

Build Your Own Obstacle Course

Building your own obstacle course doesn't have to be complicated or expensive. This article summarizes the basics of building your own obstacle training course.



Select a Training Location

When selecting a location for your obstacle training course, choose one with a barrier. A fence or arena wall provides a physical barrier and a stop zone for safety. Select a training site with low traffic. A quiet area is less distracting and can improve your ability to focus. Choose an area with good footing. Look for a location that provides a level grade and good traction. Stay away from slippery or hard surfaces.

Designate a Safe Zone

When constructing your obstacle course, leave a space where there are no obstacles. We call this, "The Safe Zone". It's a place to go and regroup when you are having difficulty. You and your horse can take a deep breath and relax before you try again.



Selecting Obstacles

When selecting obstacles for your training course, choose safe and durable items. Your horse should be able to safely step on the item without breaking it or injuring himself. Minimize the risk of injury by closely inspecting your obstacles. Look for sharp edges that could cut

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your horse. Remove any strings or ropes that could entangle your horse. We like items that are lightweight and easily moved. This makes setting up and dismantling your course easy. Obstacles that you can stack, fold or rollup are convenient to store.

Constructing Obstacles

A simple way to make an obstacle course is to use items you already have on hand. A tarp on the ground is a good obstacle to begin with. Use ground poles to hold the tarp in place. Ground poles also provide a pathway or guide to walk through. You can make this obstacle more challenging by placing empty plastic bottles or brightly colored foam water noodles on it.



Tires without rims separated by ground poles are another easy obstacle to construct. This obstacle simulates your horse walking on uneven ground.

If you are the handyman type, you can build your own obstacles. A portable carwash can be constructed by attaching tape streamers to a PVC (plastic) frame.



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A bridge obstacle can be made from a sturdy sheet of plywood placed on a tire base. Build a ramp and stairs by constructing it in three pieces then securely attaching them together.



When designing your course use your imagination. Tailor your obstacle course to items your horse needs work on. Include a variety of obstacles. Set up some obstacles on the ground, some incorporating movement, bright colors or sound.

Want More Information

For more information on how to build your own obstacle training course and techniques to overcome obstacles visit our website www.riderselite.com. Our newest interactive training cd-rom ***Sensory Training Simplified "A guide to despook your horse"*** is now available as your personal training resource.

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