

What to Do on Arrival at the Event Base

Before you rock up, expecting to ride, you must have pre-nominated on Try Booking, or by the method specified by the Event Organiser, as they need to know numbers of competitors in order to provide appropriate facilities and staffing.

It is important to give yourself and your horse as much time as possible before you set out on your scheduled ride, to set everything out so it all runs smoothly for you and your horse. Most riders arrive the day before an Event in order to:

- ✓ rest their horses from the journey,
- ✓ ride the start/finish sections of the track beforehand,
- ✓ complete registration and paperwork,
- ✓ Vet In the horse so he/she is qualified as “Fit to Start”, and
- ✓ lay out their gear; horse feed, human snacks etc. ready to go.

If the ride start is in the afternoon, you may be able to arrive early morning.

Look after your horse

Your horse has travelled, so he/she will need a drink, a grass pick, a stroll, possibly a pee and poo, and to relax.

Set up your yards, provide him/her with hay, water, possibly a feed and leave him/her alone for an hour or so.

Make yourself known

This is the time to come and say “Hi” at the Secretarial post. Bring all your paperwork; pre nomination Try-Booking receipt, Horse Health Declaration, Hendra Vaccination Certificate (if required by the event).

Members will also need your membership card, your TADRA ride bib, Rider Passport and Horse Passport; Non-members, your Ride Entry Forms.

Don't be afraid to ask questions about what happens when, or to find out who to talk to about particular details. Our experienced Secretariat will guide you through the process and tell you where and how to resolve any queries.

Before Vetting **Check out all 6 legs are working today.**

Go for a short “assurance” ride on your horse in exactly the gear you will be using in your competition ride, to make sure your horse is fully sound.

This should not be hard training (it's too late for that now) but a walk, trot, and canter, on both diagonals and both leads to check you and the horse are sound and willing.

It can be a good idea to practice the first part of your route (marked by the arrows) so that the horse is confident when setting out on track. Some people go for 2k, others 5k, some for 10k plus but what you do depends on knowing your horse and what is going to set him up to do his main task well.

Pre-Ride Vet Check

After your short assurance ride, give your horse a drink, a breather, clean him up and once he is relaxed, present him to the Vetting Ring to be checked out as "Fit to Start". Take the paperwork as advised by the Secretariat and make sure you are wearing your ride bib.

Your horse's identity will be checked, the vet will do his/her assessment and then you will be asked to run your horse out and back on a loose rein at a trot to ensure he/she is sound.

After vetting you are free to prepare your gear and supplies and set up what you will need immediately on your return to ride base for you and your horse. Pay attention to having your own nourishment and sleeping quarters ready for when you need to flop. If you are up to it, this is also a good socialisation time to chat to people in neighbouring camps.

Before you set out there will be a Pre-Ride Talk. It is imperative you attend this orientation session as you will be told track details and special considerations that you as a competitor need to be aware of. If you are not already familiar with it, the Vet-Gate-Into-Hold procedure and minimum and maximum times allowed will also be explained.

Setting off

About 10 mins before Ride Start, horses and riders assemble mounted, in an area designated at the Pre-Ride Talk, to set off at the allocated time. Riders and horses often circle and warm up at a walk or trot, taking care not to inconvenience others.

It is an orderly set out and those on less experienced horses often choose to go out after the front runners, at their own chosen pace. A few minutes of calmness and steadiness at the start will pay dividends later in the ride but please do not delay more than 10 or 15 minutes or you will be disqualified.

Enjoy your ride, and GO THE DISTANCE.