

ARENA ETIQUETTE AND SAFETY

Etiquette and safety go hand in hand. In many cases, a lack of one creates a breach of the other. Do your part to make riding with others enjoyable and safe.

- **Keep at Least One Horse Length:** Don't crowd other riders. Keep at least one or two horse lengths between you and the horse in front of you. This keeps you at a safe distance from being kicked. Any horse is capable of kicking and biting, so never assume it is safe to ride up on another horse. Also, when there are riders working on both the inside and outside track, leave enough passing room that one horse isn't able to bite or kick at the horse on the other track.
- **Left Shoulder to Left Shoulder:** Riders should try to ride in the same direction. However, many times this is not possible. When riding in opposite directions, the left shoulder to left should rule should be applied. Some European countries ride right shoulder to right shoulder; however, the international rule is the left shoulder to left shoulder rule.
- **Slow on the Inside, Fast on the Outside:** Slower riders should ride on the inside track, including those doing schooling, such as lateral work, etc. Riders working at a faster pace, such as a lope or canter, should stay on the outside track.
- **Announce Your Intentions:** Tell other riders what you plan to do, such as "passing on the outside," or "jumping fence 3," or "running the barrel pattern," or "leaving arena," or "entering arena."
- **Do Not Impede the Flow of Traffic:** Never stand or sit on your horse in the middle of the track. If you must stop, take your horse to the center of the arena. Avoid sudden stops on the track when other horses are immediately following. If you are working on stopping drills with your horse, make sure there is ample room behind you, or, first announce that you will be doing the drill.
- **Riders On a Course or Pattern Have the Right of Way:** If a rider is in the middle of a drill or course, such as a jumping course, pole bending exercise, or barrel racing pattern, the rider on course has the right of way. Never ride through the middle of their course or interrupt a drill. Stop and wait for the rider to pass in that area or finish the drill before proceeding on your horse.
- **No Lunging:** No lunging while others are riding. This is the general rule. There are exceptions if you are with very familiar with the horses and riders and have asked permission. In this case, you should lunge on one end of the arena.
- **Mount Out of the Way:** Mount and dismount in the center of the arena, not on the track.
- **Work Together:** Riders should be doing similar activities: i.e. jumping, flat work, pole bending, barrels, etc., if at all possible. Even though the rule is left shoulder to left shoulder, understand this is not always possible. Always be generous with right of way and yield to anyone who is working on a drill or pattern.

- **Cue Quietly:** Voice commands, kissing, smooching to cue your horse should be done quietly and away from other horses. Accidentally cueing another person's horse as you ride along side them may cause problems. Supervise your children and do not allow them to cue other rider's horses.
- **Try Not to Interrupt Lessons:** Try to schedule your riding times when the arena is not being used for lessons. If you must ride during a lesson, ask the instructor for permission to enter arena and try to be unobtrusive while riding.
- **Arrive On Time for Your Lesson or Scheduled Event:** If you have scheduled time for use of the arena, such as a lesson or private event, be sure to arrive on time so you do not monopolize the arena for a longer period than your scheduled event. Arrive early enough to tack up and warm up your horse before your scheduled time. This will allow you to begin and end on time so others may use the arena before and/or after you.
- **Supervise Your Children and Your Guests:** Be sure to supervise your children at all times. Never leave a child unattended on a horse or around horses. Never assume that other adults will watch your child for you, especially if the child is riding. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to supervise their own children unless other arrangements have been made. Supervise your guests, especially if they are new riders.
- **Clean Up:** Clean up the arena and aisles after use. Clear out manure, put away jumps, trotting poles, pylons, cones, barrels, training aids, water bottles, trash, etc. Leave it the way you found it or better.
- **No Smoking:** Smoking in an arena or stable is a dangerous fire hazard.
- **All Horses Under Control:** There should be no loose horses in the arena while others are riding.
- **Don't Allow Escapes:** Keep all doors or gates closed. A horse could bolt through an open door into a low ceiling stable or down a laneway and cause injury.
- **Don't Get in the Way:** Spectators should stay outside the arena, not along side the track, and never at the starting gate, especially during speed events or speed event training.
- **No Dogs:** There should be no dogs in the arena with horses and riders. Many horses do not like dogs, and some have been known to attack them. Invite dogs after the ride.
- **Warn Riders of Loud Noises:** Announce if you are going to open a noisy sliding door or start a motor; some horses may spook at the noise. Give riders an opportunity to prepare. The standard is to announce, "Door!" before opening a noisy door.
- **In Case of Emergency, HALT:** If a rider falls off and a horse gets loose, all riders should HALT, and, if necessary, dismount.
- **Follow Posted Rules:** Most arena owners have rules posted. Always follow them.