

Adaption issue galore. Long term use of this management approach can often lead horses to chronic stress, learned helplessness, illness and even 'dangerous' behavioural responses as they struggle to cope.



Stabled for long periods of time (more than 1-2 hours per day)

Prevented from developing secure attachments and pair bonds due to being turned out in isolation or with constantly changing herds

Play and exploratory behaviour is suppressed due to prolonged stabling and unsuitable turn out regimes

Limited access to grazing, supplementary forage and browsing. Often fed additional highly processed, high sugar and cereal based concentrate feeds

Regular exposure to fear provoking stimuli and punitive training methods

We drastically restrict their choice over what they do

Impoverished environment

Management compromises (Moving towards 'Horse friendly' domestication)

We will always have to make compromises with domesticated horses but that shouldn't stop us trying to do our best for them.



Provided with free choice where possible about if they want to be out in the field or inside a shelter. (If we can't 'turn out' then large outdoor 'holding yards' with friends, forage and shelter are an option)

They are encouraged to form secure attachments and pair bonds by being provided with 24/7 turn out in a mixed sex, stable herd

Healthy play, socialisation and exploratory behaviour is promoted through ensuring they live in a stable herd and by providing regular environmental and cognitive enrichment

They are provided with access to ad-lib (never run out) forage and supplementary browsing to meet their up to 18 hours a day minimum 'grazing time'. Fed non-cereal based concentrates if additional feed is needed

Limited exposure to fear provoking stimuli and force free, positive reinforcement training methods are adopted

'Ideal' based on the equid ethogram (How horses live in the wild)

They are always outdoors with lots of space to move and have 24/7 access to various choices of shelter, grazing and browsing

They live in large, stable, mixed sex groups where they can develop secure attachments and special life long pair bonds as well as maintaining their 'family' relationships. Natural social behaviours can take place

No unnecessary exposure to aversives

They always have herd members to share vigilance with

They have natural play and exploratory behaviours

They have natural sleep behaviours

Regularly enriched environment

Meeting the horses key needs helps them feel relaxed and secure. This is the lifestyle standard we can strive to meet as best as we can!

