



**YOUR FREE
RESOURCE PACK
FOR IDEAS FOR NON
RIDDEN ACTIVITIES**

**THERE IS MORE TO
OWNING A HORSE
THAN RIDING**

FREE RESOURCE PACK

Suggestions for Non Ridden Activities for Riding Schools and Riding Clubs

There is so much we can enjoy with our equines beyond riding. These activities have many benefits to both horse and human. These include:-

- Enhancing and strengthening the partnership bond and connection.
- Building confidence and self-esteem.
- Great for improving physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.
- A greater understanding and appreciation of equines.
- Enriching equines lives.
- Teaching and learning opportunities for a whole horse approach.

FUN, FREE and for YOU. The Non Ridden Equine Association UK

www.thenonriddenequineassociationuk.org



YOUR FREE RESOURCE PACK

A BIT OF BACKGROUND HISTORY

The original Non Ridden Equine Facebook group was launched on 4th May 2017. With no marketing thousands joined. It was clear that more than clicking like on Facebook had to be done. As a direct result of the need from members the not for profit Non Ridden Equine Association UK was launched. Why UK only? We do not have the funds or resources to tackle global issues. However no matter where you live in the world anyone is welcome to enjoy the Non Ridden Equine Association UK website. It is packed with free to access resources from many professionals to inspire, delight and educate.

A non ridden equine is the most at risk of abuse, substandard care and abandonment. We have an equine crisis and non ridden equines are the hardest to rehome. This along with if you choose to own a non ridden equine or choose not to ride you face challenges and pressures in an equine world geared towards riding. Very little non ridden is taught at grass roots or showcased in the mainstream on the many delights and benefits of non ridden activities. So we encourage riding schools and riding clubs to offer non ridden activities alongside riding.

We hope we can change people's perceptions and challenge thinking by promoting the many benefits of non ridden. In turn so it becomes more accepted alongside riding. We are not anti-riding. If more people valued non ridden equines they will not be seen as worthless. Our campaign is to encourage non ridden activities to be seen as having a high value.

SAFETY FIRST

Before you get started:

- Check your insurance covers you to offer non ridden activities.
- Talk to your staff. Check out who is qualified and passionate about non ridden activities as they will be able to pull together non ridden activities. If you haven't a qualified professional on your team you need to think about the skills your team have, staff development and training.
- Link up with professionals in your area who provide non ridden services as there are golden opportunities to work together in partnership to develop a rich diversity of non ridden activities.
- Never offer any new activity with equines without gaining the qualifications, knowledge and skills.
- Never offer any new activity with equines without the equines having the training and understanding of what is being asked of them and they are comfortable with what is being asked.
- Ensure participants wear the correct safety equipment that is in line with current safety standards. For example hard hat, body protector, gloves and suitable footwear and clothing for the activity.
- Ensure the equines that participate are suitable for the activity. Regular health checks for your equines are essential to ensure your horse is physically and mentally able to do the activities.
- Ensure your horses wear suitable tack that is comfortable and fits correctly.
- Always work safely in a safe environment.
- Always risk assess activities and use them as a live document.
- Always follow all health and safety protocol.

The suggestions for non ridden activities in this resource pack are provided for you to use with a qualified professional to deliver non ridden activities.



IDEAS FOR NON RIDDEN ACTIVITIES

The activities are listed in alphabetical order, not in order of importance.

ADOPT & DONATE



Non ridden equines are the most at risk of neglect and abandonment. Welfare organizations are full to bursting and to keep going they need our help. Why not organize a day trip out and pay a visit to your local welfare organization? It is an opportunity to learn about the wonderful work they do. Their dedication to rescuing equines and to rehabilitate them can only happen with support from the public and donations. Many rescue centers run adoption schemes, so you can choose a horse to adopt for a year. Some welfare organizations take in tack and equipment as donations and hold tack sales. You could have a coffee morning and raise money for your chosen equine charity. (Photograph Left: taken at Redwings Oxhill)

