

Safety Tips

Safety is a very important consideration when dealing with horses as they are big, unpredictable 'flight' animals and accidents unfortunately do happen. By following safety procedures, you can minimise the likelihood of a mishap and feel more confident when handling your horse.



General rules of safety

- Always wear suitable clothing and footwear when riding and working around horses. Shoes with no heel such as trainers or sandals are dangerous to ride in as they can allow your foot to slip through the stirrup iron and increase the risk of you being dragged from the horse if you fall off. Loose clothing can flap about and get caught up so wear well-fitting clothes such as jodhpurs.
- Don't wear a lot of jewellery. Big loop earrings and necklaces can get caught up and rings may get lost or damaged.
- Keep all stable yard equipment stored safely so that it does not pose a danger to horses or people.
- Always approach horses calmly and quietly and from an angle that they can see you. Talk to them quietly and do not walk directly up behind them, as they may get startled and kick out.
- Never kneel or sit down close to a horse. If they suddenly move or kick out you might not be able to get out of the way in time.
- When picking up heavy objects always bend your knees and keep your back straight so that you don't strain your back.
- Try to make sure you are never alone around horses in case you are injured and you need someone to help you.
- If you go out riding make sure you tell someone back at the yard where you are going and how long you intend to be so that if there is a problem they will know where to go looking for you. Take a mobile phone with you but keep it switched off unless you need to use it.
- Tell the yard manager or stable owner of any broken equipment, windows, doors or fencing so that they can be fixed quickly. Look out for nails sticking out, and any loose hinges on gates and doors.

- Make sure you tie gates and doors back safely before leading horses through so that they don't swing back and hit them.
- Remember to shut gates and doors securely behind you so that you don't let horses out accidentally.
- Clean up any spillages promptly so that people don't slip over, particularly in the winter when they can quickly turn to ice.
- In winter have salt on hand to make walkways safer in the event of snow and ice.
- As you are walking around the stables, quickly glance at every horse you pass to make sure they are OK and not cast or ill. Check horses in the field in the same way to make sure they are not injured or ill.
- Regularly inspect stables and paddock fencing for nails or pieces of wire sticking out on which the horse may cut itself.

