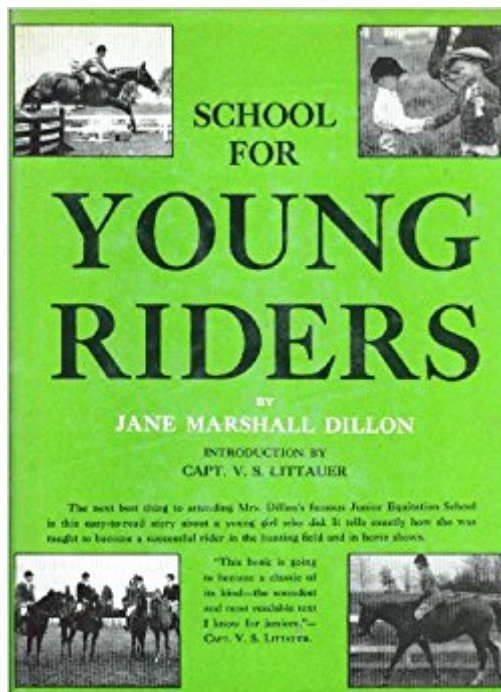


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# School For Young Riders



## Synopsis

The next best thing to attending Mrs. Dillon's famous Junior Equitation School is this easy-to-read story about a young girl who did. It tells exactly how she was taught to become a successful rider in the hunting field and in horse shows.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The next best thing to attending Mrs. Dillon's famous Junior Equitation School is this easy-to-read story about a young girl who did. It tells exactly how she was taught to become a successful rider in the hunting field and in horse shows.

In a completely no-horsey place decades ago, I found this book in the local library and kept renewing/rereading for ages. And for the ages it is so good. Regardless of time, this book puts you right in the middle of your horse, sweetly and effectively. I have whipped-in to hunts, played polo, done endurance riding and had fun in all if not so much success! My best teacher has been this book. Thanks Ms Dillon, Ms. Kusner, Ms. April Dawn.

I loved this book! It is a wonderful introduction to not just riding, but horsemanship as taught by the inimitable Jane Dillon. I was one of her very first students in 1951, when she rented the old Hayfield Farm, next to the Coast Guard Station on Telegraph Road in Alexandria, VA. We rode in the large, round barn and stabled the horses in the understory. The horses mentioned in the book were all old

friends and I rode most of them. With her ladylike southern drawl, Jane imparted not only equestrian skills but courtesy and sportsmanship. We were expected to be ladies and gentlemen. She influenced the rest of my life in a good way. The photographs show the old days before spandex and stretch britches when you had to have the bulgy "peg" on the sides of the thigh so as not to split the crotch seam while riding! It gives a glimpse into life in the 1950's and 1960's which has sadly slipped away to a much harsher world. Jane's approach to educating the whole person comes through in the text in a delightful way. It takes me back to riding in her advanced class with Kathy Kusner and Joe Fargis, who won the individual gold medal at the Los Angeles olympics in 1986.

I have a copy that's now over 40 years old. My friend, in her late 30s, is under a disability but decided she really wanted to learn the basics of riding - she has extremely limited vision and is deemed legally blind - there is a therapeutic riding program which will work with her. I found this copy of the book online, gently used, and got it for my friend (with a magnifying glass and patience, she can read), the pictures are excellent and the format of the book - a story about the young people taking riding lessons and starting with grooming the horse, the first riding lessons, makes it an easy read for any age. Although since this book was written, there have been changes in how we train and ride and care for horses, good basics are timeless. Also, a few years after I received my copy of this book decades ago when I was first starting to learn to ride, I was working with horses on the racetrack and made the acquaintance of a young woman, Betsy Wells, who became a lifelong friend. Betsy noticed the book among my collection of horse books and was surprised to see it - she and her two sisters are among the 'young riders' profiled in the book, they all learned to ride at "Mrs Ds" riding school. They in many of the photos. Sadly, Betsy passed away a few years ago but I know she would be pleased to find she continues to influence 'young riders' of all ages.

As a horse crazy child in the early 70s, I loved this book and studied it constantly. Then I had an opportunity to enroll and take classes there when we moved to Virginia. We students, mostly girls, would all gather outside Ms. Dillon's house on Saturday mornings smartly attired in our jodphurs and starched white equestrian shirts with our horse grooming tools in buckets. We would have an hour of theory followed by an hour of riding and *School for Young Riders* was our textbook, naturally.

I have owned this book since 1969. It gave me a strong riding foundation and appreciation for the many fun things one can do with a horse. It took me 37 years to fulfill my dream of foxhunting. This

book given to me by a thoughtful friend on my 11th birthday changed my life. Now, I own a couple of horses, Fox hunt, do dressage, and enjoy all that comes with horses.

I borrowed this from an older sister, must have been around 1991, and it really got me started. It would be great to see a reprint, perhaps with footnotes or an appendix with updates on some of the outdated fashions, or some kind of similar book. Something more accessible to new riders today. I loved that there were quizzes, I learned most of my basic horse knowledge from reading this book. I recommend this for new horse people, as long as they realize that clothing styles have changed, as well as some show rules. And there is not as much fox hunting these days... As I read the chapters on fox hunting, I read about hunts that no longer exist because the land has been taken over for business and housing. I know a bit of the nostalgia the other reviewer talked about, even though this book was written a few decades before I was born. The barn where I learned to ride was bought by developers in 2001. The land is disappearing and it feels terribly tragic.

Someone gave me a tattered copy of this book when I first started riding hunt seat in the early 80s, and even though the baggy breeches, bare heads and quaint hairstyles look pretty outdated, you just can't beat the solid foundation these riders got. You see so many kids bumped up too fast these days, kids who can't tell a fetlock from a forelock, fighting fancy hot horses and focusing on the almighty ribbons. This book (and others of its era, like the Western books that feature pleasure horses with natural head carriage and girls who aren't dressed like Tammy Wynette) makes me nostalgic for a time that maybe never existed. Except for the baggy breeches (I wish they'd come back!!) . ; ) I wish this were back in print! I can't find my copy.

About 40 years ago I remember reading this as a requirement for riding camp. It was close to what we were taught at the time. It was informative and easy reading for a kid. It also harkens back to a simpler, more pleasant time, when horseback riding was in a closer vicinity to neighborhoods, and thus, more obtainable for ordinary folks.

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