AGILITY

Horse agility is great fun and has many benefits. It is an in hand activity where equine and human navigate a course of obstacles. It is all about development of positive horsemanship. It builds confidence in both the horse and the handler. Engaging in agility you develop your dialogue communication skills, building rapport and understanding as a partnership. It is easy to get started in agility as many of the obstacles are usually found on most yards or are easy to make or inexpensive to purchase. Check out the Agility section in the Library for more information

<https://www.thenonriddenequineassociationuk.org/agility-for-equines.html>

(Photograph Right: Drum on an agility play day)



BALL GAMES



Play is a wonderful activity to enjoy with to your horse. If you use positive reinforcement / clicker training it is easy to teach your horse to play with a ball; as you teach them to target touch. Horses often then discover the joy that they can move the ball about, and if it has a handle they can learn to pick it up. It is possible to teach your horse to play football, and fetch. Balls can be purchased via the internet. They vary in sizes and prices. There are very large purpose made for equines down to gym balls to smaller tough dog balls. It is strongly advised you supervise your horse with the ball. (Photographs left: Kez)

BALLOONS

Helium balloons are a great training tool. We used some to help our horse deal with the farmer's bird scaring bird of prey kite that appeared in the crop fields we walk round. Using positive reinforcement we enabled our horse to feel confident to approach, inspect and learn that things that floated up in the air are nothing to worry about. (Picture right: Kez and Steve)



BUBBLES



Blowing bubbles isn't just for children. Blowing bubbles can be an enrichment activity. Ensure you don't frighten your horse by first blowing the bubbles away from him and down wind, so he can see them drift away. Let him get curious and before long he may want to check them out. (Picture left: Kez)

CLICKER TRAINING / POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

If you are looking for an ethical and compassionate way to train then clicker training is for you. It is easy to get started, there are many trainers who provide services to teach you how. You will also find on the Non Ridden Equine Association UK website a library with a dedicated section on **Positive Reinforcement** with FREE to enjoy articles from a diversity of professionals to inspire, delight and educate. Clicker training will start non ridden. Once you have mastered the basics it can be embedded into any activity for example: handling, leading, play, agility and riding. To check out the FREE resource Library on the Non Ridden Equine Association UK please use this link:

<https://www.thenonriddenequineassociationuk.org/clicker-training-positive-reinforcement.html>

(Photograph right: Vicki Yates and Kez and a click treat moment)



CONES

You can use cones in many ways. Leading an Equine. Do you have someone who can teach basic leading skills? If yes great as this is an opportunity to teach people how to safely lead. Once mastered in a safe arena leading can be extended into leading round a safe course of cones set up in the arena. To weave in and out of. To mark out a pattern to use for groundwork for example: To do figures of eight, clover leaf pattern, squares, etc. If you have enough you can use them to set out a circle and you stand on the inside of the circle and ask your horse to travel round the outside of the circle. You can use them for playing hide the treat under. They can be used to mark out a box for your horse to halt, and stand in. They are inexpensive and a really useful bit of kit for non ridden activities.

(Photograph right: Taken at an Introduction to agility day at Morton Morrell)



CREATIVITY



Equines are stunningly beautiful and can be inspirational for the creation of art in many forms. Spending time enjoying the beauty of your horse and the environment can be the ignition for your creative juices to flow. We are often too hung up on doing, getting chores done and rushing we miss out on the beauty that surrounds us. Why not offer people the opportunity to enjoy your beautiful equines in creative sessions e.g. photography, videos, drawing, painting, words, crafts....The only limitation is your imagination. If no one on your team is creative why not ask a local artist to run a creative equine themed art activity?

(Photograph left: Jack by Vicki Jayne Yates)

DOING OR BEING?

Our modern world is fast paced, often stressful and pressured. We rush about doing and have little time to just be. We are human beings not human doings. You could offer people the opportunity to come along for a window of time to just be with a horse. Not to do anything, do absolutely nothing, just be.

