

# What is Western Riding?

Western Riding is extremely versatile and fun with something for everyone! Whether you enjoy a relaxing trail ride, the speed of barrel racing, the precision of competitive trail courses, the thrill of working cattle or the excitement of a sliding stop in reining – western riding is for you! It is a style of riding that is very easy to learn the basics but which requires tremendous skill and dedication to master at its highest level.

There are a wide variety of disciplines associated with western riding but for the main part they all refer back to the skills that cowboys had to use in the course of their daily work.

Because the daily work of rounding, sorting, branding and caring for cattle usually to happen on the open plains, cowboys needed a quick, nimble and intelligent horse that could reach top speed quickly, stop on a dime, and change direction in an instant. The horse needed to be controlled mostly by legs and weight, ridden with only one hand and a light touch on the reins so that cowboy's attention could also be on their tasks.

Since the cowboys were required to work long hours in the saddle, their equipment needed to be as safe and comfortable as possible. Therefore, the western saddle has a horn, high cantle and deep seat to provide the most comfort over long hours in the saddle over rough terrain.

Today, we do not have the same lifestyle as the cowboys out in the vast plains but the type of horse, training and events of today all relate back to these roots. There are numerous competitions for the western rider. Some of the main events, just to mention a few are: reining, pleasure, cutting, trail, team penning, halter, horsemanship, showmanship, barrel racing, pole bending, flag race and trail riding. There are events from beginner to advanced and from recreational riding to competition.

Western Riding is well established in North America and is now taking the world by storm! One of its disciplines, the fast and exciting sport of reining, is now included in the World Equestrian Games and it is hoped to be included in the 2012 Olympics!

Here at B'N'R Stables we provide a strong start, both in and out of the saddle for all types of western riding. Our students all have different goals and dreams and we work to provide the knowledge, skills and support to reach these goals. Some students come once a year for their special week at camp, and others have become champions at various horse competitions. We recognize the incredible gift horses are and provide the best care and training possible, respecting their needs along with ours.