

DESTINATION POLO

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

Learn to Play Polo

Lessons, playing and horses, from your very first ride to a lifetime in the game. No riding experience needed.

VIRGINIA · PHIPPS FIELD & GREAT MEADOW

FLORIDA · BELDI POLO CLUB

DESTINATIONPOLO.COM

WELCOME

A guide to learning polo

Polo looks fast, and it is. But learning it is a step-by-step process, and every step builds on the last. Whether you've ridden all your life or never sat on a horse, we have a proven way to get you on the field.

Safety, enjoyment and progress are the three things we never trade away. We teach on gentle, experienced horses, an instructor stays on the field with you the whole time, and most beginners are playing in slow practice chukkers within about a week.

This guide walks through the four phases of learning the game, and what each one looks like with us.

01 Lessons

Learning the basics: the swing, sitting the horse and the line of the ball.

02 Playing

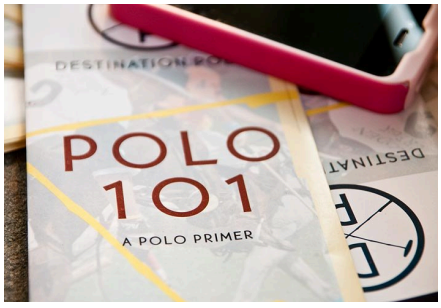
Hitting, riding, strategy and the rules that make the game make sense.

03 Horses

Leasing, buying the right horse, and the care that keeps it sound.

04 Short or long term

One lesson or a lifetime, with a plan and every cost up front.









A FIRST LESSON IN THE ARENA

PHASE ONE

01 Lessons: learning the basics

It starts with the swing. We break it down into a simple, efficient motion, because the easier it is, the better it works. From there we add new ideas one at a time, each one building on what you've already learned.

Once the swing is in place, we introduce the *line of the ball*, the idea most polo rules are built on, and start working on your riding.

Early on, we keep things easy. Our lesson horses are experts at their job, and it's always amazing to watch someone who has never ridden steer around the field on day one.

After the first phase, we move you to horses that ask a little more of you, so you really learn to ride. It can be the frustrating step, but it's a necessary block in the polo pyramid.

HOW YOU START

STEP 1

Polo 101 lesson

Sit the horse safely, hold the mallet and hit the ball at a walk. We bring the horse, helmet and mallet.

STEP 2

Slow practice chukkers

Once you're comfortable in the saddle, join easy chukkers with an instructor riding alongside.

STEP 3

Play

Move into practice games and leagues, ride our horses by the chukker, and keep building.

PHASE TWO

02 Playing: hitting, riding & strategy

Hitting

Hitting the ball is the first step to playing. Once you can stay on the horse safely and hit the ball, you're ready for slow chukkers. And once you've played your first game, there's no going back. It's a feeling like no other, and a journey that lasts the rest of your life. No two moments on the field are ever the same, so every game is a new chance to practice what you've learned.

Riding

As you progress, your riding will improve. Along the way we'll learn what kind of rider you are and build a blueprint for the type of horse you need. You will learn to ride, but much of your success comes from trusting us to know what matters. It's far easier to find a horse that suits your riding than to learn to ride every horse.



ARENA POLO UNDER THE LIGHTS

> *You could spend a lifetime learning to ride a horse for five minutes. It's much easier to find a horse you can ride in five minutes for a lifetime.*

Strategy & rules

Polo is much more than it looks. To the outsider, it's horses running and people chasing a little white ball. Underneath is a world of strategy and rules that makes the game far richer, and learning it properly means doing the right thing at the right moment. Players who don't learn it mostly hear the whistle.

When players come to us from elsewhere, we often hear, "No one ever taught me that." Usually their teacher didn't know. Our knowledge comes from polo all over the world, and there's a reason for everything we teach. The proof is the final product: you, on the field, playing polo.



PART OF THE DESTINATION POLO STRING

PHASE THREE

03 Horses: ownership & care

Most people say horses are 70% of the game. We think they're at least that.