EQUINE FACILITATED LEARNING

There are many small organizations that offer equine facilitated learning to people. Each is different, there are a rich diversity of professionals offering coaching services, education, therapeutic counselling, personal development courses, health and wellbeing, corporate activities, recreation therapy, life skills provider and more. There is much debate on the topic of the ethics; and good practitioners see the horse as a partner not a tool. Why not link up with your local equine facilitated learning practitioners as there is sure to be an opportunity to offer some therapeutic sessions to your clients by working in partnership

FLAGS

A flag is another inexpensive item you can use in non ridden activities. Great for teaching confidence and spook busting. Before you can teach this to others you must be qualified, confident and skilled in horsemanship. Another opportunity to use positive reinforcement to help horses learn flags are not to be feared. You can link up with a horsemanship practitioner to teach the techniques.

(Picture above right: Vicki Yates and Kez at liberty with a flag)



FRIENDS & FAMILY



Why not hold a family fun day? Here you could get the staff to showcase some non ridden activities. Help the parents to see they can be involved more, rather than just dropping off their child to learn to ride. You can use a family fun day to showcase horses are not just for being ridden. You can talk about the activities you provide for all to learn more about horses in a non ridden context. The more it is talked about it will eventually become more widely accepted.

(Photograph left: Vicki Yates with her granddaughter Perri-May and Kez. Perri-May asked if she could ride Kez. Out of the mouths of babes. All her exposure to horses has been mostly in films, cartoons and mainstream images where horses are seen to be ridden. When we told her why Kez is not ridden she was totally

accepting of the idea.)

GROUNDWORK & HORSEMANSHIP

There is good, bad and ugly groundwork practices out there and here is not the platform to debate this. Good groundwork sees the horse as sentient, a partner and uses positive reinforcement and ethical and compassionate methods. There are groundwork activities for helping a horse to be flexible, have core strength, good balance and rhythm. There are groundwork activities that encourage the horse to think rather than react and to look to the handler for guidance. There are exercises on the ground where horse and handler use a shared language to communicate in dialogue. Good groundwork never punishes a horse, or uses gadgets, or uses force or intimidation. Good groundwork builds confidence, trust, rapport, empathy, and is joyful and fun for both horse and handler. If you are looking to offer groundwork horsemanship to clients this is an opportunity to research ethical compassionate groundwork approaches. Learning something new is life enriching and fun; it allows us to develop our skills, knowledge and expertise. (Photograph above right: Vicki Yates and Ruby doing groundwork with positive reinforcement)



HERD WATCHING



Why not offer heard watching? We can learn a great deal about horses by quietly observing. It is an opportunity for us all to learn about equine language and communication, social bonds and herd etiquette. It is a great opportunity to see the how horses connect with one another in the herd, and see the personalities and characters of the horses. This activity is great for us humans as we live in a fast paced world. So sitting quietly, simply observing gives us a golden gift of slowing down and the chance to see the world from the horse's perspective.

(Photograph above: Best Friends)

HOOP

A great activity is to see if you can ask a horse to accurately place his front hooves in a hoop. It is essential you select a hoop that comes apart, like the one in the picture. Just in case your horse gets his legs caught.

(Picture right: Sammy with Christine at Liberty with the hoop exercise.)



INJURIES

All equines can get into scrapes. Injuries can and do happen. Why run an equine first aid course? The Blue Cross has some very useful basic information. www.bluecross.org.uk/pet-advice/basic-first-aid-horses

JUMPING

Some horses love to jump, others don't. If you have a horse that loves to jump, jumping can be non ridden. This activity would be great for your more advanced groundwork students, as a good level of groundwork must be mastered before progressing to jumping. If you have a safe enclosed environment you could set up a jump for the horse to pop over in the school in hand or at liberty. For the highly skilled and adventurous and have access to safe natural jumps, like logs, ditches, banks in the field or a cross country jumps you could choose to take a horse out jumping in hand.

LIBERTY

Liberty is about giving horses the choice to engage with us and to be a liberty in activities we both enjoy. True liberty is without tack and gives the horse the choice and permission to leave. Then what you are left with is the truth, the connection, mutual trust, play, joy and fun. It is a showcase of your communication and your relationship. Liberty work can greatly enhance groundwork training and riding activities. It will teach you many skills when working at liberty: Patience, flexibility, compassion, empathy, how to ignite self-motivation in your horse, kindness, creativity, great timing, a full grasp of equine language and etiquette, and knowing your horse as an individual. It would be inspirational for your clients to work with a professional who specializes in Liberty and Play. So invest in making links with professionals who offer this service.

