

Equine Dry Lot

Managing horses on small acreage can be challenging. One of the challenges often faced is the need for grazing but being limited on space. Dry lots can serve many purposes but the main purpose is to have somewhere to confine horses when pastures need time to rest and regrow. It is important to consider grading and footing when thinking about putting in a dry lot. Without the proper grade and footing layers, the dry lot will not stand the test of time.

What is an equine dry lot?

- A small sacrifice area (usually free of vegetation) where shelter, feed, and water are located to house horses when they need to come off pastures.
- Other Purposes:
 - Exercise/Turnout from Stall
 - Injury Recovery
 - Managing Metabolic Issues



Figure 1 Before



Figure 2 After

Dry Lot Overview

- Location: Near Barn/Shelter
 - Think central location to all pastures (for shelter, water, feed)
- Size: min. 400 sq. feet (20x20 ft.) for one horse
- Cost for 20x20 ft. Dry Lot:
 - Low End ~\$1,000 (6 in. of screenings/rock dust)
 - High End ~\$2,300 (geotextile fabric, 6 in. drainage stone, 6 in. screenings/rock dust)

Dry Lots = Better Pastures and Healthier Horses

- Manage horses on high density farms (boarding/training facilities)
- Utilize rotational grazing
- Manage turnout time
- Prevent trampling when soil is too wet
- Recovering from injury and need limited (safe) space
- No mud!! Mud causes injury (it's slippery), thrush, parasites, abscesses, and more
- Properly managed pastures can reduce hay cost by ~\$60-\$100/month!



For more information about equine dry lots and construction tips, please call your local Extension Agent for advice.