



EQUESTRIAN SPORTS NEW ZEALAND

Equestrian Sports New Zealand Competitors Guide for Good Horse Welfare Practice (Especially prepared for North Island And South Island Secondary Schools Events)

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Including Top Tips for each Domain

The Five Domains model of animal welfare assessment

The Five Domains model of animal welfare assessment has been used since 1994. It is based on "Five Domains" of an individual animal, or group of animals' welfare at any point in time.

These Domains each contribute to an animal's overall welfare and allow us to assess the Four Functional Domains, which impact an animals' welfare, as either a positive or negative influence on the animals' experience of its world in Domain 5.

One of the most important strengths of the Five Domains is that it recognises that minimising or resolving negative physical, health or mental states does not necessarily result in positive welfare but may only provide a neutral state.

To help ensure animals have a 'life worth living' they must have the opportunity to have positive experiences.

To enable this, those responsible for the care of animals need to provide them with environments that not only allow but encourage animals to express natural behaviours that they find rewarding. Management of animals requires that all negative experiences are immediately addressed; positive experiences are identified and provided for them, and barriers to positive experiences removed wherever possible.

This shift in understanding is the basis for the Five Domains model which incorporates the provision of positive welfare and recognises mental affective states. It centres on the following five categories with practical provisions:

Nutrition

“Provide ready access to safe water and a diet adjusted to the individual to ensure and maintain optimal health and fitness.”

- A good state of hydration is essential. To stay hydrated, horses need at least 50mL of water per kg of body weight per day. A 500kg horse will therefore require at least 25L.
- Ensure your horse or pony has plenty of access to water during yarding, competition and at night. It can be a good idea to use bailing twine to tie water buckets against a post whilst horses are yarded to avoid spillage and a thirsty horse!



- Horses are designed to graze and forages such as grass and hay should make up a large portion of their diet. Ensuring your horse has constant access to hay whilst yarded or tied to trucks is a good idea whilst at a show to help balance time away from grazing. It can also be a good idea to spend a bit of time hand grazing as and when you can to keep your horse/pony happy.
- Because most horses and ponies in New Zealand are used to a diet predominantly of grass and hay, try to replicate this when away from home and avoid making sudden changes to your horse's diet, even though he won't be in his usual environment.
- On the days when you compete, feed your horse as per normal the evening before and after, and you may wish to add some extra salt or electrolytes to their after-work feed if they have sweated heavily.

NUTRITION TOP TIP:
 MAKE SURE YOUR
 HORSE ALWAYS HAS
 ADEQUATE FIBRE
 AND WATER



Environment

“Provide suitable safe enclosures with room to move, shade, good air quality and comfortable resting areas.”

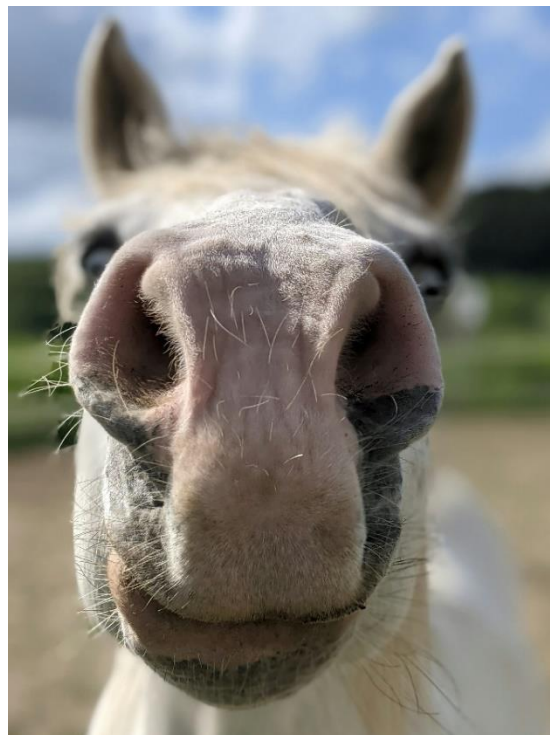
- Horses' thermoneutral zone is usually between 5°C and 25°C. The thermoneutral zone is the range of ambient temperature where horses can usually remain comfortable without effort.
- Temperatures at both Taupo and Christchurch can be cold at night and wind chill can be present during the day. Ensuring your horse has the right weight of cover whilst yarded at the show is a good idea, especially if they are not usually in the temperature range you may experience whilst at Interschools.
- If you are standing outside a ring waiting to ride or need to wait for a mounted prizegiving it can be a good idea to have a light blanket over the horses' quarters to avoid them becoming cold and stiff if temperatures are low or wind chill is very cold.

