

## BASIC CLOTHING:

After the first few lessons, and once riders are independently going around the arena, we require all riders to have their own helmet, gloves and boots. We also strongly recommend riders to have breeches or jodhpur pants for practice.

**Helmets:** Helmet requirements vary across the country, many shows require them at the tournament and academy level, and while they aren't worn as often in performance, the rules state that a rider will not be penalized for wearing a helmet. While not required, helmets are strongly recommended for all lesson students. Some popular brands include the Ovation Deluxe Schooling helmet (\$60), the Charles Owen Hampton Helmet (\$200), and the Troxel Duratec (\$75). The most important thing when purchasing a helmet is to make sure it fits properly and is an ASTM/SEI Certified riding helmet (not a bike helmet). A poorly-fitting helmet can cause serious problems. When you have the helmet on, it should not be possible to pull it down over the eyes. We recommend helmets that have adjustment in the back so that they will fit any head and will grow with your child. Please do not purchase a used helmet – as the history is not disclosed and therefore they are no longer certified. If a helmet has been in an accident, a new helmet must be purchased. Just like with car seats, damage is often not noticeable, but it can no longer protect the rider sufficiently.



*L-R: Charles Owen Hampton, Ovation Deluxe Schooling and Troxel Duratec*

**Boots:** We suggest tennis shoes for the first few lessons, or another closed-toe shoe with a small heel. Cowboy boots are not functional for saddle seat riding, as it does not allow the rider to get their heel down, or their foot in the proper position. Riding boots can be purchased for a reasonable fee at local stores or online. Black Jodhpur Boots (often called paddock boots) are what saddle seat riders wear both in lessons and in the show ring.

Traditionally, they come in a lace-up and zip option in many different brands. Prices range from about \$50-\$150 for new boots, depending on brand and quality. Boots may also be purchased on consignment.



*Ariat Zip Paddock Boot*



**Gloves:** In the beginning it can be hard to learn how to properly hold the reins, and young children often complain that their hands will hurt after riding (usually it is because they are ‘over-gripping’ the reins and actually holding them too tightly, causing their hands to cramp). Gloves can be purchased inexpensively and will really help the rider grip the reins (think how baseball players wear gloves to bat). It is also a good practice to wear them every time they ride, as they are required for competitions. Leather riding gloves are preferred, as they will grip leather reins the best and will mold to your rider’s hand, becoming broken-in and very comfortable. Most practice gloves are in the \$30 and under range. For competitions, black (or coordinating color) gloves are required.

*Top: Hartmeyer Long Leather Show Glove. Bottom: SSG Leather Riding Glove*

**Jodhpur Pants:** Saddle seat riders wear Kentucky Jodhpurs. This is a style of pant that has a ‘bell’ at the bottom and a tie-down or underpass (elastic strap) that goes underneath the boot and helps hold the pants down so they don’t ride up the leg (which is uncomfortable and rubs the leg). The basic style is a polyester jod in black. Jods should be plenty long and go well below the heel of the boot - when they are off the horse it is proper practice to turn the bell up at the bottom so they don’t walk on them. Many lesson riders will ride in **bootcut breeches** for lessons; these are typically for hunt seat riding and are more stretchy leggings with knee patches. Breeches are acceptable for practice, however will not be permitted for competitions. There are many brands of Kentucky Jodhpur pants and prices range from \$50-\$250. Some popular brands include, Kerrits Bootcut Breeches, Ovation Jodhpur Pants, Lucky Jods, Mod Jods, American Jodhpur Company, Hartmeyer Saddlery Jodhpurs, and custom options including Becker Brothers. These can also be purchased on consignment.



*L: Kerrits bootcut breeches R: Ovation Jods (shown too short for competition).*