If you took up polo later in life, horses are the fastest way to excel. You can learn to hit the ball and where to be, but if you can't get to the play, you're helpless. If you're trusting an animal with your safety, why not have the best?

Our horses are chosen for temperament first and ability second. We never buy green horses. Each one has already played polo in Mexico before it ever carries a student, then settles in here before joining the string.

Mexico	6–12 mo	1 mo	6 mo	Ready
1–2 yrs of polo	watched in play	arrive in Virginia	rest & settle	join the string

> *That's why our horses are rarely for sale. Once a horse earns its place in the string, it's trusted with our students for years.*



Lease first, buy right

WHERE MOST PLAYERS START

Lease by the game

Arrive 30 minutes before play. Your horse is tacked and ready. Ride, hand it back, go home. You pay per session, with no feed, vet, farrier or trailer bills. It's usually cheaper over a season, even if it looks pricier up front.

WHEN YOU'RE READY

Own your horse

Rewarding, especially if the bond with a horse is what you're after. The purchase price is the smallest cost: feed, vet, farrier, insurance and board never stop, and you'll need a truck, trailer, tack and time.

Buying the right horse

We see it all the time: people pick a price for a horse without knowing what they actually need. Buying a horse is the most important step in a polo career, and most people get it wrong. There are too many variables for a beginner to get right. Over a horse's 5 to 10 years of service, the purchase price is small compared with how much you enjoy it, what it costs to keep, and what it costs if it doesn't work out. We know the good from the bad, and we'll walk you through it.

Smile Back Guarantee

Buy a horse from us, and if it isn't the right fit, we'll take it back or trade it.



Care, handled for you

What happens after the sale matters just as much. However simple it looks, good care keeps a polo pony sound in body and mind. We don't expect you to become an expert in horse care. Our team offers turnkey service and handles every detail, so your time goes into enjoying the game, not learning the ins and outs of the horse world.

Want the numbers? Ask for our lease-versus-own cost breakdown.

04

PHASE FOUR

Short term or long term

Whether your polo lasts one lesson or a lifetime, you get the same level of service. If all you want is a taste of the game and a great photo, we love that. It spreads the word about the sport, and gives you a game to share with your friends.

If you want to really learn to play, give us the chance to show you the right way. Doing it on your own almost always costs more, because the pitfalls add up. We'll design a program around you, and walk you through it with every cost up front.

APRIL — NOVEMBER · PHIPPS & GREAT MEADOW

Virginia

Polo 101 Lesson — $250
Your first private lesson. Horse and gear included.

Learn to Play · 5 lessons — $1,250
From the basics to your first practice chukkers.

4 Chukker Practice Game — $800
A full practice game on our horses, with coaching.

Private Lessons · 10 lessons — $2,250
One-on-one lessons built around your goals.

DECEMBER — APRIL · BELDI POLO CLUB

Florida

Private Lesson — $350
One-on-one instruction on our horses, per hour.

Lesson Package · 10 lessons — $3,000
Ten private lessons on our horses, built around your goals.

4 Chukker Practice Game — $2,250
A full practice game on our horses.

4 Chukker Pro-Am — $2,250
Play alongside a professional, with coaching on the field.

PACKAGES

Lessons, chukkers and horses in one plan

	VIRGINIA	FLORIDA
Polo 101 The introduction, start to finish.	$1,500	$2,500
Learn the Basics Riding, hitting and the rules of the game.	$2,500	$5,000
Learn to Play From lessons all the way into games.	$5,000	$10,000



THE NEXT STEP

Let's make the right plan for you.

We look forward to being part of your polo career. Tell us about your riding, your goals and your schedule, and we'll put together a plan with every cost up front, so there are no surprises. Call any time to talk through any part of it. Polo is what we do, and we look forward to sharing it with you.

CALL OR TEXT

(540) 229-7656

ONLINE

DestinationPolo.com

Virginia

April – November · on the grass at Phipps Field, between Middleburg and Upperville, and in the arena at Great Meadow Stadium, The Plains

Beldi Polo Club, Florida

December – April

Doug Barnes

OWNER, DESTINATION POLO

DESTINATION POLO