

Weight Chart Guidance

Horses, ponies and donkeys play a vital role in the RDA and must be handled with awareness and consideration at all times. For more information on Equine Welfare, please visit our Equine Welfare Policy on the RDA website. This weight chart applies to anyone riding under RDA insurance, whether a participant, volunteer or member of staff.



Section 1

RDA takes the welfare of its equines seriously: Every equine should have weight limit clearly written on the chart.

Sample Equine "Weight" Chart

Name	Height	Age	Maximum Carrying Weight	Tack Weight	Maximum "Riding Weight" Weight of Rider
Jinks	12hh	8	6.5st (41kg)	1st (6.36kg)	5.5st (35kg)
Snowy	13.2hh	6	10st (63kg)	1st (6.36kg)	9st (57kg)
Flash	14hh	15	9st (57kg)	1st (6.36kg)	8st (50kg)
Bob	15.1hh	12	15st (95kg)	1.5st (9.5kg)	13.5st (80kg)

Notes:

- **Maximum Carrying Weight:** This is the maximum weight (rider plus tack) the equine should be asked to carry.
- **Tack Weight:** To get the most accurate record of how much your tack weighs, weigh the tack on its own. If you can't or don't have the facilities to do it, we would recommend adding 1st (6.36kg), for ponies tack and 1.5st (9.35kg), for horses.
- **Maximum Riding Weight of Rider:** This is the riding weight NOT scale weight and must be taken into account when allocating riders to equines. (See Section 4 for calculation)

Section 2 - Assessing an equine's Maximum Carrying Weight

- The Maximum Carrying Weight of an equine is the maximum Total Weight (Load) it should carry (See Section 1). This includes the Riding Weight of the Rider (see Section 4) plus additional tack weight.
- Each equine is different – its **Maximum Carrying Weight must be assessed by a knowledgeable person and agreed with its owner/registered keeper.**
- Maximum Carrying Weight is assessed on breed, conformation, body condition score and age not just height.
- Powerful short coupled equines with strong bone will carry more than lighter boned or long backed animals of the same height.
- An equine which is old or "soft" and overweight or has a low body condition score can carry less weight than a similar animal that is well muscled (fit) and in good general condition.

Donkeys – The recommended maximum carrying weight for a "fit" donkey is * 8st (51kg). (This includes Riding Weight of Rider plus Tack).

Section 3 - A Rough Guide to Calculating the Load an Equine is Capable of Carrying

If you don't have scales large enough to stand an equine on, you can work out the body weight of the equine by using the following calculation:

$$\text{Weight in kgs} = \frac{\text{Girth}^2 (\text{cms}) \times \text{length} (\text{cms})}{11880}$$

(Length = point of shoulder to point of buttock)

(Girth = Measure the tape from 1 inch behind point of wither, all the way around the horse)

Next divide total body weight by 6 for max. carrying weight in kgs.

This will give you the maximum weight carrying capacity which works out to be at 16.7% of the horse's body weight. (This is before taking into consideration Section 4)

You can find a Maximum Carrying Weight Calculator on our website by visiting: <http://www.rda.org.uk/runningyourgroup/horses-and-rda/>

Section 4 - Assessing Horse & Rider Combinations

- Riders of the same scale weight may have different riding weights.
- For example, if you have an unbalanced rider with low core stability, they will ride heavier – therefore you need to make an addition to their "scale" weight. (see below for example)
- Any tall rider on too small a pony unbalances it and adds to its load.
- We recommend you have:
 - An up to date record of each rider's weight, wearing riding clothes
 - Scales available to check this regularly

Sample Rider's Weight Chart

Name	Date	Scale Weight	Addition	Riding Weight
Sharon	01.01.18	6st (38.1kg)	10%	6.5st (41.28kg)
John	14.11.17	9st (57.15kg)	0%	9st (57.15kg)
Roy	30.10.17	12st (76.2kg)	5%	12.5st (79.38kg)

Practical Points

- **Horses:** The horse showing unusual signs of irritation or reluctance may be trying to tell you the rider is too heavy or badly positioned. Check the rider's position (sitting level but not bumping about or tilting badly on the corners) and check the rider's weight. We also recommend you look into checking the horses wellbeing to ensure that they are free of pain.
- Every equine should have the results of these weight calculations clearly written on their chart.

Did you know?

- It is possible for a 14hh finely built pony to carry less than a 13hh of pony of a stronger build. This could be down to age, conformation & fitness. It isn't all about the equines height!
- Strong boned = strong frame and large bones & joints. This does not refer to overweight or large horses.

Did you know?

- When calculating weight it is important to remember that moving slowly in confined spaces with frequent start, stops and turns is hard work for an equine, especially if they are old or have an unbalanced/uncoordinated rider.

Note:

- These measurements are a guide only, based on a fit, active animal. The weight may need to be adjusted downward according to type, condition and age.

Did you know?

- Be aware an equine which is described as "up to 10st (63.5kg)" may have an unbalanced rider who weighs 9st (57.16kg) on the scales but rides over 10st (63.5kg) (See Section 4) plus tack weighing 1st (6.35kg). He is carrying nearly 11st (70kg). This is overloading and should be corrected.