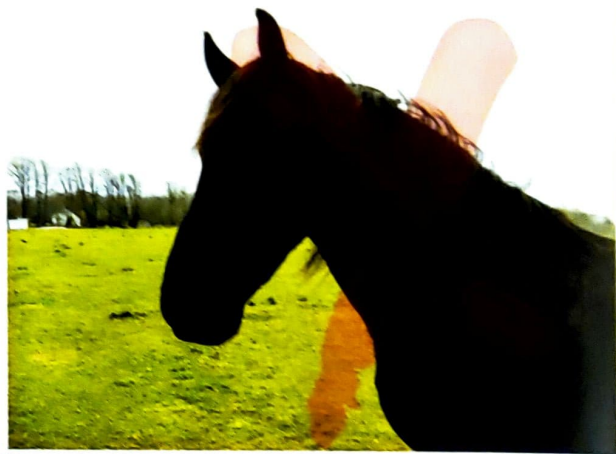


Setting Yourself Up For Success Photographing Your Adult Horse

**Making and Choosing Photos of Your
Mare, Stallion or Gelding That Will Stand
Out in an Ad**

**By Lori Ann Thwing
MomentsByLoriAnn.com**

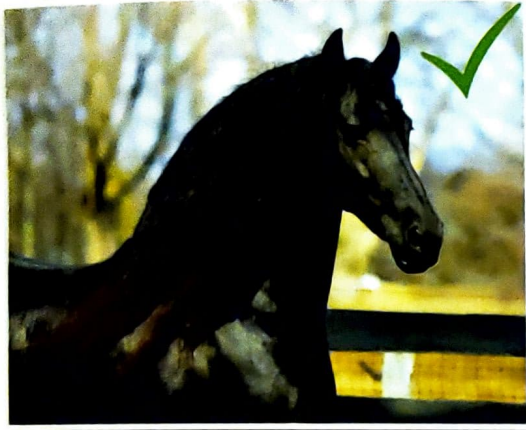


There are many different reasons to sell your adult horse, from downsizing your herd to wanting to help them reach their fullest potential with a different owner. Powerful photos that represent your horse well in your advertisement can help make that sale.

The right photos can attract clients to your ad and help you get the price you are asking while the wrong ones can make potential buyers look elsewhere.

With a little prep work and the correct photos, your ad will stand out and get attention.

“Breathtaking,” “stunning,” “regal” and “magnificent,” are just a few of the words commonly used to describe the Friesian horse. Capturing and conveying that in a photo appropriate for a sale advertisement can be a challenge. With some planning and preparation, you can create an ad that will show potential buyers what your horse has to offer.



DO take photos under a clear sky.



DO keep the back and foreground clear.



DO stand back and zoom up, keeping the camera level with the shoulder. Sometimes photos have to be taken on a cloudy day, keep the sun to your back to make the most of what light you have.

When, Where and How

When: Most Friesian horses have at least some fading or red highlights so taking photos during the hour before sunset and after sunrise brings out the copper tones in hair and can make an already faded horse look orange. Also avoid the sun being directly overhead, which leads to dark shadows and harsh lighting. Full sun without clouds is best to give enough light to capture movement clearly and show good muscle definition under that black coat.

Where: Choose a flat area with low grass and nothing distracting in the back or foreground. A pasture the horse has never been in can help get them excited and have more animated movement. Be sure to stand back and zoom in to keep the horse's proportions accurate.

How: Use a good digital camera for better quality and to capture motion more clearly. If using a cellphone camera, stand back and zoom in to help avoid distortion. Have a couple people with can/plastic bottles with rocks, plastic bags, to get your horse moving. They can also be used to get attention for ears forward in a conformation photo. Always keep the sun at your back and take the photo with your camera level with the horse's shoulder and aim straight or slightly up.



DON'T take photos during the Golden Hour or high noon.



DON'T have anything in the pasture that can be in the way.



DON'T get too close, distorting the horse's proportions.