**ENVIRONMENT
 TOP TIP:**
 REGULARLY CHECK
 YOUR HORSE IS
 COMFORTABLE

Health

“To diagnose, prevent and treat disease, or injury and to create and implement good exercise conditioning and free exercise.”

- As much as we do our best to prepare for an event there can be bumps in the road.
- Be sure to look out for signs of pain or discomfort and put your horse’s welfare before competition.
- Pain-related behaviours can range from subtly moving away when being groomed or not allowing you to catch them in the field to high reactivity behaviours e.g. bucking/ rearing.
- If you think your horse needs vet attention reach out to the event Chief Steward (through your team manager) and the on-site vet will assist you.



HEALTH TOP TIP:
REGULARLY CHECK
YOUR HORSE OVER
AND MONITOR THEM
FOR DISCOMFORT

- Horses’ welfare should always be at the forefront. If you see something that you think is putting a horse or a rider’s wellbeing at risk please report it to the event Chief Steward. ESNZ take horse welfare seriously and will step in to help or refer to the on-site vet if there is a welfare issue.

Behaviour

“Provide sufficient space, proper and safe facilities, compatible company to enable the horse to express normal behaviours.”

- Promote engagement in rewarding activities and positive interactions, enjoyable experiences, calm and confident horse.
- After competing, it’s a good idea to take them for a hand walk in the evening, just to stretch out their muscles. You can repeat this again the next morning also, especially for horses being housed in yards or boxes when they usually live in a paddock.

BEHAVIOUR TOP TIP:
SPEND TIME AND
ENGAGE WITH YOUR
HORSE REGULARLY



Mental State

“Provide safe, compatible, and appropriate opportunities to have pleasurable experiences.”

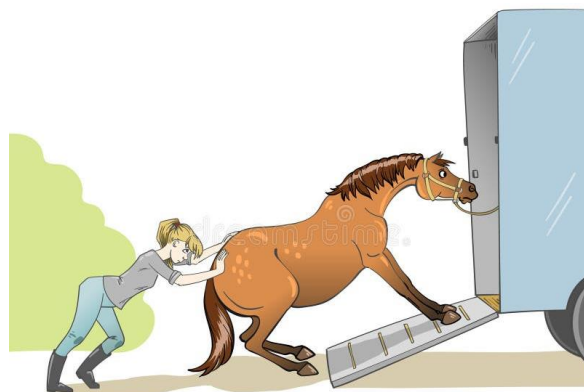
- Just like us, good quality rest and sleep is essential as it allows horses’ brains and bodies time to recuperate.
- It is important to remember that horses do not sleep through the night like we do, but sleep in several short bouts throughout the day and night.
- Ideally, horses should be allowed to choose how and when they rest and sleep. It can be a good idea to allow your horse sometime during the day (and of course night) where they are left in peace to rest.
- Ensure you also minimise boredom, anxiety, fear, and loneliness. Your horse takes cues from you, your presence and calm attitude can help them to feel calm, confident, at ease and more in control. They enjoy variety and find being bonded with their human rewarding.

**MENTAL STATE
TOP TIP:
DON'T FORGET TO
ALSO LEAVE THEM IN
PEACE AT TIMES SO
THEY CAN REST**

Travel and Transport

No matter how far you are travelling to our Interschool events from, ESNZ has some guidelines when it comes to transporting your four-legged friend:

- Make sure your horse float/vehicle/truck has a current WOF or COF.
- Ensure the horse transport is reasonably comfortable and secure.
- Supply your horse/pony with proper and sufficient food and water at sufficient intervals as required.
- Rest periods must allow horses sufficient time to drink and eat, rest, relieve themselves and recover.



Human Wellbeing

- Your health and wellbeing is important too. While away from home you'll be doing activities for longer periods of time than what you might be used to while at home.
- As well as your horse needing to be kept warm in colder weather, it's equally important that you also look after yourself – pack twice as much warm clothing as you think you'll need as you won't have your home comforts. Make sure you bring plenty of warm and comfy bedding. Fuelling up on plenty of hot drinks and warm food (we will also have food carts for this) will help too.
- We have a few fun activities planned for the evenings too, so make sure you join in on these – it's a great way to meet other riders and enjoy the hospitality that we and the amazing sponsors are putting on for you.



HUMAN WELLBEING
TOP TIP:
PACK PLENTY AND
TAKE TIME OUT TO
LOOK AFTER
YOURSELF TOO!