

OWNERSHIP AND SYNDICATES



IRISH HORSE RACING GUIDES



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Racehorse Ownership in Ireland: Syndicates, Clubs and Going Solo

You do not need to be wealthy to own part of a racehorse in Ireland. Here is how the different ownership types work, how to register, and what to think about before you sign up.

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At a glance

SYNDICATE SIZE

3 to 100 members, one registered as owner and agent

PARTNERSHIP SIZE

2 to 6 members, all registered owners

RACING CLUB SIZE

Minimum 5 members, no upper limit, 2 agents

MINIMUM ACCOUNT LODGEMENT

€500 per horse (sole owners and syndicates); €1,000 (racing clubs)

REGISTRATION TIME

About two working days once paperwork is correct

ENTRY-LEVEL COST

From about €50 a month in a syndicate or club, according to HRI

Owning a racehorse sounds like something reserved for sheikhs and stud farms, but in Ireland it is far more accessible than most people think. Syndicates and racing clubs let groups of friends, colleagues or complete strangers share a horse and the costs that go with it. Horse Racing Ireland (HRI) runs a dedicated ownership service to help newcomers get started, and says ownership through a syndicate or club can cost as little as €50 a month.

This guide explains the main options, how registration works, and the questions to ask before you hand over any money.

1 Who does what

- **Horse Racing Ireland (HRI)** is the body that governs and promotes Irish racing. Its ownership team, HRI Ownership, can introduce you to trainers and ownership groups, and owners, syndicates and clubs are registered through HRI's systems.
- **The Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board (IHRB)** is the regulator, responsible for the rules of racing and licensing. It took over that role from the Turf Club in 2018.
- **Trainers** look after the horse day to day and charge the owners for doing so.
- **The Association of Irish Racehorse Owners (AIRO)** represents owners and publishes practical guidance on syndicates and clubs.

2 The main ways to own a racehorse

Sole ownership

One person owns the horse outright and pays all the bills. You get full control over decisions, alongside your trainer, and keep any prize money due to the owner. It is also the most expensive route by some distance.

Partnership

Between two and six people. All partners must be registered owners, but only the first named partner needs to register the racing colours and authority to act. A partnership suits a small group who know each other well and want an equal say.

Syndicate

A syndicate can have anywhere from 3 to 100 members. Only one member needs to register as an owner, acting as the **agent** for the syndicate. The agent handles the paperwork and has access to the syndicate's account. A syndicate can own more than one horse, and syndicates must be renewed each year.

AIRO recommends that every member receives a copy of a written syndicate agreement covering things like how shares are divided, how and when members pay (weekly, monthly, in advance or in arrears), and what happens when someone wants to leave.

Racing club

A racing club needs at least five members and has no upper limit, which is why clubs are often the cheapest way in. A club must have two agents. Because costs are split across so many people, a club is a popular introduction for newcomers, and clubs can be set up among friends, family or people who have never met but share an interest.

Company

A registered company can also own racehorses, which some businesses use for hospitality or promotion.

3 How registration works

Owners of every type register through HRI. According to HRI, registration takes about two working days once all the correct paperwork is lodged. Before a horse can run, the owner's racing account needs a minimum lodgement:

- **€500 per horse** for sole owners and syndicates
- **€1,000** for racing clubs

HRI's registration guide also lists an entitlement of four AIR passes, the owners' racecourse admission cards, for every ownership type, with options for extra admissions.

Note

HRI points out that its ownership forms are not legally binding agreements between members. If you are forming a partnership, syndicate or club, have a proper agreement drawn up with a solicitor.

4 What it costs

There is no single price for owning a racehorse, because it depends on how much the horse cost, which trainer you choose, whether it runs on the Flat or over jumps, and how many people are sharing. HRI suggests that a share in a syndicate or club can start from around €50 a month, and that its team will help you find an option to suit your budget.

When you are comparing offers, ask for a clear breakdown of:

- **Purchase price** of the horse, or the cost of your share of it
- **Training fees**, usually charged monthly by the trainer
- **Vet, farrier and transport costs**, which are often billed on top
- **Entry fees** for each race
- **Insurance**, if the group chooses to take it
- **Management fees**, if a commercial syndicate or club is organising everything

Go in with your eyes open. Most racehorses do not win enough prize money to cover their costs, so think of ownership as paying for an experience rather than an investment.

5 What you get for your money

The fun part. Owners are welcome at the stables to watch their horse on the gallops and talk through plans with the trainer. On race days you have access to the parade ring and owners' facilities, and there is nothing quite like seeing your colours come past the post. HRI even has an online tool to design your own racing colours.

6 Questions to ask before joining a syndicate or club

1. Who is the registered agent, and how will members see the accounts?
 2. What exactly is included in the monthly fee, and what is billed extra?
 3. How many horses does the group own, and with which trainer?
 4. What happens to prize money and to the horse if it is sold?
 5. How do you leave, and can your share be transferred?
 6. What happens when the horse retires? A good group will have a plan for retraining or rehoming. See our guide to buying a retired racehorse for how that side of things works.
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7 Getting started

The simplest first step is to contact HRI Ownership, which can talk you through the options and introduce you to trainers and groups looking for members. It also helps to go racing and chat to people: many syndicates advertise at racecourses and festivals. Our Irish racing calendar is a good place to find a meeting, and the Punchestown Festival and Galway Races are lively places to see syndicate horses in action.

If you would rather work with horses than own one, have a look at our guide to working in Irish racing and our jobs board.

Questions people ask

How much does it cost to own a racehorse in Ireland?

It varies widely. Horse Racing Ireland says a share in a syndicate or club can start from about €50 a month, while sole ownership costs far more. Ask for a full breakdown of training, vet, farrier and entry fees before committing.

What is the difference between a syndicate and a racing club?

A syndicate has 3 to 100 members, with one registered as owner and agent. A racing club needs at least five members with no upper limit and two agents, which usually makes each share cheaper.

How long does it take to register as an owner?

HRI says registration takes about two working days once all the correct paperwork has been lodged, along with the minimum account lodgement.

Is racehorse ownership a good investment?

It is best treated as a hobby rather than an investment. Most horses do not earn enough prize money to cover their costs, so budget for the enjoyment and treat any winnings as a bonus.

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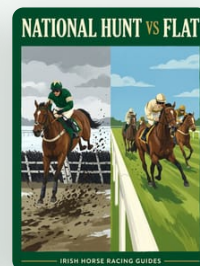
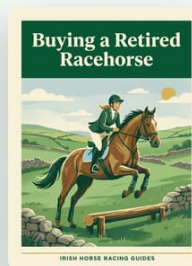
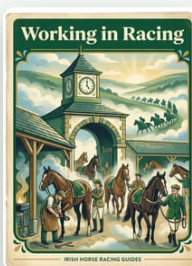
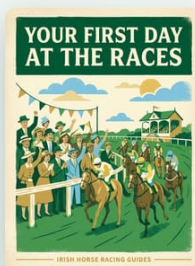
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Last reviewed 30 September 2026. Dates and details change, so check with the racecourse before you travel.



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