

# Overview of Country Trails & Riding School Lesson Program

*1 Irvine Park Rd, Orange, CA 92869*

**TEL: (714) 538-5860**

**www.ctridding.com**

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## Location

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We are located inside Irvine Regional Park, across from parking lot #5.

### **Directions after entering the park:**

- Once through the park entrance, continue straight.
- Follow the signs that read "Horse Rentals."
- Pass the first parking area (lot #6) on right, and turn right immediately after lot #6.
- Park in the next parking area (lot #5), which will be on the right, Country Trails will be on the left.
- Our office is a brown, barn-style building with a large sign that reads "Rental Horses"
- Enter through the gate to the right of this sign.
- Check in at the window for first day to fill out paperwork and sign in.

Weekends and holidays can be fairly busy at the park. If the lots are ever full due to park activities, students are welcome to park on the dirt in front of our office during their lesson.

We recommend ongoing students obtain a park pass for regular re-entry. Park passes are valid for one year from purchase date. Passes can be purchased at the Park Ranger's main office, at the OC Zoo or on the Irvine Park webpage. Prices are available online.

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## Getting Started

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The first class will be a private, 30-minute one-on-one with the instructor. This is an evaluation lesson to rate the student's level of skill/experience. We require all new students take a private assessment lesson regardless of whether this is their first time on a horse, or if students have years of experience.

We ask that students and their parents/legal guardians (if applicable) arrive 15-20 minutes early to sign in and fill out paperwork. Payment is due upon signing in, prior to riding. For evaluation lessons, the student's horse will be groomed and tacked for him/her in advance. In future lessons, students will learn to groom, tack/un-tack, and care for their horses on his/her own. Our aim is for lesson students to gain the skills to be independent, capable and knowledgeable horsemen/women.

After the evaluation lesson, students will be placed in a group class of 2-5 riders. Students are assigned a weekly lesson slot and will ride at the same day/time each week (unless prior arrangements have been made). Group lessons allow students to learn in a social atmosphere, and gain insight from watching other riders while improving the student's own skills. After evaluation lesson, students may enter the stables on his/her own without checking in at the window. Minors may be dropped off by their parents/legal guardians as long as an adult staff member is present.

We do offer adult-only group classes for adults who wish to improve their riding abilities. We also offer private 30-minute lessons for students who prefer one-on-one instruction with our staff. Please contact the office to learn more about lesson times for our adult-only classes and private lessons.

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### **Our Lesson Program**

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Country Trails & Riding School offers a comprehensive lesson program; students will learn many other aspects of horse care in addition to horseback riding. Students must arrive 30 minutes prior to their scheduled ride time to learn/practice retrieving their horse from his/her stall, grooming, tacking, and other related skills. Students must also allow 30 minutes after their lesson to clean/return their equipment, groom/bathe their horse, and tidy their grooming area. Lessons are two hours in their entirety, one hour of riding and a half and hour before and after for horse care.

Our philosophy is that we strive to foster a passion not just for horseback riding, but for horses as a whole. We believe that participating in grooming and horse care is essential for creating a well-rounded horseman/woman. Our students find that the discipline, patience and work ethic applied to horses often benefits them in many other aspects of life. We offer an active volunteer program for ongoing students enrolled in lessons. Volunteers gain an enriched experience in horse care, stable management, and assisting other students. Please discuss with a staff member for more details about eligibility for participation.

We encourage parents to stay and watch lessons, however, for liability and safety reasons, parents are not allowed to assist with or handle the horses. We have a pergola by our arena (where the students ride) and we also have seated areas for guests to view the class. Students that are dropped off must be picked up 30 minutes after the end of their scheduled ride time, unless prior arrangements have been made. Students and volunteers must be picked up by closing, or parents/legal guardians will incur a "late-pickup-fee" of \$20 per every 15 minutes after closing. We cannot leave students at the barn without an adult staff member present.

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### **Make-Up Lessons**

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Should a scheduling conflict arise with a student's regular ride time, please inform us with as much advance as possible. Excused absences from scheduled lesson time will result in a "makeup lesson". Students are required to promptly schedule a makeup lesson at an alternate time from their regular weekly lesson time. Makeups must be redeemed within four weeks of the missed date. Makeups will no longer be honored after four weeks. Country trails will not provide refunds for unused makeup lessons. If you are having trouble getting caught up please inform us and we will work out some options for you.

We understand that extenuating circumstances happen, and that riders may fall ill the day of their lesson. We ask that students call to inform us with as much notice as possible so that we can make arrangements for their horse to be exercised/for other riders to have the opportunity to fill the spot. Cancellations made with more than 24 hours in advance will result in a make-up lesson. Cancellations made with less than 24 hours advance will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Unless there is an emergency, calling 1-2 hours prior to class to cancel is insufficient notice, and will result in a missed lesson without a make-up. Lessons missed without any advanced notice will not result in a makeup.

In the event of a holiday, inclement weather, emergency, or unforeseen event that results in barn closure during a student's scheduled weekly lesson time, students are required to schedule a makeup lesson at an alternate time. Country trails will not provide refunds for unused makeup lessons.

