

LEGAL HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO HAVE HIM VETTED?



Always have a horse vetted, regardless of who you're buying from

Q Do you think it's important to get a horse vetted before purchase? I'm buying from a friend and finding it difficult to ask for the horse to be vetted - what should I do?



Hanna Campbell

It's extremely important to ensure you have a horse vetted prior to purchase. In our practice, we regularly have enquiries from individuals who have bought a horse without having had him vetted and want to know their legal rights as to whether or not they can return him when problems arise.

Unless a person has misled you as to the health of the horse they're selling, a buyer in a private sale would have no recourse. Note that misled doesn't mean merely staying silent about a known problem the horse has - the seller would

actually have had to mislead you and you would have to be able to prove that to make a successful claim for misrepresentation.

As such, it's vital you have a horse vetted to ensure, as far as is possible, that you're not going to run into problems. A veterinary examination is not expensive when compared to the potential vet bills that could be incurred by failing to have it done. The cost of keeping a horse who can't be ridden can be extremely frustrating when you're told a veterinary examination could have avoided this.

If the vet misses something he should

have spotted, you would potentially have a case for professional negligence. We have dealt with such matters and we'd always advise you have the horse vetted by a specialist equine vet.

In relation to the difficulties you are experiencing in raising the issue with your friend, I would simply explain to her that buying a horse is a big decision and you need to be sure there are no underlying health problems she is unaware of.

Explain the vetting will give you peace of mind. By asking for a vetting, you are not accusing the owner of being dishonest in any way.