

Equine Passports

Do all horses need a passport?

As from 1st July 2009, it is a requirement for all our horses, ponies and donkeys in the UK to have a passport - even if they are retired or do not ever leave their field. You can be fined up to £5,000 for not having a valid passport. The legislation comes from an EU directive that has been adopted into UK law to protect the human food chain from meat containing traces of equine medicine that may be harmful to humans. It has had the additional benefit of making it much harder to sell stolen horses.



Unsure if your horse has a passport?

It does not matter if you have bred the horse, purchased it or rescued it; you need to get a passport as soon as possible.

If you're unsure if your horse has a passport, you can check via the organisations that issue them. Visit DEFRA to see a list of these organisations: bit.ly/2qbmgh7.

If you've carried out all the checks and you're unable to find the paperwork for your horse's passport, you will need to apply for a replacement. If the horse turns out to already have a passport, you'll need to register the change of ownership.



Is there a deadline to apply for a passport?

Yes - under the legislation, foals must have a passport and microchip within six months of birth or before 30th November of the year in which they were born, whichever date occurs later.

If your horse does not have a passport your insurance may be invalid; you may also be liable to prosecution if you attempt to sell the horse.

Section IX of the horse passport

Section IX of the Horse Passport MUST be signed by the owner, keeper or veterinarian to identify whether the horse is 'intended' or 'not intended' to enter the human food chain.

This is primarily to ensure that no horses receiving certain medications enter the food chain, and also to prevent the sale of stolen horses or ponies as the passport should prove its identity.



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When do I need to show my equine's passport?

The equine passport must be kept with the horse at all times (except in special circumstances such as a short hack/ride). For example, if you normally stable your horse at livery, the passport must be kept at the livery. You might be asked to present your horse's passport at a competition, when transporting your horse or when your horse receives veterinary treatment.

If you have a horse in your care and you can't show a valid passport on request, you could get an unlimited fine.

In the event of the horse's death, you will need to send the passport back to the office that issued it. It is an offence not to do this within 30 days.

FEI passports

An FEI passport is mandatory for horses competing at most international FEI sanctioned events.

If you are planning on competing at an FEI event and your horse requires an FEI passport, please contact your discipline directly for information on how to apply.

Be aware that most disciplines require at least 6 weeks notice in advance before they can issue a passport.



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Any questions?
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