

# NORTH AMERICAN TRAIL RIDE CONFERENCE

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## SUGGESTIONS FOR HOSTING AN NATRC™ CLINIC

- At least four (4) months in advance, find a location/club/facility willing to host clinic attendees. Ideally, use a covered arena (if in winter) with an adjacent trail (can be very short). Decide if the facility size will limit the number of attendees.
- Complete and send an NATRC clinic sanction application form (no fee). Form is on-line at [www.natrc.org](http://www.natrc.org). Send to NATRC, PO Box 969, Beatrice, NE 68310 at least 60 days before clinic date.
- Decide on topics for demonstration/ discussion. Some suggestions are: conditioning and fitness for the trail; feed and nutrition for the distance horse; how good equitation helps the horse travel down the trail; tack and tack fit; rider fitness; training the horse over obstacles (backing, side pass, etc.).
- Arrange for speakers. Suggestions are: a veterinary judge, horsemanship judge(s), local distance rider “celebrities”, feed and nutrition experts, farriers, equitation trainers (dressage), equine massage therapist, or a personal trainer. Be imaginative. (What would you enjoy and benefit from?)
- Invite two or three NATRC riders to bring their horses for demonstration purposes.
- If horses are being used, NATRC insurance through Equisure MUST be secured at least 60 days in advance. If a 1-day clinic is held with a competitive ride and on the day of actual riding, the ride insurance will cover the clinic.
- Decide on a clinic fee. It should cover the cost of insurance for 1-day clinic with horses (if not held in conjunction with a sanctioned ride), facility fees, clinic manuals, food for volunteers at lunch, and clerical expenses.
- Post advertisement/ flyer on websites, Facebook, feed and tack stores, hosting club newsletters, CTR list, Equestrian Connection, Ride and Riding magazines (all free), and any other local sources.
- Prepare packets for attendees. Include such things as: clinic manual (for reading later), handouts on feed/nutrition, articles (with permission from author or publisher) pertaining to trail riding, articles on horse trailer safety (contact a local horse trailer dealer or research articles in various magazines); contact AAEP for free handouts on various horse/veterinary tips; contact several companies for freebies to tuck in packet; NATRC brochures; *Hoof Print* copies, if available.
- Prepare a binder with: NATRC liability releases for workers, NATRC liability release for attendees, State liability waivers for both. Printable versions are available on-line at [www.natrc.org](http://www.natrc.org).
- Prepare an agenda for the clinic day. Limit speakers to 30 minutes each. Start with introduction of speakers and a brief general layout of the day’s activities.
- Prepare layout of planned obstacles (such as ground poles [logs], bridge, cones, barrels). To save time, get them ready before the clinic starts.
- Appoint someone to act as host/ greeter/ secretary and someone (other than yourself) to handle registration on clinic day.
- Several folding tables should be set up - one for registration and two for volunteer lunch (depending on size). Have clerical supplies (pens, name tags). Supply water for participants (cooler or muck bucket filled with bottles of water and ice works just fine). A big bag of carrots is nice to be able to give some to the participants for the horses at lunch.
- Greet your speakers and give them a general rundown of the day’s events (printed agenda is nice). This is better done by email ahead of time so they know their time slot.
- Keep participants active. Break down the presentations to talking and “in-hand work” in the morning session and “under saddle work” in the afternoon session. It works well to divide them into two groups (if less than 8 in each group) and have at least two “instructors” with each group. Spend enough time so each can work on presenting their horses to the judges and longing (or circling in hand). For obstacle work, set up “stations” (such as uphill position, downhill position, over poles, backing thru poles) in different sections of the arena and have one or two “instructors” help each participant. Start one group two stations ahead of the next group and rotate them through all the obstacles. It keeps people moving and eliminates a lot of waiting time. Allow time for actual trail riding at ride pace. Discuss dealing with the horse in a group situation.
- Encourage questions and comments at ALL times. One person’s questions may answer another’s.
- Keep things moving along as efficiently as possible without being rushed.
- Follow-up with clinic attendees. Send thank you’s to those who gave their time and energy to help.
- Send in the Insurance Reimbursement Request Form and follow-up report to National.
- Publish clinic comments in your regional newsletter or *Hoof Print*. TAKE PHOTOS!