

*“When I go racing I can feel the excitement as soon as I see the runners in the paper. The adrenaline really starts pumping.”*

The most important relationship you will have during your ownership journey will be between you and your trainer. They will be responsible for the horse's wellbeing, individual training, progress and performance.

There are many factors which you may like to consider when making your choice of trainer.

- **LOCATION** – You are likely to want to see your horse as often as possible so it is important to select a trainer who is relatively local.
- **RECORD** – The length of time they have been training and their track record of success is another important consideration
- **COMMUNICATION** – A trainer's ability to communicate with their owners and their general philosophy towards training is probably the most important attribute to look for when selecting a trainer.

Most trainers will be delighted to show you around their establishment without commitment, as long as you arrange the visit in advance.

A trainer may charge commission when assisting you in your selection of a horse, others work on the basis that they train the horse in return for selecting it – check this before making any decisions. They may also have knowledge of horses available for sale or lease or they may have other clients with whom you could share ownership.

When you contact a trainer there are several basic questions you should ask. Firstly, you need to enquire about training fees (these are charged on a daily basis and can vary depending on the stage of work the horse is at, see *Costs*). Most trainers can provide this as a monthly amount. Also ask for an estimate of the incidentals such as track fees, blacksmith fees, normal veterinary costs and transport charges. The important thing to remember is that the more questions you ask the greater your knowledge, and this will decrease the chance of any surprise or hidden costs.

The personal rapport you have with a trainer is important as this can determine the enjoyment you derive from owning your horse. It's important to remember that these trainers are under an incredible amount of pressure every time your horse steps out onto the track. However you as an owner are effectively an employer and you have the right to know what is happening with your investment at all times. Communication is the single most important component of a successful relationship between owners and trainers.

Regular visits to the stables to view your horse, watching trackwork and discussing progress, all add greatly to the ownership experience. The New Zealand Trainers' Association represents all professional trainers and will be able to provide you with a list of trainers and contacts who could best suit your location and requirements.

To see how trainers are faring in the premiership for the season, go to [www.nzracing.co.nz](http://www.nzracing.co.nz) under the jockeys and trainers section to see this table.



FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:  
**THE NEW ZEALAND TRAINERS ASSOCIATION**  
[www.nztrainers.co.nz](http://www.nztrainers.co.nz)

Executive Officer – Mary McCarty    T 07 377 0090  
P O Box 711    F 07 378 2590  
Taupo    M 021 487 880

## 20 QUESTIONS TO GET YOU STARTED WITH A TRAINER

- 1 What is your daily training rate?  
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- 2 What else do you bill for (eg track fees, dentist, blacksmith etc)?  
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- 3 Do you have email?  
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- 4 How do you advise owners of a horse's progress?  
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- 5 Who is your vet and how often would he visit your stable?  
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- 6 Do you use a particular float company?  
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- 7 Where do your horses spell?  
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- 8 Do you include the owner in your plans for a horse's racing programme?  
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- 9 Do you encourage owners to visit the stable?  
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- 10 Do you use a particular stable jockey?  
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- 11 Do you encourage your owners to have input into selection of jockeys?  
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- 12 Would you prefer to have contact with one syndicate member rather than individual members of the group calling you?  
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- 13 What is the best way to contact you?  
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- 14 What is the best time to contact you?  
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- 15 If you are overseas or away at another venue who do we liaise with at your stable?  
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- 16 Will you tell us if you feel the horse will not make a racehorse?  
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- 17 If that were the case would you be prepared to help us find a replacement?  
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- 18 Do you have a website?  
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- 19 Do you send out a regular stable newsletter?  
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- 20 Do you enjoy celebrating/commiserating with your owners after a race?  
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Remember the idea is to establish whether or not you believe the trainer concerned suits your needs and requirements.

You may not particularly care to be involved in planning your horse's racing programme, instead leaving it to the professional you are paying to do the job. However, the important thing to ensure is that you are happy you are going to be able to communicate with your trainer to your mutual satisfaction.

You may have other questions you wish to include but the above 20 questions cover the basic requirements.

## OWNER TRAINER AGREEMENT

Enclosed is a copy of the NZ Trainers Association/NZ Thoroughbred Racehorse Owners Federation sanctioned agreement. Ensure that you have one of these when your horse goes into training. It safeguards you and the trainer by setting out costs and conditions etc.