

Fun Kit

Golden Cross Ranch, LLC *Having Fun With Your Horse*

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How the Fun Kit Came To Be

"I decided it was time to find some fun things for us to do together. Often there is nobody around to trail ride with and we spend a lot of our time in the arena because honestly, after breaking five ribs, I am still regaining my confidence level. And Dylan is helping me do that. So the fun kit became some of the different ways I could think of for me and Dylan to just have fun together, doing stuff in the arena."

Recommended experience level: Because the fun kit requires solid riding skills, we recommend this kit for the experienced rider.

Fun Kit Item List

Please Note: While we try our best to provide the exact items seen here, if we are unable to order a specific item from our suppliers, we reserve the right to replace it with an as good or better quality item that provides a similar function.



Heavy Duty Tote Bag Fun Kit Color: Red

Dimensions: 18 ½" x 14 ½" x 4" with 27" double handles

Material: 600D Flexar Canvas

Our tote bag is very sturdy and has with lots of room. It is a great way to carry the items you will be using in your Fun Kit!



Sponge for Horse Hydra Finepore All Purpose Body/Bath Sponge 6 ½" x 4" x 2"

What a great way to cool down your horse or to give him a bath!



Hand Towel for Human Color: Black, Dimensions: 16" x 28" (wash before first use)

Working with horses can be hot, sweaty work so we included a hand towel for you to use to cool off or clean up with.



Insulated Lunch Bag for Horse and Human to share Foam insulated with waterproof lining. Front pocket. Has a handy carrying strap that can also be looped onto a saddle horn and an easy open Velcro fastener.

Fun Kit Lunch Bag Color: Red

Dimensions: 9" x 7" x 4 ¾"

Material: 70D Nylon

I get shaky if I go too long without a snack. Our lunch bags can easily hold those snack bars, fruit or sandwiches that are so important for a fun session with your horse – you don't want to get hungry in the middle of your time together and not have something to eat!



Aquaclip for Water or Beverage Bottle A handy gadget for securing your water or beverage bottle to your saddle or it comfortably slips over your waistband or belt. It also comes with "gripper teeth to open stubborn beverage caps. The aqua clip is durable, non-toxic and recyclable. Water bottle not included.



Kid Size Lariat (for portability and still plenty long!) We decided to go with a kid size rope for our fun kit for two compelling reasons – affordability and portability. While smaller than an adult sized rope, we found it to still be plenty long and durable enough for “having fun,” while keeping it within a reasonable size for our tote kits. These ropes are also more cost effective than their adult versions, and we are trying hard to keep our costs down, so that we can offer our kits to you at affordable prices.

Dimensions: 5/16”D x 20’L

We recommend wearing gloves anytime you are using a rope, to provide a better grip and prevent rope burns. We recommend that you NEVER tie the rope to your horse or to yourself.



Waliki Exercise Ball –

Size: Medium (30”/75cm)

Color: Red or Green (Your Choice According to Availability)

This high quality ball is stamped with the beautiful Waliki logo, and is made with extra thick material.

The bottom of the ball has a "75CM" mark.

Weight limit: 200KG/400 Pounds

Each Ball comes with an adapter that allows you to inflate it using a bicycle pump.

Yes, we realize that once you blow the ball up, it will no longer fit in the tote unless you choose to deflate it, which you probably won’t want to do. But we found these balls at a great price and had so much fun testing them, that we decided it was worth the hassle of finding a home for a 30 inch ball once it is blown up and no longer fits in the tote, and we think you will too!



Mrs. Pastures Cookies for Horses A sample pack of three cookies is included in your kit. Dylan loves these cookies and gets two every time I go to the barn – and he knows it too! All natural ingredients made of oats, wheat bran, rolled barley, cane molasses, apples and water with no additives or preservatives. Because they are dehydrated instead of baked, they are hard and crunchy so they won't crumble in your pocket. We also offer a variety of sizes on our website.

