

# SCA Equestrian Activity Information for the Autocrat

You are going to organize an Event. You have called upon your local group, your Barony and your closest friends to help. Somewhere along the process of enlisting help for all the things we do in the SCA, someone suggests "Wouldn't it be cool to have horses?" For most autocrats, the first question is "How?"

It is the purpose of this article to explain the proper procedures that must be followed, according to SCA and Midrealm rules, but mostly to define the needs of the Equestrians to participate, and to keep the 'surprises' at minimum and the event safe for horse and rider.

**Step 1** - Contact the Kingdom Equestrian Officer (KEO) of the Middle Kingdom - contact information is listed in the Pale and at the Midrealm website. Do not think that just because you have talked to a local equestrian or marshal that you can have Equestrian activities at your event. Provide the KEO with all event information. Location, dates, contacts (both SCA and site owner). This MUST happen at least 90 days before the event date.

**Step 2** - The KEO will arrange for a site inspection (details of what we are looking for will follow later in this missive). The event autocrat and a representative of the site should be present. This ensures everyone knows what to expect.

**Step 3** - You will be informed (usually at the inspection) if the site and event are approved for Equestrian Activities. Once approved, an Equestrian Marshal in Charge / or an Equestrian Steward will be assigned, and coordination of what preparations are needed from the site owners and event staff will begin.

**Step 4** - VERY IMPORTANT - Activate the SCA-required Equestrian Insurance. This must be completed at least 30 days prior to the event, or a substantial late fee is charged. Please see the SCA [Insurance page](#) for certificate ordering instructions, current fees, and other information.

The Equestrian Marshal or Steward will take care of almost everything else. Event websites and flyers should list this person as the contact for Equestrian participants, and if all goes well you'll have a safe and exciting event that will have that added medieval feel of the horse.

**Site requirements** - Number one is "Will the site owner allow horses?" If not, the rest is moot.

**Space** - Two issues - the list field, and adequate parking for trailers.

The list field must at least 60 by 120 feet (this small of an area would limit the types of games). Ideal would be 90 by 240 feet. Footing must be firm, consistent, free of debris, voids and as level as possible.

Fenced areas, such as paddocks or riding rings, are the best places to hold the games. If no fencing exists, then list ropes or another type of sturdy boundary is necessary. The equestrian list area must be CLEARLY marked, and evident to any gentle in the area that they are entering a horse area. Is there an alternate location if footing gets too wet?

If flagging a grass field it important to let the site owners know that the field will be left with divots and much of the grass may be trodden down.

**Parking** - Truck and trailers can range from small to large. A small vehicle and 2 horse trailer will take up about 30 feet of space, while some crew cab trucks hauling a large multi horse trailer will need upwards of 60 feet. In any case the parking must be firm ground that is unaffected by foul weather. The parking should be close to the list area.

**Stalls / Stables** - Are there stalls available at the site or near the site? If so, what are the fees? Some will waive the fee providing the stall is clean when we leave. Is there bedding on site? Today the most common is sawdust or pine shavings. Stalls are not required as many of us will camp with our horse, by tying to trailer, running a picket line or fencing a paddock using electric fencing (are picket lines or step-in posts allowed and/or feasible?).

**"What's that smell?"** - What is to be done with the manure? While horse manure is an excellent fertilizer, most people have great objections to leaving it in their yard, roads and driveways. Courteous equestrians will pick it up, but what to do with it then? Is there someplace to dump, spread or are we expected to haul it out?

**Water** - The average horse can consume up to 20 gallons of water a day. More on hot arid days. It is extremely important that an adequate water supply be close to the area that the horses are kept. An added bonus would be if there is a location to 'hose down' the horses, especially during hot weather.

**Veterinary services** - Is there a local Veterinarian available to be on call? You cannot assume that the local vet will care for horses, or 'large animal vets' do either. Call and confirm.

Equestrian activities have been held in many types of situations. From official arenas and stables , to wide-open fields. The type of activity you are looking for will dictate the site requirements. For instance, if you simply want to have a procession and nothing more, very little is needed other than the insurance, a marshal, and someone willing to bring their horses for your use. The above are things we will be looking for, when considering having 'full scale Equine Activity'.

This lists is neither complete, nor absolute. Contact your Regional Equestrian Marshal or the KEO with any questions that you may have.

THL Timotheous Symmes  
Pentemere Regional Equestrian Marshal

