

FACTSHEET: OWNERS

THE COSTS OF OWNING AND KEEPING A DONKEY



Before taking on a donkey, you should be prepared for the costs of creating a suitable environment and providing ongoing care. This factsheet highlights some of the factors you will need to consider and gives approximate costs. Using this information, you will be able to prepare a budget.

WHAT FACTORS DO I NEED TO CONSIDER?

Think about:

- The cost of keeping two donkeys. Donkeys must have a companion, ideally another donkey.
- The cost of ongoing healthcare. Donkeys require regular health checks and preventative care (such as vaccinations, footcare, and dental care).
- The availability of shelter. Donkeys must have access to shelter from rain.
- The availability of turn out. Donkeys need access to pasture for grazing and exercise, unless restricted for medical reasons.
- The availability of dry standing areas. Donkeys' feet do not tolerate damp conditions well. Access to dry hardstanding is essential for their welfare.
- The other facilities you have available, such as fencing and electricity supply. These will affect the initial expense of preparing for a donkey.
- The additional facilities you need. The Donkey Sanctuary's free training course Introduction to Donkey Care - Stage 1, or the DVD that accompanies the course, will help you decide.

See online at thedonkeysanctuary.org.uk/what-we-do/training-centre/stage-1 for more information on the course.

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WHAT ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT DO I NEED?

All costs are approximate and may vary from supplier to supplier and region to region.

EQUIPMENT	COST
Electric fencing energiser	£90 - £200
Plastic 90 cm fencing stakes – 15 posts, based on a square field of one acre (1,047 m ²) with solid fencing around the perimeter	£35
Electric fencing tape – 200 m roll	£24 - £50
Internal batteries	£12 each
Stable wheelbarrow	£50 - £200
Fork	£20
Shovel	£20
Yard broom	£10
Poop scoop and rake	£15
Head collar and rope	£20
Grooming kit (dandy brush, body brush, plastic curry comb, hoof pick, tray or basket, cotton swabs, sponges, scissors)	£25
Rugs (not all donkeys will need these)	£50
Buckets (minimum of two)	£10
APPROXIMATE INITIAL OUTLAY	£331 - £603



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WHAT ARE THE ANNUAL COSTS OF ONGOING CARE?

These costs are approximate and based on a healthy donkey in good body condition with access to sufficient nutritional grazing during summer and ad-lib barley straw, and adequate hay or haylage in the winter.

Elderly donkeys and those with dental problems or ongoing health problems may require different bedding, feed, or other ongoing care. This may be significantly more costly.

Veterinary costs shown are only for annual checks and vaccinations. Veterinary treatment for illness or injury can cost hundreds or even thousands of pounds. You should take out appropriate veterinary insurance so that you can cover these costs if the need arises.

	COST
Vet call-out and examination fee (per visit)	£40 - £80 There will be additional costs for any diagnostics or treatment that are required.
Flu and tetanus vaccination	£30 - £45 per vaccine Frequency of vaccination depends on multiple factors, including manufacturer's instructions for the product used.
Dental check	£50 - £70 At least once a year, but may be more frequent.
Faecal worm egg count	£16 - £40 (Two to four times per year). Guardian owners can speak to a Donkey Welfare Adviser about access to our lab services.
Worming*	£12 - £30 (based on worming three times in a year).
Farrier	£160 - £260 (average eight-weekly trim).
Insurance (third party liability only)	£40 - £100
Hay	£104 - £182 If your donkey is off grazing in winter (one small bale per week for 26 weeks). Prices vary, £4 - £7 per small bale.
Straw for feed and bedding	£400 - £600 (100 bales per donkey per year). Prices vary, £4 - £6 per bale Particle bedding where used instead of straw. Prices vary, £6 - £10 per bale.
COST PER DONKEY PER YEAR	£852 - £1,407

*Your worming programme and choice of wormer will depend on your land management system, other animals in the same location, and the results of a faecal worm egg count. Speak to an equine vet or your local equine or agricultural suppliers may have a Registered Animal Medicines Advisor (SQP) who are also qualified to give advice on worming control programmes and to prescribe some of the wormers.

See Factsheet: *Responsible Worm Control – A Guide for Owners* for more information.