HAVING FUN WITH YOUR HORSE AND THE FUN KIT

The possibilities are really up to you and your imagination. But the first step in any endeavor with your horse and introducing a new object, is to allow him some time to get used to it. The two main components of your Fun Kit is the 30" ball and the kid rope. We recommend that you only work with one item at a time. Introduce the item slowly and allow your horse to get comfortable with it – always starting this process on the ground. As your horse grows more confident, you can try different things.



Here I introduced Dylan to the ball in the arena. He wasn't sure at first, so I just let him get used to it being in his space. Once he decided it was okay, I bounced it around him until he ignored it, and then I rolled it up to his legs so that it lightly brushed against them. He was a bit nervous at first, but it didn't take him long to decide that the ball was nothing to get excited about. Keep in mind that since every horse is different, they will respond differently to the ball. Some horses may be totally bored and yawn – other horses may be convinced that the ball will eat them. Be careful to progress at your horse's rate and above all, do so safely.



By the end of our session I was riding around the arena, herding the ball from Dylan's back using a short length of PVC pipe I found lying around. (After I got Dylan used to me waving it from his back). I used the PVC pipe and shoved the ball up and down the length of the arena. It reminded me of polo we used to play with a basketball and broomstick when we were kids. I think it reminded Dylan of his days on the ranch because he started "herding" the ball with very little encouragement.

Dylan and I are starting to get the hang of it. Not bad for a very windy day!



Use your imagination – perhaps you can entice your horse into playing ball with you on the ground. If you can get some of your friends involved, you could even try a game of horse soccer. And the ball also works great as a pilates exercise ball for your own personal workout!

Even though Dylan is a ranch horse and so he is accustomed to a person working with a rope around him, it has been awhile since he has seen a rope. It is always a good thing to reintroduce potentially scary items to your horse on the ground, especially if he hasn't seen it for awhile. Just because he didn't spook around it 2 months ago doesn't mean he will automatically remember. The "It won't eat me" light bulb will go off much sooner if he has seen it before, and this way you can help you and your horse stay safe by preventing an unexpected reaction to the object.



Letting Dylan examine the rope

Remember – NEVER tie the rope to your horse or to a person. If your horse starts to get concerned and you think you are losing control, you can simply release the rope and the scary thing goes away. But if the horse is tied to the scary thing or the rope is tied to you, and the horse gets very scared, a bad train wreck can occur before you are able to untie the rope. ALWAYS keep focused on your horse and make sure that the rope is in a position for safe release at any time. A pair of gloves will help your grip and also prevent rope burn.



Let's try it on the ground first

Notice in the pictures on the ground, that I have the rope looped (NOT TIED) around the saddle horn. We are taking our time and dragging the PVC pipe around the arena. We started with just a few steps, as Dylan adjusted to the weight of pulling the pipe. As he got comfortable, we went further, until we were calmly walking around the arena.



Time to try in the saddle

Because Dylan became totally unconcerned about dragging the PVC pipe, we were ready to do some saddle work. Notice I don't even have the rope looped around the saddle horn in the picture above. I am holding it in my hand in a way that will allow me to drop it without getting caught up in it, if I feel like I am starting to lose control and need to focus on Dylan without the rope getting in my way. We practiced dragging the PVC like this until I was satisfied that Dylan was comfortable with the pipe being dragged behind us.



Looping the rope around the saddle horn

Now that Dylan was confident in all of the preceding steps – I felt confident enough to loop the rope around the saddle horn so that he could do the work of dragging the pipe. Notice I LOOPED the rope, NOT tied it – again, we want to always keep our option available for a quick release if needed. Dylan did great and I could tell he enjoyed “doing a job.”

I noticed that both while herding the ball and dragging the rope that Dylan was very focused and seemed to be enjoying himself. I could tell that he liked being given tasks to do and it made our time in the arena much more interesting. While we don’t use our fun kit every day, we do use it as a pleasant break when we both are ready to do something different. It keeps us both fresh so that our arena work doesn’t become dull over time. The Fun Kit helps us to have fun in the arena by challenging us to perform different tasks that are only limited by making sure we are following safe practices and by using our imagination!

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