



Cleanliness on the yard is not chiefly about appearance – although that's a bonus – but is critical to reducing the risk of equine illness

How to deep clean a stable

JAYNE TANSEY is a yard supervisor at the Philip Leverhulme Equine Hospital. Here's her method:

- 1 Remove all faeces and urine, along with all the bedding, matting and equipment (buckets, string and so on).
 - 2 Empty and clean any associated drains.
 - 3 Remove dust from all fixtures, such as lights, heaters, pipes, hay racks and from the rafters and roof.
 - 4 Manually scrub walls and floors with an animal-safe general surface disinfectant to remove organic matter and clean grossly contaminated areas.
 - 5 Allow to dry, before replacing all the cleaned accessories.
 - 6 For a really thorough clean, repeat steps four and five.
- Speak to your local farm supplier for advice on the best chemicals to use. We use non-residue disinfectants that do not contaminate the environment, but naturally degrade to water.

composite walls and sealed floors,” says Andrea. “We empty every bit of shavings out of the box and wash down the walls with a soft brush, with disinfectant. We have the soft, sealed floors, give those a brush down, let that dry and then later in the week we knapsack spray, then do all the feed pods, hay bars and the drinkers.”

Bucket slime is banished, their beds are immaculate and they are disinfectant demons. Catherine Welton gets a masterclass in yard hygiene from the pros

“Spot checks are carried out where any member of the team can have their hands swabbed at any point, which is sent to our onsite lab for analysis of bacteria.”

AND while we don't need to go as far as swabbing our fellow liveries, Jayne points out that keeping on top of germs in our own stable management routine is important.

“You may not need hospital-level protocols at home, but biosecurity is still very relevant,” she says. “Damp and warm environments such as stables and high touch areas act as the perfect bacterial breeding ground. Biofilms can form on these surfaces, building over time which can make it difficult to remove bacteria and disinfectant becomes less effective. So, it's important to clean 'high touch' areas such as tack rooms regularly.”

Andrea O'Brien is company director at

Equine International Shipping in Ireland. “Hygiene is very important in the world of horse transportation, for a number of reasons,” she says. “Mostly biosecurity for safeguarding against the spread of disease, bacterial, viral or fungal infections, for example, ringworm.”

As well as maintaining hygiene standards for the horses in transit, they also have a layover yard where horses stay for their Department of Agriculture inspection, before leaving the country or on entry.

“Our layover stables have

WHEN it comes to maintaining good hygiene on our own yards, there are some commonly overlooked areas.

“Like field troughs – when was the last time they were emptied and scrubbed out?” asks Rosina Lillywhite, head of nursing at Liphook. “Standing water is an ideal breeding ground for bacteria.”

And in the stable, it's what lurks beneath that's often the problem.

“Many people use rubber mats, and the stable looks clean but debris and moisture can build up underneath,”

she points out. “Mats need to be lifted regularly and the floor properly cleaned and disinfected.”

Unfortunately, just sloshing around disinfectant isn't the answer.

“Disinfectant is inactivated by organic material (like faeces and urine) so if you don't