On the Non Ridden Equine Association UK website there is a Library with a **Liberty** section.

<https://www.thenonriddenequineassociationuk.org/at-liberty.html>



(Photograph above: Kez and Ringo at Liberty with the podium. This activity took place in their field so they were free to leave at any time.)

LONG REINING



Long reining may be seen as old fashioned. It has more uses than be part of training for starting a young horse for riding. It is great for building a partnership, bond, confidence and trust in any horse and handler. It teaches your horse to listen to your cues to and to take direction. You can use long reining to manoeuvre round or over obstacles. Long reining can be done in a halter, bitless bridle or with a bit. It is a skill and technique that should be taught at grass roots. If your team is not skilled in long reining it would be a golden opportunity for staff

development, so invest in some professional lessons. Start with lessons with a tutor and an experienced horse. Then train your own horses to be confident and relaxed long reining. When the staff and horses are confident and skilled this is the time to start teaching others. (Picture above left: Vicki Yates and Ruby)

MASSAGE

Massaging your horse is a wonderful activity. It enables you to feel your horse's muscles. It can be very pleasurable for the horse. And a wonderful way to connect with horses. However if there is any tension, areas and of discomfort your horse will not enjoy being massaged. If you do discover any discomfort or pain contact your vet. You could work with a local professional who provides equine massage and offer a session for people to come along and learn more about it.

MENTAL WELLBEING

It is well known that having equines in our lives is great for our emotional wellbeing. Many equine therapy centers provide services to support people with mental health issues with equine-assisted psychotherapy. People can learn and understand by working with a professional and an equine about their condition and what triggers or causes it.

Those of who own an equine know first-hand the many benefits equines bring to our emotional wellbeing. Horses rely on us for their care. So it gives us focus, a reason to get up and get going each day. We must be reliable. The link between physical and mental health is well documented and looking after an equine gives us exercise and keeps us active. You could offer people the opportunity to learn how to care for a horse. With the recognition that people gain a great deal from the caring so they may well want to continue helping to look after the horses after the course has finished as it is very therapeutic. Food for thought that activities such as caring for a horse, grooming, feeding, and stable duties can reduce stress and anxiety. Spending time with a horse can lift your spirits and is a natural mood enhancer. Research has shown that spending time with animals can help reduce stress, anxiety and depression. It can help you to feel calmer, happier and feel more positive about life. Can your riding school or riding club champion and celebrate how good being with equines is for your mental welling and happiness?

MUTUAL GROOMING



Equines love to bond and form strong friendships. A very natural activity pair bonds engage in is mutually grooming each other. We can engage in a similar activity with our horse. It is an opportunity to discover how a horse likes to be touched. Each horse has a preference, some love gentle soft stroking, others a good scratch. Humans get busy with dirt removal when grooming. How about instead asking your horse how he likes to be groomed? Look for feedback from your horse, if he's happy he will be blissed out. Your horse may offer to groom you in return. Some horses are careful and mindful and gentle, others are rough. It can hurt, so you can provide an alternative by placing an old jacket or a towel over a stable door and encourage your horse to groom that instead of you. Knowing what type of touch your horse finds pleasurable can also be used as a reward.

(Picture above left: Steve Yates and Ruby engaging in mutual grooming.)

NOT RIDING TODAY?

In an equine world geared towards riding, this question "not riding today?" in its' various forms gets asked people who choose not to ride. It is then sometimes followed by more questions and the person can feel pressured to justify why they choose not to ride. There are many reasons why people choose not to ride. They can be very personal reasons. Sadly for some people this questioning and pressure can turn to criticism, ridicule and judgement. Without education on the many joys and benefits of non ridden this will continue. So can your riding school or riding club make a difference? Can you make your environment a place for all riders and non riders. Can your approach challenge this thinking? Here is a link for information on some of the many reasons why people choose not to ride.

www.thenonriddenequineassociationuk.org/why-are-you-not-riding.html



PAMPER YOUR PONY

Some equines love to be pampered others not. If you own equines that adore the attention of being pampered why not offer pamper your pony sessions? Teach people how to groom a horse. Teach braiding manes and tails. You could go for a full on equine spa day, book treatments from a professionals: massage, reiki, bowen, etc.....so people can learn about the rich diversity out there. Once everyone has finished pampering their ponies you could have a best turned out show. Or encourage people to take photographs to use for on-line showing.

