



AWHA Warmbloods are Winners!

Buying a Warmblood

Australian Warmblood Horse Association Limited

Are you about to venture into the purchase a Warmblood? If so, this brochure contains a few pointers that may assist you, particularly if this is your first experience with this breed.

What is a Warmblood?

A Warmblood is a riding horse bred for equestrian sports such as dressage, show jumping, eventing and driving. In other words, a performance horse. A review of world rankings shows that Warmblood horses clearly dominate in dressage, showjumping and eventing (www.wbfsh.org). If you want to be part of this success story, look for an Australian Warmblood Horse Association Limited (AWHA Ltd) horse.

The breeding population of the AWHA Ltd comprises all horses registered by the organisation and includes:

- Imported and Australian Warmbloods;
- Classified foundation mares of Warmblood, Thoroughbred, Anglo-Arabian or Warmblood/Arabian breeding;
- Progeny of performance tested stallions accredited by recognised overseas Warmblood organisations that may be conceived by artificial insemination using imported semen.

Approved Warmblood ancestry for AWHA Ltd pedigree purposes generally means descent from recognised European Warmblood breeds. The AWHA Ltd encompasses multiple Warmblood breeds, i.e. Oldenburg, Hanoverian, Selle Français, Dutch Warmblood, etc.

Rate of development and growth.



Warmbloods are generally large horses that develop slowly. They may not attain their full development until they are eight years old. Although some Warmbloods remain in proportion, others develop in many odd ways; some grow long in the body whilst some go through stages where the hindquarter is significantly higher than the forehand ('high behind'). In fact, they can be out of proportion in all kinds of odd ways. If you are looking at young horses you may find it a significant challenge to picture what the horse will be like when fully grown. Young foal photographs may provide a useful guide to what the horse looks like when it is in proportion.

The lack of proportion in the young horse significantly impacts their movement. The larger the horse, the more common late development is and some bloodlines are known to be slower to develop than others. This slow rate of growth may mean that breeders choose not to 'break in' their youngsters until they are four or five years old.

Breed societies and registration.

There is no legislation or regulation that controls the establishment of breed societies or registries in Australia. Anyone can choose to establish a breed society or registry and a number of people have. In Australia there are a number of registries and breed societies and it is important that you understand the distinctions between them and what that means with respect to the horses registered with that organisation and the reliability of their registration papers.

The AWHA Ltd is a registered company that must comply with ASIC requirements including the requirement for an annual audit. It is the oldest Warmblood breed society in Australia and is an 'A' class member of the World Breeding Federation for Sport Horses (www.wbfsh.org).

The AWHA Ltd is a breed society. It has stringent breeding guidelines that define the criteria that must be met before horses are accepted into the studbook. These guidelines include proven pedigrees, mare classification and stallion licensing and are designed to guide improvement in the breed. As such, not all mares or stallions presented will be accepted for breeding.



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Pedigree papers.



When you are buying a Warmblood the reliability of the pedigree or registration documents depends on the requirements of the registering body for parentage validation. If the horse isn't registered with a breed society or registry you are depending on the word of the seller. Equestrian Australia (EA) registration does not provide any assurance of parentage. EA accepts the parentage as submitted by the person registering the horse. There is no requirement for proof of parentage.

The robustness of registering organisations parentage validation processes is highly variable. It can range from dependence on the word of the breeder, the verification of the paper trail for the breeding of the mare through to DNA typing to both parents.

The requirement for registration with the AWHA Ltd includes a robust paper trail as well as, in some circumstances DNA typing. The actual process varies depending on whether the service was live service, shipped chilled semen or imported frozen semen. Registration of foals produced by embryo transfer also requires full verification.

Type of registration within studbooks.



Studbooks have different categories within them. When you are buying a Warmblood you need to ensure that the category in which the horse is registered will allow you to do the things you want to do with your horse. If you are buying a riding horse you may be interested in the eligibility of the horse for competing in specific types of events. For example, a horse must be registered with an organisation that is a member of the World Breeding Federation for Sport Horses to be eligible to compete at the World Young Horse Championships or eligibility for breed society competition awards.

If you are buying a mare or a breeding stallion ensure that it is classified or licensed, or satisfies the criteria to enable classification or licensing.

If you have any questions or concerns with the eligibility of the horse you are considering, for example, registration with the AWHA Ltd, acceptability for classification or licensing, please contact the AWHA Federal Registrar. The contact details are on the AWHA website: www.awha.com.au.

You will require the pedigree or the AWHA Ltd registration number of the horse for the registrar to be able to give you a definitive response.

For further information about the Australian Warmblood and the AWHA Ltd, please visit: www.awha.com.au

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