

Sample Aerobic and Anaerobic Conditioning Routines

Based on consultation with your trainer and veterinarian, establish a workout routine that conditions for the type of activity that reflects your riding interests. This will determine rather to emphasize aerobic conditioning (general purpose riding, trail riding, pleasure showing) or anaerobic conditioning (racing, reining, roping, polo, eventing).

Use the table below as an example of the two types of riding activities and example conditioning routines. Please note that your horse's level of fitness, terrain, weather and other factors must be considered in developing a conditioning routine. These general guidelines may not be appropriate for your horse.

These sample programs assume access to a measured arena. If you are trail conditioning, then you should establish distance markers along the trail in order to actively travel a known distance. The sample programs also exercise the horse equally on both leads. In most activities (save track racing), both leads should be exercised equally for the best overall conditioning performance.

Sample arena dimensions 275 feet by 125 feet → Circumference approximately 800 feet on the rail

<u>One Set</u>	<u>Aerobic</u>	<u>Anaerobic</u>
Forward direction (or left lead)		
Active gait	Canter	Gallop
Target active heart rate ¹	140-150 bpm	170-180 bpm
Distance at active heart rate	4 laps ² (3200 feet)	2 laps (1600 feet)
Resting gait	Trot	Walk
Target resting heart rate ³	<90	<90
Time to achieve resting heart rate	Record	Record
Reverse direction (or right lead)		
Active gait	Canter	Gallop
Target active heart rate	150 bpm	180 bpm
Distance at active heart rate	4 laps	2 laps
Resting gait	Walk	Walk
Target resting heart rate	<90	<90
Time to achieve resting heart rate	Record	Record

Perform two sets in each workout.

Record time to achieve resting heart rate as a measure of fitness improvement.

Perform the conditioning routine a minimum of one time per week. Ideally, condition two or three times per week (not more).

1 Start counting laps as you enter the target active heart rate

2 Laps are easier to deal with. Adjust the number of laps based on your arena or track size. Given the fitness level of your horse, you may wish to increase or decrease the total distance. Avoid overworking a young horse, or a horse that is out of condition.

3 If you are unable to achieve the target resting heart rate in 5 minutes, then shorten the distance at the active heart rate. After a week or two conditioning at the lower distance, you can adjust to the longer distance if the horse can achieve the resting heart rate in 5 minutes.