

NATURAL
Animal
CENTRE

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Intro to R+: Set Up for Success



How To: “Set Up For Success”

No matter what discipline or training method you choose we have to “set up for success”.

You must have heard that one a thousand times!

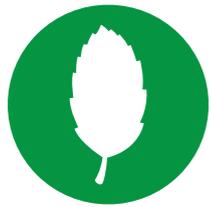
But what does it really mean when we are training with R+?

Consider the 23 hours

that we're not with our horses:



There is so much to take into consideration when we start to think about the context prior to our training, some of the key things are:



Could my horse be hungry whilst I'm training?



Has my horse had ample time for turn out and interaction with other equines?



Does my horse have access to the food I'm training with at other times in their day? Or am I the only source of this particular food?



Why is it important to consider the other 23 hours that we are not interacting with our horses?

Just like us, our horses are affected by what happens during their day, and this will affect how they respond to us during training sessions. Take for instance a horse who has been in their stable overnight (approx. 12-15 hours), they will have had no equine interaction, have a lot of pent up energy and will more than likely be hungry due to their hay net having run out hours ago. Now you



Making sure your horse is well prepared for their training will make for a calmer more focused learner.

take this horse into the school and commence a training session with them, they are far more likely to be pushy, energetic, nippy and

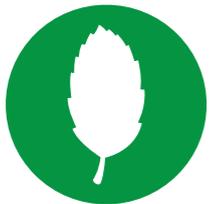
inattentive when compared to a horse who has come in after being out all day, with a full belly of forage! This is just one example.

Antecedent Arrangements

Setting up your training environment to promote success:



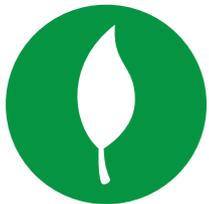
The environment we are in at the time of training has a huge affect on how the session will pan out. Things to consider:



When learning new skills, is my horse confident in the area I have chosen to train in? Or does this area induce stress on either of us?



How can I set up the environment so that the behaviour I am looking to reinforce comes easily to my horse?



Can I use a natural environment to my advantage? Think puddles, natural inclines etc, the world is full of natural schooling opportunities.



Using our environment to help guide the horse to our desired behavioural outcome not only makes it quicker and easier to meet our training goals, it also goes a long way to reducing frustration for the horse.

Imagine being told that you had to sit an exam on a subject you've never studied before, in a language you barely know, you get there, sit down and open the paper. The pages are blank, all bar the question at the top of the page. Panic, confusion, frustration 'how on earth am I meant to know the answer?' you



An antecedent arrangement circus prep; we started with a reverse round pen and now we are on to working inside our circus ring boxes!

think... verses you sit down, open the paper, the question is multiple choice, there are some picture sources that

give you background information, and even someone there reading the question to you and telling you whether you're on the right track.