always keep your weight within the limits set by the racing school/stables. They support you with professional nutrition advice.
- You wear riding gear including high boots and helmet.

## Getting In

- Riding experience and confidence with horses is more important than educational qualifications. Most jockeys start off as a stablehand (see the [Stablehand or Groom](#) job profile).
- You can then go on a Foundation Course, followed by an Apprenticeship and then an Advanced Apprenticeship at the Northern Racing College in Doncaster.
- The residential Foundation Course can take up to 12 weeks and leads to Level 1 Diploma Work Based Racehorse Care. On successful completion you would do a 6-week work placement with a racehorse trainer, before starting the full time Apprenticeship.
- The Apprenticeship, which is done in the workplace, leads to a Level 2 Diploma in Work Based Racehorse Care.
- You can then progress to the Advanced Apprenticeship, leading to a Level 3 Diploma.
- You can also train at racing schools in England, at Newmarket (British Racing School) and Marlborough (Haddon Training Limited) and in Ireland, at Kildare (Racing Academy and Centre of Education).
- Each racing school has its own entry requirements regarding weight and height so you should check the individual websites for details.
- You must be very physically fit and strong enough to control large high-spirited animals.
- A driving licence is often necessary, as many stables are in remote areas.

## What Does It Take

You must be:

- interested in horses, able to relate to them, understand and control them
- knowledgeable about horse care and welfare
- very physically fit with a good sense of balance
- honest and reliable
- determined to succeed in the racing industry
- competitive and courageous
- aware of safety and able to cope with the risks of racing
- willing to do routine tasks
- a good team worker, to work with stablehands, trainers and owners.

## Training

- You must have a licence from the British Horseracing Authority (BHA), when you become an apprentice (flat racing) or conditional (jump racing) jockey.
- Your employer will put you forward for the licensing course once you have sufficient knowledge.
- A number of training providers run courses taking apprentice jockeys and conditional jockeys through the various stages: Licence, Continuation and Advanced Courses. Progress depends on the number of winners you ride.
- The initial licence course lasts for 5 days. You must also have a medical examination and pass a fitness test as part of the application for a licence.

## Getting On

- You will have a manager to negotiate races for you.
- You might work for overseas stables in USA, Japan or Dubai.
- You will have a short working life and will move on to other work when you are between 40-45 years old. Sports journalism or commentating, racetrack management or training or horse supplies sales might be possibilities.

## More Information

There are five racecourses in Scotland, at Ayr, Hamilton Park, Kelso, Musselburgh and Perth, each with a dramatically different layout and offering a different challenge. Both men and women can train as jockeys but only a small number of women do so.

## Contacts

### **Association of British Riding Schools (ABRS)**

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### **British Horse Society (BHS)**

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### **British Horseracing Authority (BHA)**

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### **Northern Racing College (NRC)**

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### **Racing to School**

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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.