

# **GOING HUNTING**

# **S D H**

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# Welcome to the South Devon Hunt

This leaflet is aimed at adults and children, in fact anybody who wants to come hunting with the South Devon Hunt. It hopefully provides answers to some of the questions that you'd like to ask, especially if you or your family are new to the sport.

There's a guide to hunting terms, language and signals, information about what to do before you come hunting and details of what to wear (you and your horse) and how to behave.

Our aim is to encourage people to enjoy hunting so this leaflet is your friendly guide because we want to welcome you and we want you to know you feel at home with us.

Our country goes as far north as Postbridge, down to Dawlish and across to Totnes. It incorporates a variety of inland and moorland meets.

## **Before you go hunting....**

Telephone the Hunt Secretary and ask if you may join the hunt for the day and check the amount (cap) you will be required to pay. You can also find out about the best place to park and any other matters you are unsure about. We want to help you so don't be afraid to ask questions. Also by making contact you can be informed of any last minute changes due to weather, farming issues, etc.

**This is only a GUIDE of what to wear. Please don't be put off by the list below – come in suitable riding clothes.**

## **Adult**

### **Autumn Hunting:**

- Tweed coat
- Shirt and tie or stock-shirt and coloured stock
- Brown, beige or cream breeches
- Brown boots or short boots with chaps
- Spurs with brown straps
- Approved riding hat with dark cover
- Gloves

### **From opening meet:**

- Black or Blue coat
- Stock-shirt and cream or white stock
- Pale breeches
- Black boots
- Spurs with black straps
- Approved riding hat with dark cover
- Gloves – preferably pale

## **Junior**

- Approved riding hat with dark cover and chin strap
- Tweed jacket
- Shirt and tie
- Beige jodphurs
- Boots
- Hair neat and tidy with hair net if required
- Gloves
- Dress suitably for the prevailing weather conditions – don't get cold!

## **What to wear .... your horse/pony**

- If you are unsure play safe with a stronger bit
- Dark or sheepskin numnahs, following saddle shape
- Boots if required
- Plait from November
- Ribbons – Red – if kicks; Green – young and inexperienced

- Clean horse!
- Clean tack!

#### **What should I have in my pockets....**

You should have money for your Cap, a penknife, some baler twine and possibly some food. You may even consider carrying a small handkerchief or a bandage for emergencies. If you are new to the hunt, or suffer from a medical condition, it's a good idea to carry a printed copy of your details so we can help you should you have an accident. (This is particularly important if you are a Junior and not accompanied by an adult).

#### **While hunting....**

- Park safely, well away from the meet. Take care not to block roads or gateways
- Vehicles must be parked on the moor
- Find out who the Master is and say *Good Morning*
- Give Cap (daily charge) to Hunt Secretary
- Stay behind the Field Master if there is one out
- Watch out for children and give them plenty of room
- Be aware of non-hunting vehicles and do not block the road
- Never cross a sown field, stay single file round the edge
- Go carefully across fields and down banks, especially when wet
- If you hear *Huntsman Please* or *Whip Please* let them pass
- Always shut a gate if you are the last through. If *Gate Please* is shouted from In front, pass on to the person behind
- Always face your horses head to hounds where possible
- Stay quiet when hounds are working and listen for instructions
- When leaving for home, find a Master or Secretary and say *Goodnight*
- ABOVE ALL – enjoy your day with us!

#### **Hunting terms**

**Master** – or maybe a Joint Master – These are the people responsible for the running of the hunt and particularly the liaison with the farmers and landowners. They should have right of way at all times, second only to the Hunt Staff.

**Huntsman** – the man who hunts the hounds. Only one Huntsman will be on the hunting field each day. He may also be the Master and he has absolute right of way at all times.

**Couples** – hounds are counted in couples (twos).

**Cast** – when the hounds are looking for the line. The Huntsman may cast the hounds towards where he thinks the hounds will pick it up.

**Line** – the scent left by the trail layers.

**Check** – when the hounds loose the line.

**Speak or speaking** – hounds do not bark, they speak or are speaking when they are '@on the line'.

**Babble or babbling** – a hounds that speaks when its not hunting is said to be a babbler or babbling.

**Heel** – hounds are said to be on a heel line when they are going in the reverse direction to the route laid by the trail layers.

**Hunt Staff** – the people who are responsible for working the hounds ie: Huntsman and Whipper In. They may be Masters, amateurs or professionals.

**Whipper In (Whip)** – the person who helps the Huntsman to control the hounds. This person has right of way at all times and will only give way to the Huntsman.

**Field** – the mounted followers.

**Field Master** – the person in charge of leading and controlling the field, you should always follow the Field Master and never ride in front.

**Master/Huntsman/Whip/Hound Please** – this means give way to these people as they have a job to do. Go to one side and always turn your horses head towards hound to avoid kicking a hound as this is a very bad 'crime'.

**Gate please** – shouted backwards on going through a gate that should be closed. If this is not acknowledged by a raised hand shut the gate.

**Hand in the air by gateway** – signal to people coming towards the gate but out of hearing that the gate should be shut. The response should be to hold your hand in the air to show that you have got the message and will shut the gate.

**Hold Hard** – shouted to stop the field overtaking the Hunt Staff.

**Kick On!** – you may get this response when you make way for a Master or Huntsman at a gate or jump. It means that you don't have to wait for him/her and should carry on.

**Lawn Meet** – a meet where refreshments are provided by someone, usually the owner of the property where the meet is taking place. This person should be thanked by everyone as they leave the meet. Good etiquette dictates that horses should be plaited for lawn meets.

**Manners** – be polite at all times and to everyone, from landowners, other road users and walkers to the riders around you.