



American Haflinger Registry

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First Time Buyer Tips

Welcome to the wonderful world of Haflingers. If you are thinking about buying your first Haflinger and want to make sure that the pedigree is in order, here are a few items to check before handing over your hard-earned money. If you are buying from a current AHR member you should expect all of the items listed below to be in order.

Ask the owner to show you the original pedigree. AHR pedigrees are printed on green marbled paper in a horizontal format, with a gold logo in the upper left corner.

First, turn the pedigree over and look at the drawing of the horse's face on the back. Pull the forelock back on the horse and make sure the drawing matches the face. If the pedigree gives the description as a "blaze narrow" and this horse has a star, you have a problem. (The descriptions are under the horse's name on the front of the pedigree.) In cases where the drawing is similar but not close enough, we can pull foal registration photos and compare them. In some cases, inaccurate drawings could result from a poor quality or fuzzy registration photo where we made our best educated guess. Sometimes we have a good clear photo and our drawing matches pretty well. On rare occasions, a face will change as the horse gets older, but usually there is some tell-tale unique portion of the marking that will confirm it is the same horse.

Next, look to make sure the person selling you the horse is the recorded owner. If the seller is the first owner of the horse, that name will be on the front of the pedigree in the lower left corner. Once the horse has been sold for the first time, all other owners will be recorded on the back. Check to make sure the person selling you the horse is the last typed name on the back. (There will be a signature, but the signature is signed by an AHR staff person, not an owner.)

Sometimes the seller will provide a signed transfer from the previous owner (skipping themselves as owner). Be aware that AHR will not accept skipping transfers. The chain of ownership must be kept intact. This may necessitate a double transfer – one from the recorded owner to the person you are buying the horse from and one from that person to you. Since the previous transfer was not recorded at the time of sale, there will also be a late penalty on that transfer. Be sure to negotiate who pays the transfer fees up front. AHR rules state that the seller pays the transfer, however, that is often negotiated between buyer and seller at the time of sale.

Please understand that not allowing the skipping of transfers protects the recorded owner. For example, I sell a horse because I have decided that it is too exuberant for my children to ride. I disclose everything I know to the prospective buyer. I sign a transfer and hand it to the buyer along with the pedigree assuming that they will send it in to have the ownership record updated. However, they don't complete the transfer and instead, hand the transfer with my signature on it to the next person, who by the way, was told by the seller that "this mare is a real babysitter." You can see how this could create liability issues. I know of one case where the "seller" was contacted for more information. It turns out that he was not the seller at all and asked us not to complete the transfer to the unknown buyer because he didn't know how the horse had been presented to the buyer, or anything that had happened to the horse in the year since he had actually sold it, and he wasn't willing to take that responsibility. This should also be a heads up to sellers and explains the reason AHR asks that the seller send in the transfer. That way you, as a seller, know that the transfer has been completed and the horse is no longer recorded in your name.

If the horse you are considering buying is a bred mare, here are a few items to consider. First, was the mare at least 3 years of age before she was bred? If she was bred before January 1st of her 3 year old year, the foal will not be able to be registered. Second, was the mare bred to a current, fully licensed AHR breeding stallion? AHR stallions must be licensed, DNA tested, and annual renewal fees paid before offspring can be registered. If so, the seller must provide a breeding certificate, signed by both the owners of the mare and stallion at the time of breeding. Third, the seller must be able to provide proof of DNA testing for the mare. Transfer of ownership cannot be completed on bred mares until DNA testing is, at a minimum, submitted for processing.

If the horse you are considering is not yet AHR registered, but the seller assures you that he is “registerable”, beware. AHR rules state that only the owner of the mare at the time of foaling can register a foal. That means that if the seller intends for you to register the horse, he must present you with the signed application for registration, the signed breeding certificate and a signed transfer of ownership for that horse. If the horse is a filly, or a stud colt that is the result of AI with transported or frozen semen, or if the foal was not registered by December 31st of its birth year, DNA testing with parentage proof will be required in order to complete the registration. That means that both the sire and dam must already have DNA testing on file in order to parentage proof the foal. Also, any registration not completed in the year of the horse’s birth, will incur additional late penalties, so registration fees may be significant.

If everything checks out okay and the seller hands you the pedigree and the transfer, do one last check. Make sure that the transfer application has been signed correctly. If the horse is registered in the names of joint owners, then you need two separate signatures, one from each owner. The only exception to that is if the names are separated by an “or” rather than “and”. Example, if the ownership record states “John and Mary Smith”, then your transfer should have one signature from John Smith and a second signature from Mary Smith. We can’t accept one person signing “ John and Mary Smith”. If the ownership record states “John or Mary Smith”, then either signature would suffice.

If you are buying a horse and you want to put the ownership record in the name of a minor child or grandchild, then we also need some additional information. We need to know the birth date of the child in order to determine when that child becomes legal age of 18. If the horse is sold, a minor owner cannot sign the transfer of ownership. This must be done by a parent or guardian. We would need to know who that person is at the time of the original transfer. We also request that any adult that is not the legal guardian of the minor child and that is listing the name of that child as owner of a horse, please also send documentation that proves that the parent or legal guardian of the child knows it is being done.

Hopefully the buying of your first (or your tenth) Haflinger will be an enjoyable experience, unmarred by paperwork snafus. If you have any questions about registration or transfer, please call the knowledgeable staff at the AHR office at 330-784-000 or send an email to secretary@haflingerhorse.com