



International Horsemanship Association

Requirements for Professional Practitioner Recommendation

January 31, 2019

Thank you for your interest in becoming an IHA Recommended Practitioner. The IHA, applying standards as defined by the Grades of Horsemanship (GOH), will recommend practitioners who demonstrate exceptional understanding of horse psychology, healthy biomechanics, and Relationship-Based Horsemanship.

The IHA defines Practitioners as those professionals whose responsibility is caring for horses and for those who partner with horses during the course of their business. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Farriers and Hoof Care Specialists
- Veterinarian
- Professional Grooms
- Therapists
- Life Coaches

To Become a Recommended Practitioner:

- **Join the IHA** by becoming a member in any of the following categories:
 - Digital
 - Hard Copy
 - Professional
 - Lifetime
- **Submit completed application**, along with the additional materials listed and assessment fee.

Special Discount: *The IHA will waive the normal \$325 fee for application processing and Ground Skills assessment for the first 30 IHA professional members who apply for recommended status. If you are not ready to submit the total application but would like to take advantage of the special offer, you may still do so. You have 365 days from sending in a completed application document and payment to provide your videos and other requested documents.*

*Once your application has been approved and you are or have upgraded your IHA membership to Practitioner or Lifetime Member, you will **receive all the benefits** associated with IHA Recommended Practitioner membership status.*

What You Need to Know

You must complete the minimum Ground skills requirement to be considered a Recommended Professional Practitioner. The ability to perform these movements indicates that you know how to handle your client's horses safely.

The Relationship-Based Horsemanship skills that are tested will nurture your partnership with your equine clients and co-workers.

Minimum Ground Skills Grade 2 required for recommendation.

Submission of any or all of the other five skill sets is totally optional and will only add to your credentials as a knowledgeable equine professional.

- Applicants must be 18 years of age or older.
- Fees:
 - Application processing and Ground Skills assessment - - - - - \$325
(Fee waived for initial 30 Professional Member applicants)
 - Assessment of Additional (Optional) Skill Sets: - - - - - - - - \$45
(Maximum fee for all 5 remaining skill sets will be \$225).
- The fee is payable by credit card or PayPal at the time the application document is submitted to the IHA. Applications will not be assessed until payment is received.
- All applicants submitting a completed application will receive comments and a recommendation (approval and/or areas to improve) within 45 days of receipt by the IHA of the complete application.
- If the application is not approved, it may be re-submitted once within 180 *days* of the IHA's response without additional fee.

Requirements for Recommended Practitioner Application Include:

1. **Signed IHA Equine Professional application** document which includes signed IHA Code of Ethics. This document may be completed and signed online or printed and mailed to IHA.
2. **Two video submissions:** All professionals interested in being recommended *must submit the Ground Skills skill set first*. All other skill set submissions are optional, and may be completed at any time. Additional skill sets may be

submitted at the same time as the ground skill assessment if desired. However, if ground skills do not meet the required level, the other skill sets will not be assessed until the ground skill assessment is passed. Submit only one skill set per video please. Each video shall be 5-10 minutes in length, maximum of 10 minutes.

- **Video 1: Ground Skills:** In the video, the professional maintains the leadership role and uses appropriate phases in all movements.
- **Video 2: Session with student/client/horse** portraying the normal course of your business. Please do not exceed a time limit of 5-10 minutes, and follow this Format:
 - Introduce yourself, the student, and/or the horse.
 - Briefly explain the topic you will demonstrate in the video.
 - Show the topic with explanation of the steps and discuss your next plan of action.

3. **Photograph of applicant (may include equine partner) with a minimum of 5 X 7 at 300 dpi resolution.**
4. **2 letters of reference from professionals in the horse industry who appreciate your talents.**
5. **3 letters of reference from students or clients (over 18 years old).**
6. **Liability release form utilized in your business.**
7. **Proof of \$1,000,000 (USD) professional liability insurance coverage.**
Once approved, the professional must submit proof of IHA being named as additionally insured in the liability insurance policy.

Please note that the International Horsemanship Association reserves the right to reject or revoke recommendations based on unsafe or inhumane interactions with horses.

Ground Skills

Required for all applicants

Show the movements using one rope/line at least 10' long attached to a halter or cavesson. A stick is allowed. Bits are not allowed. Showing these tasks will give you an eventual assessment to Grade 2 of the GOH. This is an approximation until the GOH is completed.

Goal of Ground Skills: To develop trust, understanding, and strengthen the horse/human bond. To create the situation where the horse is eager to respond to the human's request.

Overall Quality: Horse and human show mutual understanding and enjoyment and work together in a positive manner.

Attributes of the Horse: The horse must be happy, relaxed, confident, athletic, responsive to subtle cues without pulling on the rope, and must be focused on the human.

Attributes of the Human: Stays in appropriate position. Maintains horse's confidence and rewards effort. Has positive focus to achieve goal with a minimum of physical effort. Is competent and fair in use of tools. Recovers easily from errors.

These movements can be completed in any order:

1. Point at each hoof and horse should hold the hoof up for 3-5 seconds.
2. Yield the FQ (fore quarters) 365° by touch both directions.
3. Yield the HQ (hindquarters) 365° with energy (no touch) both directions.
4. Show the horse is confident with flag or stick waving.
5. Sidepass 20ft using the fence both directions 45-90°.
6. Walk, trot circles both directions, human remains relaxed and not nagging horse.
7. Trot a figure 8.
8. Lead horse at a walk, trot, stop and back up on a loose rope.
9. Jump a small jump (18").
10. Horse to stand 2 feet on a pedestal, bridge, or 2 feet in a tire, or load in a trailer.
11. Scratch horse in a place he enjoys.