(Photograph right: Kez with a running braid)



PHYSICAL WELLBEING

Caring for an equine is physical and can contribute to us staying healthy. Day to day care activities such as poo picking around the fields require us to lift scoops of poop and push a wheelbarrow. Great for getting out doors, enjoy the fresh air, being in nature and when the sun shines natural vitamin D, helping maintain bone health. Physical movements such as walking with our horse or playing help us develop better reflexes, balance, core strength, coordination, increased joint mobility, flexibility and muscle tone. Physical exercise makes you feel good as it raises the levels of the natural mood-enhancing hormones. Plus it can be one useful tool in burning calories keeping waistlines in check. So an ideal opportunity to offer your clients the opportunity to get fit and enjoy the great life of being with horses.

PICNIC



Going on a picnic can be great fun. You could take the horses out in hand to picnic, or bring a selection of treats for your horses to enjoy in their field, yard or stable. A picnic can be a wonderful social activity for everyone to enjoy while out in the sunshine. It is a fun activity to sit together and talk about your horses.

(Picture: Kez enjoying a picnic picking a pear from the tree)

PLAY



Play is not just for the young, play is a lifetime gift. Play is not frivolous. There is far more to play than first meets the eye. Play provides us with an excellent opportunity to fully engage with our horses on many levels: cognitively, physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. It teaches horses and humans about sharing a learning experience. In horsemanship play is a wonderful tool in development of a shared language as it opens up two way communication. It builds self-esteem and self-confidence in both equine and human participants which enriches a shared supportive relationship. Play is wonderful for building mutual respect, trust and bonding. If you want to ignite cognitive

development in your horse play is a great way to encourage your horse to think. Horses are very able to cognitively process, problem solve and think things through. Play allows horses to explore the world and is fabulous for conquering their fears. Using play you can help your horse think, to look to you for guidance rather than react. Play in horsemanship teaches humans about patience and understanding. As for true horsemanship play should be 50 / 50 with the horse. So here it is essential we listen to the horse, as to what type of play an individual enjoys. Through play horses develop emotional maturity and the ability to concentrate. Exploration is the heart of play and it is the ignition to curiosity and problem-solving skills. Too many of us get hung up on being serious with our horses. Letting your hair down, laughter and joy in play is a wonderful way to spend time with your horse. Play should be a cherished part of horsemanship. It sets you up for a meaningful close bond and friendship with your horse. It is sociable, rewarding, motivating and sets us up for success mentally, physically, socially and emotionally. Most of all play is fun. This is an area little taught in the mainstream. It is strongly advised you gain skills, knowledge and expertise in equine play before you think about how you can offer this as a learning opportunity for your clients.

(Photograph above left: Kez playing with his ball.)

PODIUM / PEDESTAL

A podium or a pedestal is a great piece of equipment to have for non ridden activities. Teaching a horse to be confident standing on a podium has many benefits. These include confidence putting their feet on a surface that makes a noise. Coordination and body awareness stepping up and down. Accuracy of hoof placement. You can also use a podium to help prepare a horse for loading training. They are easy to make from a strong heavy duty pallet, reinforced with marine ply with an anti-slip mat on the top. (Photograph right: Drum and Craig.)



POLE WORK



A few poles can be used in many ways for in hand activities. They are great for exercises to build core strength, regulate stride length, improve flexibility and encourage a horse to become more aware of hoof placements. You can ask your horse to step over poles. And there are so many possibilities of how you can lay them out. You can raise them at one end or both (we use child potties from the pound



shop). You can make a box and use it as a stay box. Or a walk in and out box. You can build mazes and corridors with poles. Pole work can be hard work, so it pays to get advice and guidance from a physiotherapist or vet regarding its suitability for your horse. (Photographs left and right above: Kez and Steve.)

