








Before you begin:

-  Ensure any foods, essential oils, herbs, leaves and twigs etc. you use are safe for equines to consume.
-  Food-based enrichment may not be appropriate for all equines; if you're in any doubt please speak to your vet first.
-  Consider your equine's safety; not all of the suggestions below are safe to be left with an unattended horse, donkey or mule!
-  At HorseWorld we use food-based enrichment as occasional treats rather than everyday staples. Use in accordance to your own equine's management and regime.
-  Don't forget - NEVER feed any equine, or give them any of the creations suggested below, without the full permission of the animals' owner.

Snuffle mat/box

A snuffle mat or box provides both mental stimulation as our equines work out how to get to the treats, and a tasty reward for their perseverance.

To make a snuffle mat you'll need:

- Piece of rubber matting with holes in (e.g. offcuts from mud control mats)
- Strips of cloth (e.g. old towels, t-shirts, or blankets)
- Low-calorie food or treats

How to make:

Take your mat and thread strips of towel or blanket through the holes and knot to secure in place. Sprinkle some treats (or low-calorie chaff) through and allow your horse to rummage and find the treats. (Important not to leave this unsupervised in case the towel/blanket strips become loose).

The snuffle mat also works well with a sprinkling of essential oils if you wanted to have a food-free enrichment item.

To make a snuffle box you'll need:

- Cardboard box (ensure free from any staples or metal fastenings)
- Straw
- Treats of choice

How to make:

Take your cardboard box and fill with a handful of straw. Sprinkle some treats/chaff in and watch as your equine works out the quickest way to get the good stuff out!



Brilliant ideas with bird feeders....

Bird feeders can be a surprising addition to your equine's enrichment items.

They can be purchased fairly cheaply, and are really versatile in how you use them.

You could experiment with a number of different 'fillings' to see which your equine chooses; some could contain things to eat, whilst others could contain an essential oil for them to sniff.

Top tip: Hang somewhere they can swing freely. This slows down the rate at which the contents can be eaten, so providing a longer time of stimulation and entertainment!

For the food version you'll need:

- Empty suet cake/fat ball bird feeder
- Food items of choice – could be small branches/hedgerow, carrots, grass or hay

How to make:

Simply feed the food through the holes of the feeder so they are sticking out and your horse can nibble. Hang using string.

For the aromatherapy version you'll need:

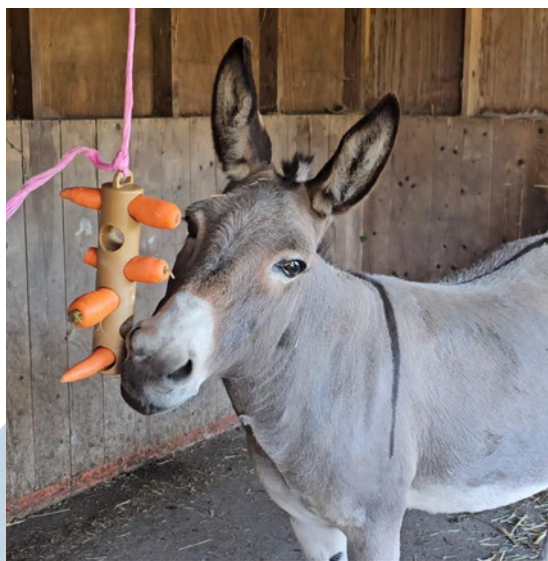
- Empty suet cake/fat ball bird feeder
- Horse safe essential oils
- Cotton wool balls or pieces of cloth

How to make:

Take your bird feeder and place in your cotton wool or blanket/towel.

Sprinkle a few drops of your oil of choice and hang up for your horse to sniff!

When choosing an oil, consider matching its properties to what your equine most needs; for example, something soothing or relaxing.

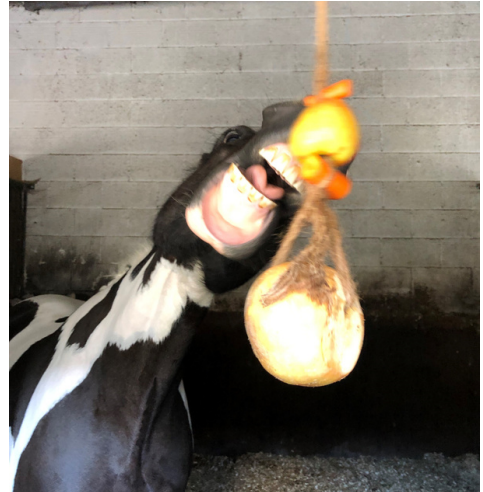


Vegetable and fruit 'kebabs'

A really easy enrichment item for your horse is making a vegetable and fruit 'kebab'.

Choose a variety of equine-friendly vegetables and fruits and carefully make a hole through the centre of each piece. You can cut into chunks or leave them whole.

Then thread a piece of string through each one, and tie up somewhere it can hang freely to make the treat-eating more challenging!



Lick mats

A lick mat is a great addition to your enrichment box! This is a great way to keep your horse entertained in a cheap way that is easy to switch up and keep different.

You'll need:

- A tray with handles, chopping board, or rubber mat such as car mat. (Handles help when tying the tray up!)

How to make:

Sticky stuff first....

Smear your paste on first; use any paste-like food that will provide a good sticky layer such as: jam, molasses, apple sauce, mint sauce, honey etc. You could just use paste, or for added interest add some herbs too.

...then add herbs!

Now you've got your sticky layer, you can sprinkle herbs on top. Some we like to use at HorseWorld include turmeric, cinnamon, mixed herbs, basil and mint.



Remember to ensure everything you use in these suggestions is safe and appropriate for YOUR equine!