

Horse Identification



If your horse went missing could you prove he belonged to you?

Horses are reported missing and stolen every week in Australia. Some are adventurous and escape their paddocks, others get loose during natural disasters and end up kilometres from home. Others are stolen.

If this happened to your horse could you prove to authorities that he is yours? If you found out your missing horse was at the local pound or saw him advertised at a local sale, could you prove to council ranger or saleyard manager that he was your horse?

There are a number of things you can do to be prepared in case your horse does go missing. Collect the information together and keep it in a safe place.

Formal identification – Registration, branding and microchipping

Breed or association registration is a good way to formally identify your horse and it means that you and your horse's details are kept at a separate location which is useful in cases where you lose your copies of ID.

Most societies and associations also ask for branding or microchipping of horses.

Even if you don't belong to a society you can still choose to have your horse branded or microchipped. This creates a traceable identity linked to you.

Ask your vet for information about branding and microchipping.

DNA

Although rarely used outside of breed societies, DNA is a useful way to prove a horse is who you say it is. When it comes down to proving that chestnut horse A is yours and chestnut horse B is not, DNA can help. Your vet will be able to help with finding a lab to record the sample.

You can also pull some of your horse's hair and keep it in a zip lock bag along with his other records.

Photos

Take good clear photos of your horse from each side and front and back. Take close up photos of any unique whorls or scars. Keep the photos in a safe place.

Horse Identity Chart

Download and fill out our Horse Identity Chart. Make sure to fill in as many details as possible. In the case of your horse wandering or being stolen you can provide copies of the chart to local rangers, police and saleyards to assist them with quick identification of your horse.

Keeping Records

Keep all your records together. This can include microchip certificate, registration papers, sales contract / sales receipt, photos, DNA papers, photographs, hair sample, Horse Identification Chart, etc. It is wise to keep more than one copy and keep them in a separate location.

You can also scan everything and save it online in “cloud storage” (Like Google Drive, free with gmail accounts). This is useful in case of natural disaster and means you can access your records from anywhere.

If your horse goes missing:

- Notify your local council ranger, the police and saleyards. Provide them with a copy of your Horse Identity Chart so they can quickly and easily identify your horse.
- Create a Missing Horse flier and make sure you include clear photos and your horse's details such as height, colour, sex, age and unique markings (scars, whorls etc). Also make sure you put your contact details! Put the fliers out in the local area – feed and saddlery stores, pony club, etc.
- Make a digital copy of your Missing Horse poster and share it in online groups and websites.