QUIETEN THE MIND

In our fast paced world it can be a challenge to quieten the mind. Being with horses is a wonderful opportunity to practice quietening the mind and mindfulness. There are equine professionals who teach mindfulness techniques and how to embed them into horsemanship. These tools not just for being with horses, these you can apply in any aspect of life. There are many benefits for mind, body and soul. It reduces stress, tension and anxiety. It helps you to gain perspective and control of your thoughts and emotions. Mindfulness helps us to be present to live in the here and now. Could your riding school or riding club offer mindfulness with horses?

(Photograph right: Ruby and Vicki Yates)



RELAXATION



There are lots of relaxation techniques that cross the species divide into both worlds of horses and humans. Horses have relaxation down to a fine art. They enjoy being together chilling. One to ponder: It is impossible to be tense, anxious or fearful at the same time as relaxed. They are polar opposites. Relaxation lowers adrenaline and is good for health and wellbeing. Relaxation allows you to connect with what really matters in life, inner peace. Relaxation can enable higher achievement, better communication, open minds and fuel creativity. It takes the drama out of

situations. Relaxation leads to better understanding, control of emotions, and a balanced state of mind and energy. With relaxation you become more aware of everything around you. With all these benefits why not think about how you could offer relaxation sessions? Or seek out a professional to teach you these techniques? (Picture above left: Alfie and Joker)

SCENT GAMES

Horses love to explore and discover new things, using all their senses. A horse has a wonderful sense of smell. I am sure you have seen a horse tilt up his head and curl up his top lip. It is called flehmen and has a purpose. Horses do this to trap a scent so they can analyze the smell. We rarely think about scent when planning an activity for our equines. Or as an opportunity to teach others. So a session you can offer is scent games for horses. You could play a game called find the food, leave your horses food in different places in the field, yard or stable and let your horse enjoy the fun of finding it. You could hide treats in a pile of hay, or under a bucket, or scatter small bits of treats in random places in the field. You could set out some cones and under some place a treat so your horse has to investigate which ones have treats. You could select some of your horse's natural hedgerow treats and place towels over them, so your horse has to sniff out the treats to get to them. You could book a session with an equine aroma therapist or equine herbalist to discover which essential oils or herbs your horse would self-select. (Picture above right: Puzzle showing us flehmen)



SPOOK BUSTING

If we go walkies or ride out with our horse we are likely to meet things that rattle or spook our horse. Helping our horse to look to us for guidance rather than react is a great tool. You could do an in-hand spook busting session in a safe environment to help people and the horses to become more confident in tackling spooky situations. As spook busting must be done ethically and correctly. On the Non Ridden Equine Association UK website you will find a library with a section dedicated to positive reinforcement packed full of resources to get you started with positive reinforcement. Play is also great for spook busting and bomb proofing your horse. Horse and human together through play around facing fears, develop new competencies, enhanced confidence and a resiliency in facing future challenges. From practicing spook busting games as a partnership, people and the horses will have tools and strategies in dealing with scary situations. Once practiced and skilled you will view tricky situations as golden training opportunities not to be feared. (Picture above right: Overcoming the fear of umbrellas)



SWEET SPOT SCRATCHES



Why not teach people all about sweet spot scratches? Do you know where your horse loves to be rubbed or scratched? Oh when you find that spot your horse will be in bliss wiggling its' lip, soft eyed and happy. It is a wonderful tool as you can use it as a fabulous reward for your horse. Some horses it can take time to find out what sort of touch and where feels good. Others it is quick and easy to find out. You will also discover that the place they enjoy being rubbed or scratched and how you do it can change over time too.

