

Training Equipment Recommendations

Building Temporary Round Pens

When a permanent round pen isn't allowed at your location, a temporary and relative easily moveable, Round Pen can be built from either wooden 8' tall by 2 1/2" or 3" diameter wooden poles, sunk into the ground about a foot. Otherwise, you can build a pen with commonly used plastic posts, which are generally 48" in height, by doubling their height. The height can be increased by using two of the 48" plastic posts and binding them, by overlapping the ends by about a foot, in order to produce a height of around 6 feet. Either type posts can be strung with 1" (or greater) electric tape, preferably 4 strands, although 3 will do for many. The better diameters for round pens are 40' to 50'. A smaller diameter can be hard on the joints of most larger horses, although they can work for smaller horses. This is particularly important when making temporary pens as there is not generally a foot board around the circumference of the base as would generally be in a permanent pen where a slope can be built up allowing the horse an incline to push against whenever running at speed. The circumference measurements for a 40' diameter pen is (40 x 3.14 PI) 125.6' or 38 meters. With a post spaced every 7' you would need 18 posts for a 40' pen. The circumference measurements for a 50' diameter pen is (50 x 3.14 PI) 157' (rounded up) 48 meters and with a post spaced every 7' you would need 23 posts for a 50' pen. To make the plastic posts sufficiently tall, you need the overlap I mentioned above. You need two 48" posts for each post location at the 7' spacing. The plastic ones can be taped together by having the bottom 12" of one overlapping onto the top 12" of the other and securely taping at three or more places along the 12" overlap - making them 6 feet tall. Then three or four strands of electric tape around the circumference: one about 1" from the top, one 12" from the ground - then two more evenly dividing (when 4 are used) the distance between the top and bottom tape strips gives a good enclosure. This requires 152 meters of tape for 40' pens or 192 meters for 50' pens (a bit more needed to create a gate and have some to stake diagonally out for strengthening). A power supply is needed if the horse doesn't already respect electric fencing or until the horse learns to respect it, then it is generally no longer needed. You need relatively flat ground (or only a slight slope to drain) with no holes or sharp rocks, etc. If you can get wooden poles, they are available in the better lengths such as 8' at most fencing suppliers and if sunk one foot into the ground they work well at 7' height (you would need 3 or 4 of the screw in insulators on the outside of each wooden post to hold the wire) and you would not likely need the diagonally stakes and tape.

Building Permanent Round Pens

A general guide for more permanent round pens : Round pens need to be built safely with sides/walls being built at least six to eight feet tall and with no gaps left between the top edges of where panels (if they are used) meet in order to prevent a cannon bone or fetlock / pastern joint slipping into the gaps. There should also be no spaces larger than 1.5 inches between horizontal or vertical slats or rails - as a foot could fit through and becoming cast. A 1" to 2" square and tight mesh fencing is a good solution. Also closely spaced wooden or plastic vertical or horizontal slats work well. Flat heavy plastic, wooden or metal panels can work if no gaps between panels are left. Although not absolutely necessary, a very good ground surface would be a packed clay base with about 1.5 inches of sand on top. Minimum round pen size should be 30' to 40' diameters for use with smaller horses and foals and 50' to 60' diameters is better for larger horses. Circumferences work out to be: (1) 30' dia. pens = 94' or about 29 meters (2) 40' dia. pens = 126' or 38 meters (3) 50' dia. pens = 157' or 48 meters and (4) 60' dia. Pens = 189' or 57 meters. Posts needed (at 7' spacing) are : (1) 30' pens = 14 posts (2) 40' pens = 18 posts (3) 50' pens = 23 posts and (4) 60' pens = 27 posts. A rubber or compressed wood skirt (so as not to splinter when kicked) about 18" high around the

bottom edge of the wall of the round pen is a good way to (a) protect the horse's feet (b) contain sand or dirt and (c) will allow the build up of ground material into a slope for the horse to push against whenever moving around at speed.



OTHER TOOLS

Use rope halters for training as well a 12' and 22' rope, and for extra difficult horses (and particularly stallions) use a sturdy 4' to 4.5' stick (with a blunt end) as an extension to your arm, with ¼" string and popper attached , much like the Parelli (carrot stick) and sticks that many other trainers use . These tools are nothing new and have been in practice for hundreds of years.

Warning