



Responsible Tethering

Credit: Adobe Stock/Omega

Tethering is legal. Some people might find it upsetting to see therefore, it must be done correctly.

It can be recognised as a short-term solution but not as a long-term method of keeping and grazing horses.

Owners must meet the horse's basic welfare needs as outline in the Animal Welfare Act 2006; Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006; and Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

If an equine is tethered without a land owner's permission, this is called **Fly Grazing**.

Tethering can restrict the horse from protecting itself for example, from stray dogs; being unable to use natural shelter from extreme weather if not tethered close enough to use it; not allowing the horse to use its fight or flight instinct if in a dangerous situation; unable to roam and forage and the need for companionship and social interaction with others.

The following information is set out under the DEFRA Code of

Practice for the welfare of horses, ponies, donkeys and their hybrids. Tethering is defined as securing an animal by an appropriately attached chain, to a centre point or anchorage, causing it to be confined to a desired area.

Suitability of the animal

- Not all animals are suited to tethering.
- Horses under the age of two years should not be tethered.
- Mares in their third trimester of pregnancy should not be tethered.
- Lactating mares with foals at foot should not be tethered.
- Mares should not be tethered near stallions.
- Sick animals should not be tethered.
- Old and infirm animals should not be tethered.
- Horses should not be tethered in and around other free roaming horses.

The site

- The area should be fairly level with a good covering of grass, free from any objects that could snag the tether or cause injury to the horse,

including natural trees and shrubs and a dry area for the horse to lay and rest.

- The horse should not be positioned where it can reach a public highway or footpath.
- The site should not be water logged or muddy.
- Written permission should be granted from the land owner before tethering occurs.
- A gap of four metres behind one horse to another should be in place and no site to overlap to prevent the horses becoming entangled.

Tethering equipment

- A well-fitted head collar or preferably a broad leather neck strap must be used. These should be fitted with a 360-degree swivel device to the chain.

If you are concerned about any tethered horses, please do not hesitate to contact us.



If a horse is tethered, it is not suitable or appropriate for another horse to graze freely alongside it.

Credit: Adobe Stock/eyepals

- The chain should be approximately 20ft in length, strong enough to prevent breakage but light enough to prevent pressure sores.
- Rope or nylon should not be used.
- The stake in the ground must not protrude ground level and must be fitted with a 360-degree swivel.

Food and water

- The site must be changed regularly to provide good quality grass.
- If the grass is not sufficient, forage should be available throughout each day.
- Water should be available on a frequent and regular basis in a spill-proof container especially in hot weather. Placing a bucket of water in a tyre can help to keep it upright. Some owners will visit regularly to offer water if the horse persistently knocks the bucket(s) over.
- Buckets for concentrate feeds

must be clean and kept in a safe condition. Rubber feed bowls or buckets with the handles removed should be used.

Shelter

- Horses should not be exposed to excessive heat from the sun, heavy rain, snow or hail, strong winds other than for short periods of time.
- In extreme weather, protection must be provided and a well-drained area must be available.
- Tethering close to a hedge or wall for natural protection from the weather can help to keep the horse dry and warm.

Exercise

Horses must be given freedom to exercise off the tether for a reasonable amount of time at least once a day.

Supervision

- Tethered animals should be visited at least twice per day during daylight hours.

- Other provisions must be available for extreme weather or any other circumstances.

Support from Bransby Horses

If you are concerned about any tethered horses or you would like any further information or advice, please do not hesitate to contact us to support you through this process.

You can contact us by phone (01427 787369 – open Monday to Friday, 8.30am-4.30pm), email welfare@bransbyhorses.co.uk or online at BransbyHorses.co.uk/welfare

In an emergency situation out of normal office hours please contact the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999.