(Picture left: Steve and Ruby)

TACK

Why not teach people about tack and how to care for it? The Non Ridden Equine Association UK and our affiliated Non Ridden Equine Facebook groups are not anti-bit. What matters is the knowledge and compassion of the mind of the hands that hold the equipment. An educated mind enables you to understand your tack choice in relation to your horsemanship stage and ability in the bigger picture of aiming for refinement of your horsemanship. The wrong approach and equipment used badly can result in disaster and can make your horse miserable. Any tack can cause discomfort or pain if used incorrectly. The horse's head and mouth is packed full of nerve endings. The skull has little padding. The nose on the horse is delicate and fragile. To help we have provided FREE to read information, advice, suggestions and tips on tack here is the link www.thenonriddenequineassociationuk.org/tack-advice-suggestions-and-tips.html

(Picture right: Kez wearing the Orbitless bridle)



TARP



A tarp is a cheap and useful bit of kit for non ridden activities. It can be set up for your horse to walk on. Weight it down with poles to stop it flapping or blowing away. It teaches your horse to be confident walking on a surface that crinkles and makes a noise. You can also set it up to use as a parking spot to halt your horse. To teach your horse to stand on tarp you need to be patient, use positive reinforcement and allow your horse to check out all is safe. Tarp can also be used draped over fencing and secured like a banner. It can also be used secured over a frame to create a tunnel. If your horse is confident with tarp and it not moving

you can extend the use by moving the tarp, firstly away from your horse. So it is no threat. Once your horse will follow you dragging the tarp you can then put a little more life into the tarp, moving it about more.

Eventually your horse may decide to play with the tarp. It pays to get professional tuition to make sure you are doing it correctly and safely. (Picture above left: Steve and Kez)

THERAPEUTIC

Sir Winston Churchill said "There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man." And he is right. Horses are good for us physically, mentally and spiritually. There is much research that now proves that engaging with horses in our lives has many therapeutic benefits.

The Non Ridden Equine Association UK has a library and a section dedicated to **Therapeutic** here is the link <https://www.thenonriddenequineassociationuk.org/therapeutic-equines.html> Here you will find lots of free to read articles to inspire, delight and educate. What therapeutic sessions can you develop for people to enjoy?

TRAFFIC SIGNS

If you are good at DIY why not make some traffic signs. They can be used for in-hand work to help your horse become confident with traffic signs. They are useful for spook busting and can also be used for attaching other objects to. In the photo you will see we attached some windmills. They make great props for obstacle courses and can be used for practicing road safety too.

(Picture right: Kez and Steve checking out the road signs and windmills)



TWO BARRELS



Barrels are readily available and cheap to acquire. You may even have some about the place. They can be used in many ways for non ridden activities. As a squeeze as in the picture of Drum and Craig. This teaches horses to be confident in small gaps and spaces. Laid end to end flat they make a great jump. End up with the top open you can put flags in and decorate them to make up a scary corner for spook busting. Our horse Kez likes to nudge and roll the barrel about too. If you have more than two barrels you can use them to weave in and out of. Or set them out in patterns.

(Picture left: Drum and Craig)

USEFUL TRICKS & TRICK TRAINING



Trick training can have some very practical uses. For example teaching your horse to lift up his hoof on a verbal cue so it is easier for hoof care. It is a fun way to engage your horse's mind. Horses are very intelligent and able to learn, reason and problem solve. Trick training done ethically with positive reinforcement is a great way to strengthen the bond with your horse. You have to work together as a partnership with ethical trick training tapping into what your horse finds fun and interesting. Tricks you could teach

are endless, here are just a few examples: touch an object, pick up an object, bow, give a kiss, come when called, park and stay, move backwards, move sideways, fetch a ball, etc. Can your riding school offer trick training? If not you could link up with a professional who specializes in liberty and trick training. (Picture above left: Vicki Yates and Kez)

VITAL SIGNS

Our equines rely on us to keep them healthy. Spotting when a horse is unwell requires a knowledge of what are normal vital signs and what is not. Do you know what are normal healthy resting temperature, heart rate, respiration rate, what the mucous membranes should look like, capillary refill time, gut sounds, and hydration levels? Would you know how to check for these? Could you run a course to teach people?

WALKIES



Wild horses roam over vast distances. It is a natural activity for horses. Walking has many physical and emotional benefits. Walking with a horse is a completely different experience than riding. It gives you the opportunity to connect in a different way. Great for building a partnership bond and chilling out together. Before venturing out for a walk ensure you have great ground skills in a safe area. How about teaching safe leading skills? Do you have someone who can teach basic leading skills? If yes great as this is an opportunity to teach people how to safely lead. Once mastered in a safe arena leading can be extended into leading round a safe course set up in the arena. Leading an Equine can be extended to going out for a walk in hand.