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### **Required Attire/Equipment**

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Like many sports, horseback riding requires specific attire and equipment. It is imperative that students wear proper footwear at all times. We require equestrian boots made of real leather by the student's first lesson. Riding boots can be purchased at a local tack store/western wear store (Hitchin' Post, Dover, Canyon Tack and Feed, American Horse Products, Boot Barn). Boots may also be purchased online, but we strongly suggest that students purchase from an equestrian website (Horse.com, StatelineTack.com, Smartpak.com, etc). A few popular name brands of footwear we recommend include Ariat, Justins, and Tredstep. Please note that department stores and other shoe stores (Macy's, Payless, etc.) do not carry equestrian footwear. Students wearing improper footwear or boots not designed for equestrian sport will not be allowed to ride.

We offer two styles of riding at Country Trails: English and Western. Both riding styles require distinct apparel for the rider's comfort and to aid the rider's position in the different types of saddles. We recommend that Western riders wear long, comfortable jeans and Western (cowboy) boots or paddock boots. We suggest that English riders wear breeches and tall boots, or paddock boots with chaps. Leggings are not appropriate or safe for horseback riding as they give no traction in the saddle.

As a student advances in his or her skills, we may ask him or her to purchase other equipment if needed to help advance his or her riding level and experiences on horseback (such as spurs, gloves, chaps, etc). We have helmets, grooming supplies, tack, and other necessities available for our riders at our facility. Students are always welcome to purchase their own grooming equipment and helmets, but it is not required. If you have questions on where to purchase equestrian apparel, please feel free to ask!

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### **Our "Whole Horse" Approach**

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As mentioned, our philosophy is to foster a passion not just for horseback riding, but for horses as a whole. We strive to educate our students in general knowledge of horse anatomy, first aid, behavior, equipment, nutrition, and much more. In the event of weather conditions that are unsafe or unsuitable for riding, (such as rain, extreme wind, muddy/slippery riding areas from previous rain), we utilize the opportunity to hold classes on equestrian-related skills aside from riding.

During an "un-mounted" lesson, class will be held for one hour instead of two hours. Students should arrive at their regular ride time, unless otherwise specified. Our instructors will lead the class in an enrichment lesson that may include activities such as viewing equestrian competition footage, caring for equipment, preparing horse medications, active discussions about horse breeds, and much more. Because we view un-mounted lessons as crucial to creating well-rounded equestrians, please note that we will not allow students to schedule a make-up riding lesson instead of attending an "un-mounted" lesson.

In the case of extreme weather, emergency, or some other unforeseen event that results in barn closure, we will call to notify students with as much advance as possible. If we are unable to reach you, we will leave a detailed voicemail to inform students of the situation. Please pay attention to whether we are holding a non-riding class or if we are canceling lessons for the day. We ask that students call back

to confirm that they will still be attending an “un-mounted” class, or, in the event of a barn closure, to schedule a make-up.

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### Payment/Cancellation Policy

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Tuition in our monthly lesson program is \$310/month. Tuition includes one weekly lesson, (four to five lessons per month, depending upon the month). Students are welcome to purchase additional lessons, priced at \$77 per class. Students joining the program mid-month will be billed \$77 per lesson until the beginning of the next full month, upon which they will be invoiced for a full month’s tuition.

Payments are due on the first of the month, and we will email invoices one to two weeks prior. Please note that our invoices are processed though Peacock Hills Equestrian Center: [pheqcaccounting@earthlink.com](mailto:pheqcaccounting@earthlink.com). In most circumstances, new students will begin receiving invoices the month following their initial month in the program.

Students may make one-time payments by credit card, either in the office or over the phone. For their convenience, students may also leave a card on file to automatically be charged for monthly invoices. Payments in cash or check may be deposited in our Country Trails office drop box. Checks mailed to our P.O. Box must be received by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month.

PMB 111  
P.O. Box 6548  
Orange, CA 92863

Payments remitted after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month will incur a \$25 late fee. Students with a past-due balance of over one month will not be allowed to ride until payment has been remitted in full.

If a student plans to leave the program, we require a 30-day written notice, either delivered to our office, or to our invoicing department by email. Please note that make up lessons must be completed before the last date of enrollment in the program. After a rider is no longer in the program, should he or she still have outstanding make up lessons remaining, he or she may redeem make ups for guided trail rides within one month (4 weeks) of their last paid day of class. Students may also gift their remaining rides to another student, friend, or family member. Absolutely no outstanding credits will be honored after 4 weeks from the final paid lesson.

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### Contact Us

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If you have any questions or concerns about the program, please don’t hesitate to reach us by email at: [countrytrailsridingschool@gmail.com](mailto:countrytrailsridingschool@gmail.com) (note this email is different from the invoice email), or call us in the office at (714)-538-5860.

Country Trails is open Tuesday - Sunday. We are an active working ranch, and our office hours vary depending on rides, vet calls, and other chores to be done throughout the day. Should no one be immediately available in the office, we ask that you please leave a message. We are usually able to return missed calls within the hour.

*Thank you for you interest in Country Trails & Riding School. We look forward to fostering your passion not just for horseback riding, but for horses as a whole.*

