



WorldHorseWelfare

HEY

- Horses' Experiences on Yards -



What is the HEY?

A yard-level horse welfare assessment tool based on the Five Domains Model, to be completed periodically by a group of caregivers.

Part 1. Horses' Experience

Needs

Horses feel best when their needs are met...

Horses' Experience

What percentage of time do the horses have this need met?
Discuss the experience of all the horses, and then select the percentage based on the individual horse who would score the lowest for each need.

Positive Indicators

What signs do you see in the horses when they have this need met?

Negative Indicators

What signs do you see in the horses when they don't have this need met?

Nutrition

1. Hydration — Horses can access clean water of an appropriate temperature, and they drink enough water throughout the day and night to stay well hydrated.



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2. Nutrition — Horses receive the appropriate amount of calories, fibre, protein, vitamins and minerals for their age, weight, reproductive state and exercise level.



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3. Grazing and Browsing — Horses engage in grazing and browsing throughout the day and night, having continuous access to fibrous grasses (fresh or dried), hedges and other vegetation.



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Environment

4. Choice of Environment —

Horses can choose among environments that are exposed to vs protected from rain, wind, sun and can move to find thermal comfort. Horses can always find a place to be calm, rest and lie down to sleep.



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5. Space Allowance — Horses spend the majority of their time in spaces where they can retreat safely from each other and from humans and in which they can stand with head fully raised, walk forward and turn around, lie down, stretch, roll over fully and groom. They also spend the majority of each 24-h period turned out in an area where they can exercise freely.



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6. Comfort Underfoot — Horses spend time on a variety of surfaces that are clean, safe and in good condition, allowing them to choose a place that is drier, wetter, softer or firmer according to their needs for comfort while standing, moving and lying.



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Health

7. Physical Fitness — Horses have a healthy level of cardiovascular and musculoskeletal fitness, allowing them to carry out all the behaviours that are normal for their age and recover quickly from exertion.



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8. Good Health — Horses receive regular preventive veterinary care, including routine dental and farriery care and are protected from the threat of infectious disease through biosecurity measures. Any injuries, diseases or wounds that do occur receive prompt veterinary attention, and the vet's treatment plans are followed.



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9. Freedom from Pain and Discomfort — Horses are kept free from prolonged pain, allowing them to carry out all normal behaviours. Horses feel no discomfort, pain or distress from the tack used on them.



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10. A Good Death — The quality of life of geriatric horses and horses with ongoing compromised health is assessed regularly by the care team so that euthanasia can be planned early to prevent suffering. Euthanasia is carried out using a suitable method which causes no distress in horses.



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Behavioural Interactions

11. Social Support — Horses live with one or more other horses with whom they have mostly positive interactions and they can safely escape conflict. Horses are able to see at least one other horse at all times, including while feeding and lying down.



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12. Exploration — Horses explore, investigate and show interest in their environments, encountering a similar level of novelty to what they would find in the wild.



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13. Expectations and Sense of Control — Horses have predictability and routine in the way that they are managed and handled, and handling is done in pairs or as groups wherever possible. Any changes to horses' environment or routine are done gradually, contributing to healthy expectations by the horse and a sense of familiarity and control.



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14. Learning — Horses live in a dynamic environment in which they learn and gain behavioural confidence throughout their lifetimes. If training occurs, horses are positively engaged with appropriate levels of challenge and reward, and trainers monitor horses' behaviour continuously for any signs of stress, fear or frustration to ensure horses remain calm and have a positive experience of learning.



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15. Positive Horse-Human Interactions — Horses have positive interactions with humans, showing minimal fear, and they are not overly dependent on humans. Humans communicate clearly with horses, preventing confusion and frustration, and horses have a high level of choice in their interactions with humans.



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Well done!



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Part 2. Actions for Improvement

It's time to get creative!

In the rows below, list your scores from lowest to highest. For each need that scored less than 100%, come up with one short-term action and one long-term action that could improve the horses' experience. Then write how you will know whether the horses' experience has improved once you've implemented the action.

Welfare Score
(Order lowest to highest)

Horses' Need

Actions for Improvement
(ST = short-term action; LT = long-term action)

Indicators to Track
How will we know if the horses' experience improves?

ST:

LT:

ST:

LT:

ST:

LT:



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Welfare Score
(Order lowest to highest)

Horses' Need

Actions for Improvement
(ST = short-term action; LT = long-term action)

Indicators to Track
How will we know if the horses' experience improves?

▼	▼	ST:	
		LT:	
▼	▼	ST:	
		LT:	
▼	▼	ST:	
		LT:	
▼	▼	ST:	
		LT:	



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▼	▼	ST:	
		LT:	
▼	▼	ST:	
		LT:	
▼	▼	ST:	
		LT:	
▼	▼	ST:	
		LT:	



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▼	▼	ST:	
		LT:	
▼	▼	ST:	
		LT:	
▼	▼	ST:	
		LT:	



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Well done!

What's next?



Share your Welfare Wins

Share your ideas that have worked and the welfare improvements you see in your horses with the rest of the equine community.

On any social media platform, just use the hashtag #WelfareWins



Learn more about horses' needs

Horses and People Magazine have developed an excellent infographic on the Five Domains Model and what horses need to thrive:

[Download it HERE](#)

For a better understanding of the science of horse welfare and what horses have evolved to need, take the research-backed online short course "[Applying the Five Domains Model to the Welfare Assessment of Sport and Recreation Horses.](#)" If you're an organisation, consider having all of your staff complete the course.



Build your science-based horse welfare assurance programme

Animal Centric has helped World Horse Welfare's UK Rescue and Rehoming Centres to develop their own Five Domains-based horse welfare assurance programmes, which include continuous horse welfare monitoring and regular comprehensive assessment.

If you are interested in developing a horse welfare assurance programme for your organisation that is driven by your staff and based on real-time evidence from your horses, please contact Animal Centric to learn more:

www.animal-centric.com