Never try to take a horse out for a walk that has separation anxiety without addressing this issue first. For more information on Walking and Hiking with an Equine please use this link

<https://www.thenonriddenequineassociationuk.org/walking-and-hiking-with-your-equine.html>

WORDS

Horses are very intelligent and able to learn verbal voice cues have a meaning. So why not get curious about how many words you can teach your horse in relation to non ridden activities. You could teach your horse a verbal word or words to request he picks up his foot. Or to whoa, stand and park. To slow down, wait, steady or to be mindful it is slippery under foot. To move over, to back up, to turn left or right. Voice cues for all paces. A word to indicate the request to touch an object, to pick up an object. Then how about teaching this as a subject to your clients?

X-FACTOR STARS & ONLINE SHOWING

No doubt people who come to your riding school or riding club have a favorite horse. We all think we have the best horse and none of us are wrong. Just as the X-Factor show gives people a place to shine in front of the judges so does on-line showing. On-line showing is great fun and there are many classes suitable for non ridden equines and non ridden activities. It is super easy to enter, fun to see all the wonderful entries and see the judge's placements. There are beautiful rosettes and prizes you can win. So why not encourage people to photograph their non ridden events, activities and sessions as they can extend what they are doing by entering their photographs into an on-line show. Here is a link to a list of on-line showing platforms:

<https://www.thenonriddenequineassociationuk.org/online-showing.html>

(Picture right: Kez with some of his on-line showing rosettes)



YARD SHOW



Why not put on a non ridden fun day and yard show. By getting together you could pull together some fun themed activities and classes. Here are just a few suggestions: Agility, Handy Pony, Best Mane, Best Tail, Best Veteran, Best Turned Out, Fancy Dress, Best Trick, Funniest Face, Horse and Hound, In Hand Dressage Test, etc.

(Picture left: Pat with Caper and Beau on a yard agility fun day)

YOUR HORSE'S WORLD – ENVIRONMENTAL ENRICHMENT



Your riding school or riding club could offer sessions on environmental enrichment. Horses have their food, water, shelter, environment and herd buddies provided by us. Their physical needs and mental needs are just as important. It is our responsibility to keep our horses mentally active too. This is where the role of environmental enrichment comes in. Horses enjoy activities they find entertaining or challenging. Enrichment comes in many forms and we have given suggestions on activities you can do together with your equine in this resource pack. Here we are focusing on how you can enrich your equines environment. Sensory enrichment is about the five senses: sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste. Sight can be as simple as placing horse safe objects your horse can visually check out. A plastic equine mirror is another great visual enrichment. We discussed earlier how important the sense of smell is. You could

scatter some herbs on the ground for your horse to enjoy smelling. Or dotting a few drops of essential oil onto fence rail. How we provide food can be an enrichment. You could place hay in lots of small piles across the field so the horse has to walk about more. Or prolong eating time by using small hole hay nets. You could cut up fruit and vegetables into very small pieces and scatter them across the field or hide in a horse safe container. Cognitive enrichment is about providing novel objects that a horse can safely investigate. These can be anything from a paper sack (make sure no metal staples), a cardboard box (again select one with no staples), a sturdy dog toy, horse ball, a mat, cone, branches (off a tree that is safe for horses to eat), etc. The key here is not to leave the objects in the environment. Let the horses enjoy the object and once they have lost interest remove it and store it away. That way you can use it again in a few weeks and it will come out as something of interest. Anything that lives in their environment they will become familiar with and lose interest in. Social enrichment involves allowing our equines to live with other equines, and other species they may naturally encounter with similar needs.

(Photo above left: Kez investigating a cardboard box)

ZZZ – SNOOZE WITH YOUR HORSE

We have got to z. Horses love to snooze and it is a huge compliment if your horse chooses to snooze with you. It shows he feels safe, secure and trusts you. So nothing wrong with providing a place for everyone to enjoy a snooze.

I am sure we haven't included everything non ridden, but enough to kick start your ideas for non ridden activities.

Please visit www.thenonriddenequineassociationuk.org for more information.



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