

Pony/Rider Weight Ratios Explained

Our ponies play a vital role in introducing the next generation to the wonderful world of equines. To ensure the safety of every little rider, our ponies are handled with awareness and consideration at all times. To ensure the happiness and health of our ponies we implement weight restrictions in accordance with animal welfare regulations.

Little Ryders Pony Rides takes the welfare of each and every pony extremely seriously: Every equine (pony) has their weight limit clearly written on their information chart displayed on the entrance table. The Little Ryders Team and Ponies thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

What is the calculation used to determine the maximum weight a pony can hold?

In accordance with Equestrian Australia (EA) advocacy for horse welfare regulations a horse or pony can safely carry 20% of its bodyweight. Any greater than this amount runs an increased risk of injury to the horse/pony. It means that the rider and equipment together (e.g. saddle) should not weigh more than a fifth of the horse's approximate weight. Our ponies are weighed on specialised horse scales every six months at their vet dentist visit. The saddles that the ponies wear are weighed every 6 months when they visit their saddle fitter or when they have a new saddle given to them. The ponies weight divided by 20% minus the weight of the pony's tack equals the maximum weight a pony can carry however there are other determining factors that affect maximum rider weight.

Did You Know?

When calculating max rider 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 older or have an unbalanced/uncoordinated rider.

How is each Ponies' Maximum Carrying Weight Determined?

In accordance to Equestrian Australia (EA) advocacy for horse welfare regulations the maximum carrying weight of each pony is the maximum Total Weight (Load) they should carry. This includes the Riding Weight of the Rider plus additional tack weight. Each pony undergoes a Maximum Carrying Weight assessment. This begins by assessing breed, conformation, body condition score, current health, amount of work and age and height.

Powerful short ponies with strong bone will carry more than lighter boned or long backed animals of the same height. An equine which is older may have a low body condition score can carry less weight than a similar animal that is well muscled (fit) and in good general condition

Every Little Ryders' Pony has different needs and health requirements –therefore they each have regular visits from vet, dentist, physiotherapist and saddle fitter. Each pony's its maximum Carrying Weight is assessed regularly by the ponies' team of health care professional and owner of Little Ryders Pony Rides Pty Ltd.

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 equine's height!

Assessing Pony & Rider Combinations

Our ponies as a collective have at times have given pony rides to over 500 Little Ryders throughout an event. Part of the maximum rider weight assessment considers that each pony has many different types of riders throughout an event.

Riders of the same scale weight may have different riding weights.

Example1 - if you have an unbalanced rider with low core stability, they will ride heavier – therefore putting more pressure on the ponies' spine, you need to make an addition to their "scale" weight.

Example 2: Any tall rider on too small a pony unbalances it and adds to its load.

We appreciate your help to look after our ponies' wellbeing by being aware of what pony is best suited to each rider. Our deepest apologies if we don't have a pony present that suits your needs to ride however please feel free to have a photo with a pony, give them cuddles and carrots.