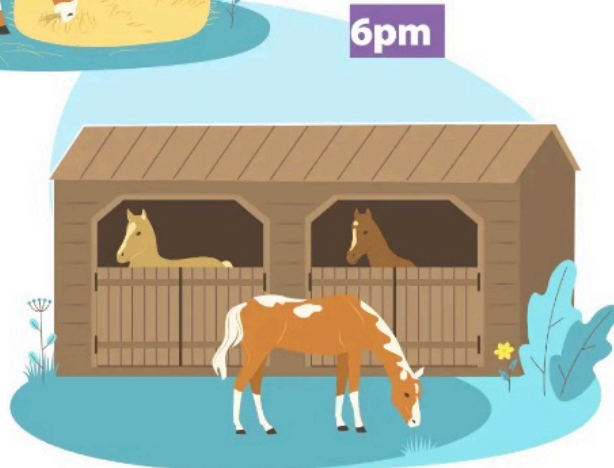
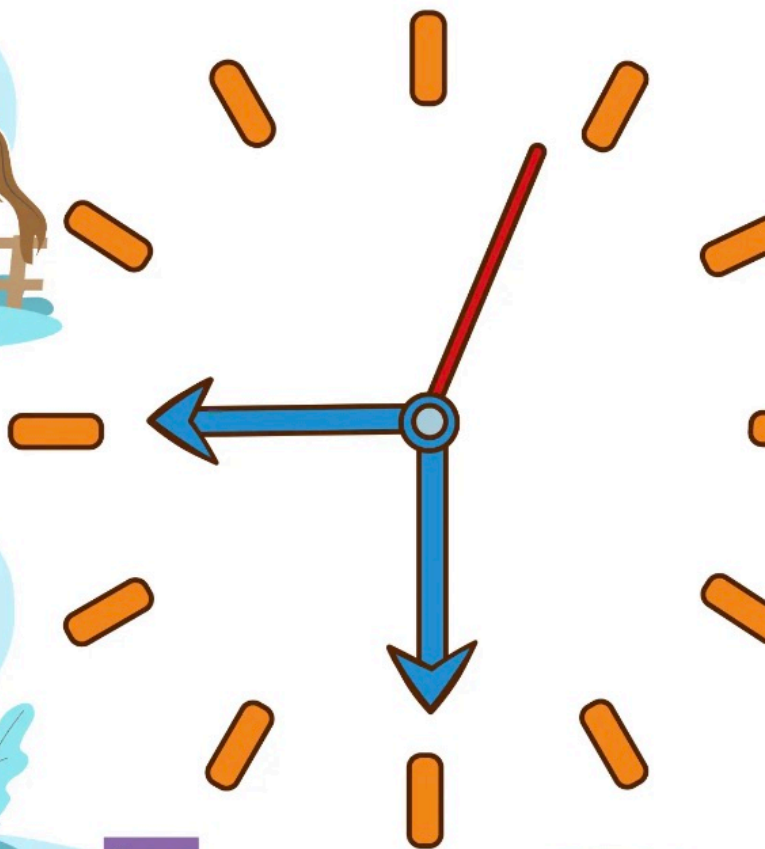


Routine MATTERS

Is following a routine the be all and end all when keeping horses and do owners really need to bust a gut to ride and feed at the same time every day? **Catherine Welton** finds out from a variety of experts



L EFT TO THEIR own devices, horses have a repetitive routine and spend the same amount of time eating, resting, sleeping and moving around every day. These were the findings of a 2021 study by Auer et al.

Owners often keep their horses in a routine without realising it, to fit around their own commitments — like work and school runs. However, sometimes horses are required to cope with a change to their routine; for example, if they are heading to a competition, a fun ride, or to camp. Some horses seem to take this kind of change in their stride, while others have a meltdown if their breakfast is even five minutes late. Therefore, what are the pros and cons of routines?