

FAQ's

Riders new to hunting will have many questions. Here are some of the most frequently asked, along with some other useful hints.

Do I need to be an expert rider?

Many abilities of rider enjoy hunting. Horses do tend to enjoy the experience and are a little more enthusiastic than normal — so be prepared for a more forward going horse than usual. If you are unsure, ask the Secretary to suggest a quieter day for your first time, or better still come Autumn Hunting during September as these days are quieter and a good introduction.

Will I need to be able to jump fences?

In the AWH Country, there is usually a way round all the jumps so jumping is not required, though the route may not be as direct. We very often have a non-jumping fieldmaster on a Saturday and we will always direct non-jumpers where to go.

What do I wear?

Correct Hunting Dress: Autumn Hunting: Tweed Jacket, Beige Jods, Shirt & Tie or coloured stock, Black or Brown Boots (or boots and gaiters), horse does not need to be plaited, please avoid brightly coloured tack and boots, gloves recommended. Hunting: Black or Blue jacket, Beige or white jods, Shirt and Stock, Black Boots (or boots and gaiters), horse plaited, please avoid brightly coloured tack and boots, gloves recommended (Children and gateshutters as Autumn Hunting above, horse need not be plaited if wearing tweed jacket). Please try and wear correct dress, show jackets and tweed jackets are OK — but you may find it cold! Horse and rider should be clean and tidy. Correct safety equipment should always be worn when mounted, it is recommended that all riders wear correctly fitting safety riding hats, children must wear body protectors and riding hats with a harness.

How much will it cost?

Autumn Hunting: £10, children £5 Hunting: Adults Sat £50, children £?, Weds ? (Only 3 visitor days allowed) See subscription rates for further info.

When can I come?

Ring Secretary to ask permission and to find out when we are hunting in an area close to you. If you are unsure, ask the Secretary to suggest a quieter day for your first time, or better still come Autumn Hunting during September as these days are quieter and a good introduction.

What is a gateshutter?

A gateshutter is someone who comes out on a very well behaved horse or pony who takes responsibility for the day to ensure all gates are shut after the field has passed through them. Subscribers take turns to gateshut, but non subscribers are also welcome to gateshut. Gateshutting days are free of charge and do not count towards visiting days. Gateshutters are required to stay out until 3pm. Visitors must have completed a day's visiting to ensure their horse or pony is suitable before volunteering to gateshut. A gateshutting rota is organised in advance so please get in touch if you would like to volunteer.

It is the responsibility of every member of the field to ensure gates are shut. Always shout gate please, even if you think the person behind you heard the last person to shout. Even if gateshutters are out, the last person through a gate is responsible for ensuring it is shut. Never leave one person on their own to shut a gate.

Tips for your first days hunting:

Practice plaiting before the day — it takes longer than you think!

Get all your kit ready the night before. Make sure all tack is clean and safe.

Be prepared to wash your horse to make sure he is clean and tidy either the day before or early in the morning.

If your horse is a good traveler — saddle up before you go, it can be difficult to tack up an excited horse, when you arrive — put the bridle on before you unload.

Allow plenty of time. You must have found and paid the Secretary and be mounted on your horse ready to go 10 mins before the meet time.

If you are not sure about anything — please ask — we were all new to it once!

Please always keep well away from the hounds — the only unforgivable sin is for your horse to stand on or kick a hound! Be aware, even if your horse is used to dogs, 50 hounds approaching from behind can be a shock always turn your horse to face them.

If instructions are given in front of you — always repeat it so that everyone behind can hear. (ie Keep in, please walk, gate please.)

If in doubt always shut the gate, always walk around the field instead of straight across, never ride through a herd of animals — go round, always thank the car drivers for slowing down, be nice to everyone you meet — you may have just galloped across their field!

But most of all ENJOY YOUR DAY!