

Water

Mules hate water and when swimming they let themselves drown when water goes into their ears! **Uh, false! No, no and no.** Mules are typically not fond of getting water into their ears which is a natural dislike for all equines. There is no validity to this statement what so ever. Mules can swim very well! To swim with your mule:



Trainer, Cindy Brasfield (Alabama) enjoying a swim with her 8 yr old Paso Fino mare mule, "Darby."

1. **The trainer/rider should know how to swim,** pretty logical thinking here.
2. **Do not go swimming alone,** take another rider friend with you.
3. **Know the area,** be aware that footing can be deceiving. Mud along the edge of a river or lake can be deep and you don't want to get your mule into trouble. Lakes and rivers can have hidden debris such as rocks or even large pieces of dangerous junk like old cars. Resist the urge to explore murky unknown bodies of water.
4. **Know your mule's ability.** If this is your mule's first trip to the beach, let him get used to the scene before getting him into water that requires swimming. Even if your mule is reasonably fit, walking through water with a rider is extremely demanding, so be mindful of your mule's exertion. If swimming in deep water, let your mule have his head. Keep your mule's hydration in mind since he can't drink the salt water.
5. **Don't take risks.** The old adage of trusting your gut is a good one to remember in the water. If you're not sure how strong the current is or you think a river may be a little too deep and too fast to cross, don't try it. Use the buddy system. Always ride in the water with someone else and make sure someone at the barn or at home knows where you are and has an idea when you are to return.