

Organizing Your Barn

An orderly, clutter-free barn is aesthetically pleasing, saves time during daily chores and is a healthy place for the horses that live there. If you're looking for ideas to give your barn an organizational face lift, here are some suggestions compiled from Dover Saddlery's own experienced equestrians. We hope you find them helpful!

Reduce Clutter

Obsolete equipment and extraneous items are the most significant impediment to creating an organized barn.

- Sort through all your existing equipment to weed out items you no longer use. Be firm in your decisions about ridding yourself of old tack, blankets and equipment that you may never need again.
- Donate your unwanted items to a therapeutic riding program or a horse rescue. Non-profit organizations will either put the items to good use or sell them to raise funds.
- Discard helmets that are more than five years old. See "Helmet Storage and Use" for more information.
- Keep only tools that are in good working order and that are used regularly. Discard worn out brooms and manure forks (or reuse the handles by installing a Future Fork Head Replacement).



Create a Hazard-Free Space

Take a fresh look around your barn to identify and remove potential hazards.

- Clear your barn aisle so that if a horse acts up on the cross ties or while being lead, it won't collide with items that could cause cuts or bruises.
- Remove all cobwebs that can catch a spark and ignite fire.
- Check your stall walls for exposed nails, splintered boards or sharp areas.
- Replace burned out light bulbs.
- Thoroughly sweep storage areas to rid the floors of dust and debris.
- Place horse grain in covered metal trash cans or metal grain bins. Rodents won't be able to chew through the metal and contaminate your grain supply.
- Make sure all blankets, sheets, halters, leads and other equipment stored on racks or hooks is out of reach of horses that could become tangled in an item.
- Remove any glass items that would create shards if broken, and remove any cardboard, which is attractive nesting material for rodents and insects.
- Set up a separate brush kit for each horse in your barn to prevent the potential spread of skin conditions or disease. Brush kits can be stored in a variety of ways, from simple pails, plastic totes or wooden grooming boxes to stall front and grooming bags.
- Create or purchase an equine medical kit. See "Maintaining an Equine Medical Kit."
- Store manure forks, brooms and shovels out of the way of traffic on wall racks.



Label Everything

Labels make finding and returning items to their proper places easy. Matching labels can also lend to the aesthetic appeal of your barn. They can be simple, handwritten signs, created on a computer or printed with an adhesive label maker.

For labels with a high end look, order custom nameplates and use them creatively. Custom plates aren't just for adhering to tack. A halter plate makes a nice-looking label on cubby holes or over bridle hooks; a stall plate makes a nice sign for tack room and grain rooms.

- Plastic key chains that allow you to insert a label into a clear window make inexpensive tags for labeling horse sheets and blankets. Fasten them on a chest clip or buckle.
- To save time in locating items, clearly mark the contents of storage bins and tack trunks.
- Label horse boots, girths and saddle pads that should be used on a particular horse to prevent the potential spread of skin conditions.



Related Topics

[Maintaining an Equine Medical Kit](#)

[Helmet Storage and Use](#)

[Cold Weather Barn Management Tips](#)

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Change with the Seasons

- ❑ Remove out-of-season items to a designated location. Consider designating a large tack trunk or a rodent-proof bin to contain summer items in winter and winter items in summer.
- ❑ Promptly clean and store dirty horse clothing after the season for it has passed so they're out of your way.
- ❑ Make sure you close the tack trunk lids tightly for seasonal storage, and consider putting some cedar blocks inside to further deter pests.

Be Creative About Storage Solutions and Resolute About Using Them

If everything in your barn has its own storage place, you will save time in your daily routine. No more searching for that lost pair of splint boots or the missing girth!

- ❑ Put a laundry bag, basket or collapsible laundry bin in your tack room for soiled items.

- ❑ If floor space is short, look to the walls for storage. There you can mount saddle, bridle and whip racks along with hooks for lunging supplies and other equipment. Wall-mounted wrap and bandage racks not only make excellent use of space, but keep these items neatly bundled and ready for use.
- ❑ Lots of wall-mounted, space-saving options for hanging and drying blankets exist. If space is really short, large, sturdy hooks hung high and side-by-side may optimize the number of articles you can hang.
- ❑ Add wooden shelving, a blanket bar or blanket rack in your tack room for holding saddle pads.
- ❑ Try to place saddle stands and racks away from windows to prevent damage to the leather from sunlight or water.
- ❑ Store horse boots within individual horse brush kits, or label them and toss them into a large bucket or cubby.

Create a Tack Cleaning Station

Tack cleaning is more apt to be done on a regular basis if the process is made easy and convenient.

- ❑ Hang a tack cleaning hook from the ceiling to make cleaning strap goods easy. You can get one in chrome or one that is color-coated to match the color scheme of your tack room.
- ❑ Store a collapsible saddle rack against the wall near the tack cleaning hook to make cleaning a saddle easy.
- ❑ Place tack cleaning products, sponges and rags in a small bucket hung or placed near your tack cleaning station. The bucket is a convenient way to store your tools – and it holds the water for cleaning.



BARN AND STABLE ORGANIZATIONAL PRODUCTS

WALL-MOUNT OPTIONS

- Swinging Rug Rack with 3 Arms
- European Horse Clothing Rack
- Collapsible Blanket Bars
- Adjustable Rug Rail
- Blanket Bar
- Wood/Brass Horse Clothing Rack
- Dover's Cooler and Blanket Rack
- Wrap and Bandage Rack
- Wooden Crop and Whip Rack
- Brass Bridle Hook
- Brass Saddle Rack
- Collapsible Tack Rack
- Standard Saddle Racks
- Stubbs Saddle Rack
- Stubbs Collapsible Saddle Rack
- Wooden Collapsible Saddle Rack
- Five-Bridle Rack
- Bridle Brackets
- Wood Shelf with 5 Hooks

STORAGE OPTIONS

- Sportote Tack Trunk
- Sportote Saddle Trunk
- Horsemen's Pride Trunk
- Dover's Hardwood Trunk with Bandage Lid
- Dover's Hardwood Trunk
- Custom Oakcroft Trunks
- Feed Bin
- Stall Front Storage Bag
- Grooming Case with Storage
- Wooden Grooming Box
- Fortiflex Grooming Tote
- Ascot I Grooming Box
- Ascot II Grooming Box
- Grooming Tote Bags
- Deluxe Grooming Tote Bag
- Kensington Show Tote
- Grooming Stool Box

FREESTANDING OR DOUBLE-DUTY OPTIONS

- Sportote Mounting Block with Storage Compartment
- Dover's Saddle Cleaning Stand
- Portable Saddle Stand
- Portable Saddle Rack
- Rolling Saddle Cart
- Sportote Tack Trunk with Padded Seat
- Brass and Wood Hook
- Flex-Hook Hangers

