

# Horse Jobs

THERE are many types of horse, with various different attributes that make them useful for various jobs. Here are just a selection of jobs that horses might do....

## Working horses

For thousands of years, horses have been trained by humans to perform all sorts of tasks, from ploughing land to pulling to transport. Though many kinds of horses can be used as work horses, the extremely strong Draught horse is often used for jobs where physical power is needed, such as pulling and ploughing. Work horses need to be physically strong but also need to be steady and calm, and sometimes quick and agile, depending on their type of work.



Courtesy of Rosser1954

## Racing horses

Horses that race need to be fast. Some breeds of horse are faster than others and so are used for racing. The type of race will also determine which type of horse is run. Horses that race on a flat surface include Thoroughbreds, Quarter Horses and Arabian horses. Thoroughbreds are good at racing over jumps and Standardbred Horses are a breed that race while pulling a driver in a sulky (a two-wheeled vehicle).



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## Showjumping & Equestrian horses

Showjumping is a sport which involves jumping over various jumps, placed strategically around a stadium. Horses of all heights from ponies upwards are used for jumping over different sized courses, though ponies are more for the younger rider. Jumping horses need to have the courage to jump over great heights and also need to be able to move in spurts and turn quickly. Other equestrian sports, such as dressage and eventing also require horses that are strong and well disciplined.



Courtesy of Ronjimin CC BY 2.5

## Police horses

In certain situations, horses help the police. They can help with crowd control on city streets, when large groups of people congregate. Their size and height make the police more visible and act as a deterrent to crime and disorder. Mounted police are also used in parks and wilder areas, where police cars cannot reach. Ireland's Garda (or police) has a Mounted Support Unit and they choose horses that have suitable physical attributes and temperament for working in a busy environment. They also need to be brave and not become distressed if there is confrontation.



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## Horses for therapy

Horse riding therapy can be very beneficial for people, particularly for those with disabilities. It can help in many ways - the motion of the horse can increase flexibility, balance and muscle strength and working with a horse can also increase confidence, patience and self-esteem. Only certain horses are selected as therapeutic horses. The main traits necessary are a sweet temperament, soundness at all speeds and not being frightened easily. There is an association for riders with disabilities called *Riding for Disabled Ireland* [www.rdai.ie](http://www.rdai.ie)



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