

SAFE FENCING STYLES

Why is good fencing important? Providing secure fencing creates a safe environment for your horse to have essential turnout time and can also make weight and herd management easier for everyone. Ensuring boundary fencing is well maintained and safe can help prevent your horse from escaping and reduce the likelihood of turnout related injury.



POST AND RAIL



When built properly it can offer a safe and secure boundary in adverse weather and high winds. Can last 10-15 years.

Pros: Post and rail is structurally secure and a good long-term investment. There is less daily maintenance.

Cons: Post and rail fencing is initially expensive and the wood does need to be weather treated. If you have a horse who crib-bites, wood fencing can be damaged and pose a risk if they ingest wood fragments.

POST AND STOCK



Pros: Stock fencing is a commonly used agricultural fencing and is often made use of by horse owners who take on land with existing stock fencing.

It provides a secure boundary and is strong and stable in adverse weather. Horsenet fencing is designed with smaller gaps at the bottom. All joins are individually welded so if a horse should get stuck, it will break.

Cons: Stock fencing can cause risk of leg injury if horses kick out and can get caught on shoes if horses are shod.

The size of hole in the stock fencing needs to be safe. Stock fencing needs to be checked for any breaks in the wire which could cause injury. It needs to be maintained well as it can start to sag over time, especially next to long grass or hedge lines. We recommend any barbed wire is removed and replaced with a safer material.

PLASTIC FENCING PANELS



It also lasts longer than most alternatives. It is more durable and safer for horses. Some varieties also allow you the option to electrify it with electric tape running through the plastic.

Pros: Plastic and PVC fencing is becoming increasingly popular with horse owners as it requires less maintenance than post and rail fencing.

Cons: Plastic fencing panels are an expensive initial outlay despite their long-term durability.

ELECTRIC



Pros: Electric fencing is a cheaper alternative to post and rail and can be electrified

This is to ensure a safe boundary and prevent escapes. It is very versatile and can easily be moved to help with grass recovery or weight management.

Cons: Electric fencing does need to be electrified. We recommend a fence tester to ensure the current is active throughout the fence.

Electric fencing needs to be checked twice daily, especially in adverse weather as it can be blown over.

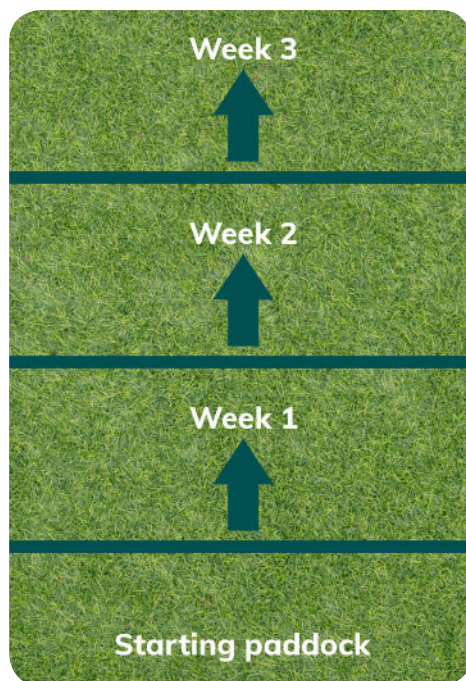
Investment in wooden posts, instead of plastic, can help with this.

Tips for using electric fencing and strip grazing:

Using electric fencing is a useful way of managing your grass whether that's to rest areas of your field or to restrict your horse's grass intake during the spring and summer months. Electric fencing can be used to temporarily divide paddocks so they can be rotated and rested, which helps to reduce your field becoming overly poached during winter.

Strip Grazing: A strip grazing system is helpful when introducing horses back onto rested areas.

Moving the electric fence along at gradual intervals (see method 1) to increase the grazing area slowly will help to reduce the likelihood of colic, laminitis, weight gain and grass sickness due to a sudden change in diet. Electric fencing can also be used as a way of ensuring horses at risk of laminitis and weight gain are maintained on a consistently low grass intake whilst still resting areas of the paddocks. In this case the grazing area should be moved along the field but not increased in size (see method 2).



Method 1



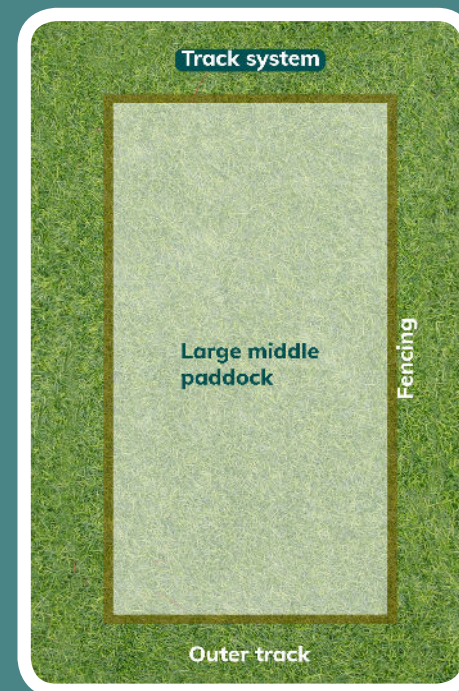
Method 2

Track System: Another useful way of using electric fencing to control weight or providing a long-term set up for horses at risk of laminitis is to set up a track system. Horses are offered a perimeter track, which encourages more movement than a traditional restricted grazing area.

The outer perimeter area has less grass than the longer grass in the middle square. The fencing can be slowly moved inwards or outwards to alter the width of the track to offer more or less grass.

By putting the water at a different point on the track than the gate, it also encourages horses to exercise by walking the track. It's important the track is a suitable width that allows horses to pass safely around other herd members, especially if some horses within the group can be dominant.

The track system can be particularly useful if you have multiple equines that have different dietary needs or grass intake requirements.



Those requiring more grass can be put into the middle section of the paddock, whilst those that are restricted stay on the track.

It is important horses have time together to be social. In the case of having two horses both requiring different needs, the one that needs more grazing can be put into the larger paddock for some period of the day, before being brought back onto the outer track.



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www.mareandfoal.org

The Mare and Foal Sanctuary, Honeysuckle Farm,
Hacombe-with-Combe, Newton Abbot, TQ12 4SA
Phone: 01626 355969 **Email:** equine@mareandfoal.org