

explains why the mule behaves the way he does.

Traders may offer to let you try the mule for a week or two and return it if you're not completely satisfied. They will give you examples of a few fickle and unreasonable people who have returned good mules or horses to them. They will explain, with a sigh of resignation, that they refunded their money and sent them on their way.

If you want to think about it overnight, the trader will kindly offer to hold the mule for you because after all you would provide such a wonderful home.

If you want to document all he's said in the form of a sales contract, detailed bill of sale, or written agreement for a trial period, and he refuses, it might mean your trader hasn't been completely truthful. Proceed with caution.



Mule and Horse Traders Come in Every Shape & Size

Don't think of all mule and horse traders as being men, there are plenty of women in this business.

For example, you might encounter a kindly senior citizen, a young woman with a baby on her hip, a cowboy, or a man in a business suit; don't let stereotypes blind your good judgment.



Mule Traders Have to Be Convincing—It's Their Craft

Mule traders know the first step in making a sale is to establish a connection with the buyer, so he or she will tell you what you want to hear.

He/she will be confident, and often friendly or funny. They will seem like a nice guy or gal and you will easily like this person. Just remember this is a business transaction and nothing more.

Mule Traders Listen Carefully (As Con Artists Do)

If you describe your ideal mule, the animal the seller is showing you will match perfectly to your needs.

If you confided that you've bought mules or horses from other traders and been unhappy, the seller will commiserate and tell you that he or she also heard bad stories about those sellers and will assure you that you're safe with him or her. Don't be fooled; most of the traders know each other and work together. They meet often across their region at livestock sales, trail rides and auctions.