

## BASIC NEEDS

**LAND** Half a hectare (about an acre) per donkey is an absolute minimum. A donkey will make at least one area a rolling patch and manure will quickly reduce the grazing area so that they will need additional feeding.

**SHELTER** Donkeys need access to shelter for shade in the summer and rain and wind in the winter. Trees are ideal but they will need protecting from the donkeys to avoid them being ring barked. In the absence of trees a small "lean-to" or shed could be provided.

**FENCING** Sound fencing is important preferably with- out barbed wire. Donkeys respect electric fencing and this is useful when needing to restrict a donkey from too much rich pasture in the spring.

**FEED** Donkeys should not have rich food and the most common problem is *overfeeding*. However, they do need *some* green feed and some good quality meadow hay. It is sometimes necessary to feed oaten hay be- cause of the shortage of meadow hay. Many members feed good quality barley straw. This has the benefit of allowing the donkey to eat without putting on weight. Rich food (i.e. too much oaten hay or pasture in the spring when it is full of goodness and clover, etc.) is bad for donkeys and needs to be restricted as it can cause laminitis. Laminitis is inflammation of the feet and is very painful for the donkey.

**HOOF CARE** The donkey's hooves should be checked regularly using a hoof pick to clean around the frog (the horny bit in the centre of the hoof). Depending on the type of land the donkey is on, the hooves would probably need a trim every eight to twelve weeks. You can get a farrier to do this or you can buy some tools and do it yourself. It is important that your donkey is well mannered about its legs and feet and will accept them being handled.

**THE SOCIETY HAS A VERY GOOD VIDEO ON HOOFCARE WHICH IS AVAILABLE FOR MEMBERS TO BORROW.**

**WATER** A good supply of clean water should always be available.

**VITAMINS** It is appropriate to provide a vitamin block for the donkey. Particularly in the summer when there is no green feed it supplies the vitamins and minerals required. The block for horses with NO UREA is the one to buy.

**WORMING** Donkeys need worming regularly to stay in good condition. One of the proprietary horse wormers is satisfactory and it is sensible to vary the brand to avoid a resistance developing.

**VACCINATIONS** It is a good idea to vaccinate against tetanus. You can buy the Tetanus Toxoid from the vet and administer it yourself. After the initial course it only needs repeating five yearly

**GROOMING.** Most donkeys love it and will stand any amount of tickling, scratching and brushing. Fly spray is sometimes needed in the early summer season and donkeys appreciate a fly veil as they are unable to do the West Australian Wave to keep the flies out of their eyes.

**COMPANY** Donkeys are herd animals and appreciate company. Another donkey is ideal but it could be a horse or pony, or a sheep or an alpaca. Donkeys do not like dogs but will learn to tolerate their own!

**COLOUR** Donkeys come in various colours.

**GREY DUN** From a light oatmeal to a dark charcoal.

**BROWN** Light, dark and very dark.

**BLACK** A raven black or a duller black, almost dark brown.

**WHITE** not always snow white; often yellowish. **BROKEN COLOURED** e.g. brown and white or grey and white, etc.

**RED** All red shades that are not bay, red roan or red- dish brown. Generally called "sorrel".

**ROAN** White hairs mingling with different colour, i.e. chocolate roan, red roan, blue roan, etc.



Donkey Society activities are organized approximately once a month; sometimes this is a walk/ride/drive (as above), sometimes a gymkhana (as below) and sometimes an information day.

Look us up on the web ([www.donkeywa.org.au](http://www.donkeywa.org.au)) and come along and see for yourselves.



### A LIST OF BOOKS THAT MAY BE HELPFUL

Donkey Business III

by Jo-anne Kokas and Christine Berry

Professional Handbook of the Donkey

by Elisabeth Svendsen

Your Donkey

by Ruth Harris

Looking after a Donkey

by Dorothy Morris

To own a Donkey

by Jenifer Simpson

### DID YOU KNOW?

Not all donkeys have a cross, some have a partial cross. and some donkeys have striped legs!

HAVING DECIDED THAT A DONKEY IS FOR YOU.....

Don't buy one as a lawnmower—they dig holes—you would be much better off with a ride -on!

You can love and cuddle any size donkey as long as they are used to being handled. If not, they will take some time to be sure of you but nearly all donkeys come round to loving being loved.

For an adult to ride you should try and find a donkey of at least 12hh (hh = hand high). A hand is 4 inches and the height is measured at the withers. They should not be ridden until 4 years old and do not reach their maximum size until about 5 years. Ideally 11.2hh would suit average sized children up to about 14 years. Smaller donkeys are OK for really little children.

A donkey of 10.2hh upwards is suitable for harness, for using as a pack animal or for small children to ride.

Look for a gelding (a castrated male) or a jennet. Jacks (an entire male donkey) should not be kept unless by an experienced donkey owner for breeding purposes. Even small jacks can be dangerous although they may appear mild and gentle.

**THE AFFILIATED DONKEY SOCIETIES OF AUSTRALIA PUBLISH A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE CALLED DONKEY DIGEST AND THE WA BRANCH ALSO PUBLISHES A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE CALLED THE NEWS AND DOS.**

**Affiliated subscription receiving both the Donkey Digest and the News and Dos via email**

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**A Subscription form can be downloaded from our website**

**[www.donkeysocietywa.org](http://www.donkeysocietywa.org)**



**Sebastian taking home his Tea**

Members of the Donkey Society of W.A. are only too happy to answer any questions you may have and can arrange to try and help with any donkey problems you may have. Please feel able to contact any members of the Committee listed below.

President	Mary-Anne Wallace	0427 804 505
Secretary	Katie Larsen	
Show Officer	Lesley Pascoe Hamersley	0403 977 840

## **The Donkey Society of Australia (W.A. Branch)**



**ARE YOU THINKING OF GETTING A DONKEY?**

Donkeys can make fabulous pets so here are a few tips to help you make the right decision.

Why do *YOU* want a donkey?

- For a lawnmower?
- To love and cuddle?
- To ride?
- To drive?
- To use as a pack animal?

Why should a donkey want *YOU*?

*What are a donkey's needs?*

Some of the basic needs of a donkey are listed overleaf. For further help and suggestions, particularly with training, and also details of the Society's activities, please visit our website at:-

**[www.donkeysocietywa.org](http://www.donkeysocietywa.org)**

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