Setting up for success includes not only knowing when, where and how to photograph your horse but what types of photos you will need to make and choose for your advertisement.



DO have your horse stand straight and look alert with a soft eye.



DO present a pleasingly arched or upright neck, and mane.

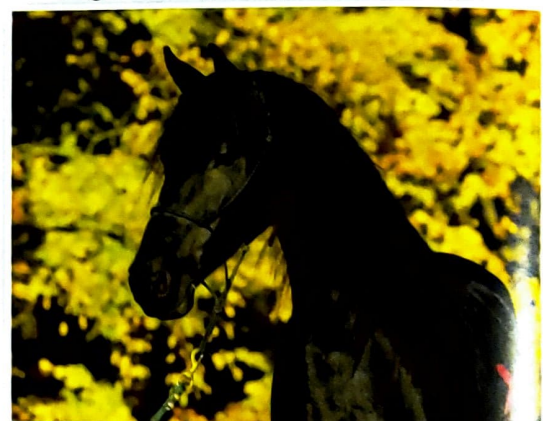


DO watch for a lowered hind end showing impulsion, animated joints and collection.

Conformation: Friesians tend to lean forward when they stand. To avoid accentuating this walk them forward and back until they stop with the front leg closest to the camera slightly forward of the other front leg. Having the back leg closest to the camera slightly behind the other back leg shows off the hip nicely. Have someone help get their ears forward and eyes open and alert.



DON'T let your horse lean forward or bring their legs too far under them.



DON'T misrepresent the shape of the neck. Her neck and body look thin.

Trot 1: This is a two-beat gait impulsion and suspension. During the impulsion beat, the trot should show power from the hindquarters and an uphill movement. The front leg and the hind leg should ideally match.



DON'T forget the hind leg or leg symmetry.

Always start with a clean horse, whether they are freshly bathed or brushed. Some horses are tender after having farrier work done, so wait a week to get photos. Spraying with a shine enhancer can help define muscles and show off a healthy coat and mane.



DO capture the moment of suspension with height and symmetry. If the horse is being shown under saddle, use this time to take these photos. The best lighting may not be possible due to class time.



Canter: This gait should show the horse's strength and balance. The body should be upright and have tension in each leg with clear impulsion from behind.

DO show balance and tension, mane flying and an uphill motion and forward movement.

How Many: FHANA suggest to include 2-6 photos for their ads.

Breed Standard: Choose photos that highlight the ways the horse conforms to the breed standard which is located on the KFPS website along with the most current linear score sheets.

Reputation: The photos represent not only the horse but you, your farm, the sire, dam, their lineage and siblings as well as your trainer. Photos that poorly represent your horse can have far-reaching and unintended consequences.

Avoid bias: Other things in the photo can also send a message to buyers. Not only can things like broken fences and controversial fencing types be distracting, but they can make some people think twice about the safety of the area.

Ask a Professional: If the horse is trained under saddle or to drive in shows, consider asking a professional to ride/drive them for the photos. If the horse who is not well trained/ muscled/ balanced consider showing at liberty photos only.

In the End: The end goal is to have photos that represent the best aspects of your horse's movement, conformation and personality. No horse is perfect so by focusing on photos that highlight those positive attributes you will set yourself up for success and make an ad that will get attention.

If you decide to hire a professional photographer, make sure they have experience photographing horses. All photos were taken by me with a Nikon D7200 camera and a 70-220 lens.

Trot Suspension: For the suspension beat of the trot, all four legs are off the ground, symmetrical and the higher the better at liberty. Under saddle, legs should be straight and in the shape of an M. This beat can be a challenge to photograph so if you cannot capture it leave this beat out of your ad. (these two are different horses)



DON'T show asymmetrical legs, lack of balance, a hyperextended front hoof which can be a sign of an underdeveloped hind end, or only 3 hooves off the ground.



DON'T present a downhill or passive looking gait. This stallion seems to be hesitating, holding back the powerful canter he shows in the opposite photo.

