



Horseback Riding for Arm Amputees

Horseback riding is an exciting and therapeutic activity that many amputees enjoy but they may need some adjustments or adaptations to ride comfortably and safely. Researching riding schools in your area to find trained instructors who have taught persons with unique needs is a good idea.

Adaptations to the reins may be necessary for arm amputees to assist with guiding the horse and for balance and safety reasons. A prosthetist made a custom spatula device (aka. opposition post – see Image 1) for one amputee so that she could easily hold the reins. One CHAMP graduate and her mother made modifications to the reins – they purchased two sets of reins and punched holes in one set and made leather loops with the other set which fit into the punched holes (see Image 2). The final rein ended up with three loops to help her quickly and easily change the length of the reins as she was riding.

Things to check:

- Fenced or indoor rings are ideal.
- Horses or ponies with a quiet and even temperament.
- Instructors should always be in attendance for beginners to help with leading and side walking.
- Instructors with experience in teaching amputees.
- Helmets with chin straps are essential.
- Special equipment such as hand holds, Devonshire boots, halter leads, and a safety belt for the rider's waist that a side walker can hold.

Resources:

- CanTRA – Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association, have many accredited members across Canada – www.cantra.ca – E mail: ctr@golden.net, Tel: (519) 767-0700.



Image 1

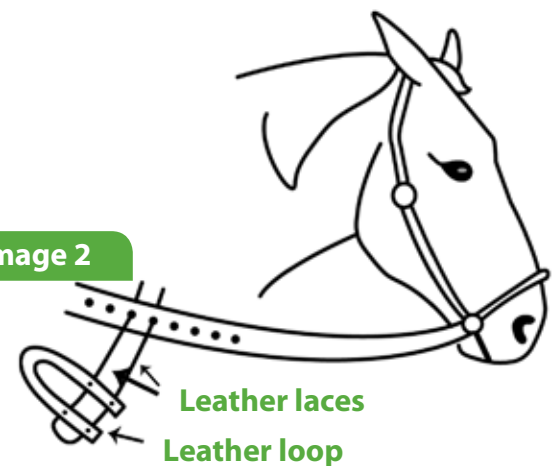


Image 2