

## What is English Riding

Although the name refers to a very specific country, English riding is a form of horseback riding that is found all over the world. There are many different variations of English riding, but you'll find that there are certain factors that unify it into a style that is immediately recognizable from Western riding. When you are looking at English riding, you'll find that some things will immediately let you know what you are looking at.

When you are looking at English riding, you'll find that an English saddle will be used, no matter what the horse is doing. The English saddle is quite flat, without the deep seat that is common to the Western saddle and without a saddle horn. This kind of saddle is designed to allow the horse the maximum amount of movement, no matter what task is in front of it. When you realize that a horse that is being put through its paces in English riding will be doing things as varied as racing or classical dressage, you will see that that demands a great deal of movement in deed.

English riding consists of many different styles, but virtually all of the styles require that both hands be held on the reins. This allows more control over the horse, and it also changes the focus of this style from the horse to the rider. When you are looking at someone who is riding English as opposed to Western style, you'll also notice that during a trot, they will tend to rise and sit with the rhythm of each stride, something that is called posting, while in Western riding, the rider will usually stay seated in the saddle.

For many people, English riding is a discipline that exemplifies the grace and power that a horse can display, and this is evident in many of the events that use this style. For instance, dressage, which is a form of training and competition, is always performed using an English saddle. Dressage is a form that maximizes the horse's potential as a riding animal, and it is aimed at enhancing the horse's precision when it comes to the control of the rider. Show jumping, where a horse is timed as it is taken over a number of obstacles, is another sport that uses English riding, as is polo, which involves a high degree of movement and exacting timing from both animal and rider.

While there is some discussion that is ever ongoing about whether one horse breed or another is preferred for Western or English styles, the truth of the matter is that any horse can be trained to either style. Most people prefer horses trained for specific events be trained exclusively in one or the other. The training in style will affect the way that the horse responds to stimulus and this can strongly affect the horse's ability to perform as necessary.

When you are looking for information on styles of riding, think about what suits you best, and make sure that you get all of the information that you need!

## About the Author

Susanne Malloy is an equestrian and editor for [www.EnglishSaddleShop.com](http://www.EnglishSaddleShop.com), a complete resource for all of your English tack, training, and riding apparel needs, including an extensive inventory of [used English saddles](#).

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