



### CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE BUYING

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With donkeys often living in to their 30s buying a donkey is a long term commitment and a sensible informed choice of donkey at this early stage will ensure years of happy donkey ownership. By ensuring you find a donkey that meets your requirements and that you are able to fully meet the donkey's needs, you have the best chance of avoiding the problems and difficulties that can come with buying an unsuitable donkey.

Before proceeding to buy a donkey ensure you have carefully considered the requirements for keeping donkeys and identified the most suitable breed, age, sex and level of handling for your situation, not just at present, but also for 5 or 10 years' time. The Donkey Sanctuary recommends that donkeys live with other suitable donkeys and separating bonded pairs can be detrimental to the donkeys' health. So you should ensure that you will have two donkeys to keep each other company.

More information on the care of donkeys can be found in the Donkey Sanctuary's Donkey Care Guide, the Sanctuary Website or on the Sanctuary's Donkey Care Training courses and DVDs.

### CHECKLIST - THE BEST WAY TO AVOID PROBLEMS WHEN BUYING A DONKEY IS TO ENSURE YOU FOLLOW THESE STEPS:

Always meet the donkey at least once before you commit to buy. Never buy "unseen" through the Internet or advertisements in papers, magazines etc.

Before you visit a donkey make sure you have a very clear, written down, idea of what will best suit you and your environment and what you have to offer the animal. This helps stop unsuitable emotional purchases.

Always take another person with you to act as a witness, preferably an experienced donkey owner or consult your local Donkey Welfare Advisor.

When you meet the donkey make sure you at least catch the donkey both in the stable and in a larger area, lead them around, groom and pick up all four feet.

Make a list of questions, in advance, to ask the seller about the physical and behaviour traits of the donkeys they are selling. Ask lots of questions about the history and behaviour of the animal, what training and handling they have received and health problems they have experienced.

If you have any doubts about the behaviour of the animal ask to see the seller handle the animal and be prepared to visit them again another day, before making a final decision.

Be prepared to walk away from donkeys that are not suitable for you and your level of experience.

Don't let emotions cloud your judgment, which is why we recommend taking another experienced person with you. This is a long term commitment and you want to give the right donkey the right home.

Be prepared to walk away from donkeys that are not suitable for you and your level of experience. It is important you can give a long term home to a donkey whose company you can safely enjoy.

If you are buying a pedigree or miniature donkey which could be extremely expensive, consider seeking the services of a Vet to check your prospective purchase.

Get confirmation in writing from the vendor that confirms the donkey is what they say it is.

Passports - it is an offence to sell, buy, export, slaughter for human consumption and use for the purposes of competition or breeding any equine which does not have a passport. The passport should remain with the animal for its lifetime.

### **BUYING FROM A DEALER:**

The Sale of Goods Act applies only if you buy an equine from a person classified as a 'dealer'. Buying from a dealer can offer the best protection.

If you find your donkey has a problem, making him unsuitable for the purpose you bought him, you're entitled to your money back – even if the dealer denies knowledge.

Reputable dealers will agree in writing to take a donkey back if it has a physical or behavioral problem and either refund the purchase price or offer an exchange. Don't let the dealer take the donkey back to sell it on your behalf. You, and not the dealer, could be sued by the next owner if you fail to disclose a problem.

If there's a problem, act straight away. The longer you leave it, the more you risk losing your right to a full refund, although you'll still be able to claim damages.

### **THE SALE OF GOODS ACT IMPLIES CERTAIN CONDITIONS OF SALE – YOUR 'STATUTORY RIGHTS'. THESE ARE:**

The donkey must be of 'reasonable' or 'satisfactory' quality – for instance, free of defects such as lameness – unless you have prior knowledge and accept the condition.

The donkey must be fit for the purpose for which it was generally sold, or any purpose made known at the time of the agreement.

He must be 'as described'. If your new eight-year-old turns out to be over 18, it's a breach of trading standards.

If one or all of these criteria are not met, you may be entitled to a full refund or the difference in value between the donkey you thought you were buying and the one you got.

### **BUYING PRIVATELY**

Buying privately is a different matter. The law 'caveat emptor' (let the buyer beware) exists. If the donkey has a problem, you must be able to prove the seller knew, or ought to have known, about it in order for you to get a refund. And suing for breach of contract can be difficult, lengthy and costly.

It is very important to follow the check list above to minimize the risk of buying an suitable donkey

Contact the Donkey Sanctuary Welfare Department who are always happy to provide help and advice if you are considering buying a donkey.

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### **THE DONKEY SANCTUARY**

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The Donkey Sanctuary was founded by Dr Elisabeth Svendsen MBE in 1969.

The Donkey Sanctuary (registered charity number 264818) and its sole corporate trustee, The Donkey Sanctuary Trustee Limited (Company number 07328588) both have their registered office at Slade House Farm, Sidmouth, EX10 0NU.

Incorporating: The Elisabeth Svendsen Trust for Children and Donkeys (EST); The International Donkey Protection Trust (IDPT).

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**WORKING WORLDWIDE**