

# Markland Rules For Using Horses

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In order to ride with us (and at any official Markland event) a potential horse rider combination must qualify to demonstrate their ability to perform safely in an event environment. This test is based on observation of the horse/rider combination to perform basic riding tasks as well as a general suitability of the horse for public events where unexpected things can happen.

There are two levels of qualification that may be attained: One is a general level qualification allowing a costumed rider to participate in events with their horse. This level of qualification is called "parade". The more advanced qualification is for a rider outfitted in armor. This advanced qualification is called "battle".

The medieval horse guild has a group of experienced members with experience in evaluating the skill, temperament and demands placed on horse and rider at events. If an individual wishes to ride at events, the rider will be asked to mount and ride in the costume and tack that they intend to attend events in. The horse and rider has to demonstrate riding at different gaits and performing various maneuvers. After witnessing a test the horse qualifier will discuss with the rider how well the horse and rider performed. If need be, a second horse qualifier may be asked for advice. If a horse and rider has difficulty above a certain level of performance, they may be restricted to certain types of costume, gaits, etc...

In addition to making certain horses and their riders acceptable to the medieval horse guild requires that all horses brought to events be current on all shots, have a valid coggins test with them (or on file for that year), and be properly cared for when at events.

As equestrians we believe that the welfare of the animal is paramount. While we do not aggressively police people at events, we expect that all individuals associated with horses behave as a responsible adult. This is a common ethic all individuals who work with and care for animals should have.

There are two types of qualifications in the Medieval Horse Guild - parade and battle.

Parade qualified riders can ride in parades or at any non-combat Markland event. To become parade qualified, a rider and horse must pass the following tests:

1. Trot or jog a serpentine around four or more designated objects. (This demonstrates the rider's ability to direct the horse.)
2. Canter three figure eights. (This demonstrates the rider's ability to control the horse at a faster gait.)
3. Stop within 40-50 feet from a gallop. (This demonstrates the rider's ability to stop the horse quickly.)

Battle qualified riders can ride in battles, fight with foot soldiers, and participate in events which require weapons. To become battle qualified, a horse and rider must pass the following tests:

1. All parade qualification tests.
2. Tack up the horse. (This demonstrates the rider's familiarity with the horse's gear.)
3. Mount and dismount in battle garb. (This demonstrates the rider's ability to dismount and remount as necessary during an event.)
4. Ride past a shield wall and throw a javelin. (This demonstrates the willingness of the horse to ride past a line of fighters.)
5. Ride past and strike a target with a javelin or sword. (This demonstrates the willingness of the horse to approach a target.)
6. Control the horse during battle conditions (weapons being beat on shields, warriors shouting, banners flying, etc.). (This demonstrates how well the horse reacts to the noise and confusion of a battle.)

## Markland Medieval Mercenary Militia

Battle qualified riders must be at least age 16 (with parental approval) or 18 (without approval) since battle qualification requires handling a weapon.

Qualifiers may place restrictions on a horse/rider, such as type of tack used, requiring supervision while riding (for young riders), etc.

A rider must be a member of the Medieval Horse Guild in order to become parade or battle qualified.

A rider must be qualified on each horse that they wish to ride at an event. The only exceptions are:

1. They are taking the test to become qualified on that horse
2. The event is a Horse War
3. They are being led around on that horse.

All Horse Guild members may ride any horse at a Horse War since this is where we practice to become qualified as well as do general riding which does not require qualification.

To become a Horse Guild Qualifier, you must pass the following tests:

1. Be a member of the Medieval Horse Guild.
2. Become parade qualified.
3. Become battle qualified.
4. Participate in parades and battles and demonstrate your mastery of these skills.
5. Be voted as a qualifier by the majority of the members attending a Horse Guide Meeting.