

# Mailbox

**Golden Cross Ranch, LLC**

***Having Fun With Your Horse***

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*How the Mailbox Came To Be*

Mail Call! We are always on the lookout to create obstacles that have a large demand. We are proud to introduce our next trail obstacle, one that has been around for years but never with such portability! Our mailbox obstacle is easy to set up and take down, and provides a great way to practice one of the most widely used obstacles found in many different equine competitions, from Western trail classes to ACTHA Competitive Trail Challenges. The fully functional full-sized mailbox sits on 40" of our beautifully colored 1 ¼" PVC pipe. The base is staked to the ground to insure that it stays in place.

Recommended experience level: Because some horses may find the mailbox a bit spooky and may require some desensitization to it, this obstacle requires solid horsemanship skills on the ground and solid riding skills if continued under saddle. We recommend this obstacle for the experienced horse person unless under the supervision of a professional trainer.

## Mailbox Item List: (shipping weight 13 lbs.)

### **High Quality Canvas Zipper Duffle Bag**

Duffle Bag Color: Navy

Dimensions: 24" x 15" x 13" with strong and durable handles

Material: Heavy Weight Canvas

Our duffle bags with zippers and carrying handles are very sturdy and have lots of room. It is a great way to carry your portable trail obstacle!

### **Mailbox**

Sturdy Weather-Resistant Full-sized Black Plastic Mailbox

### **1½" Furniture Grade PVC Pipes of various lengths and colors**

Lengths are approximate due to cutting.

Colors are guaranteed to match pipe sets as specified below.

Please inquire if you have any questions concerning color at time of ordering.

### **Mailbox Obstacle Colors:**

Two orange 20 inch lengths of PVC colored pipe for support pole

Three orange 20 inch lengths of PVC colored pipe for the base\*

\*Each pipe will have one 5/16" hole drilled approximately two inches from one end

### **1½" PVC Connectors**

One white 4 way: One to be used for the base (1 opening is on the top for the support pole of the mailbox to connect to base)

One white coupler: To be used to connect support pole together

### **Stakes to Anchor Obstacle**

Three 10 inch plated steel stakes are provided with each mailbox in order to anchor the base. These stakes penetrate hard ground, are easy to pound into the ground and easy to pull out.

### **Wooden Tap to separate couplers**

The connectors that are used with your PVC pipes provide a snug fit and can become difficult to separate from the pipe when you are ready to disassemble your obstacle. To solve this problem, we recommend that you use a piece of wood as a "tap" between the PVC and a hammer. We have provided a piece of wood as a tap to get you started.

### **Heavy Duty Rubber Mallet**

Weight: 16 oz.

A handy tool that is provided for both hammering in your stakes, insuring a snug fit when inserting pipe into connectors and for use with the wooden tap to separate couplers when you are ready to disassemble your obstacle. It even has a hook on the end to help you pull your stakes out of the ground when you are done.

# How to Assemble the Mailbox

**HINT:** Although not required, a light coating of vegetable oil on the ends of the pipes where they go into the connectors may make the disassembly process easier.

1. To assemble the base, insert a 20" base pipe into each horizontal opening of the 4 way connector, but NOT in the TOP opening. The top opening is how the support pole is connected to the base. Make sure that the ends with the pre-drilled holes are NOT inserted into the connector because this is where you will be hammering in your stake.



2. If you already know where you are going to put it, you can go ahead and anchor the base using the stakes provided.



3. Or you may want to go ahead and connect the two pieces that do not have a hole drilled in them with the PVC 1 1/4" coupler. It's so easy to assemble this obstacle that the particular order simply doesn't matter.



The mailbox has a connector on the bottom. Simply place the mailbox on top of the support pole by inserting the pole into the connector. Push down gently for a snug fit. You can then move the mailbox wherever you want it to be set up and then anchor the base poles by driving in the stakes as shown. If you change your mind, simply pull out the stakes and move the obstacle to your new location.



## Using Your Mailbox

Fully Assembled Dimensions (approximate) : 4'H

We recommend that you introduce your horse to the mailbox on the ground first, especially if he has not seen a similar obstacle in the recent past. Remember that some horses are convinced that new obstacles may try to eat them at any moment, and it is your job to convince them otherwise. This is best done from the ground before attempting the obstacle from your horse's back! It is recommended that you proceed by using the following steps:

1. Introduce your horse to the mailbox on the ground, and give him a chance to become comfortable around it. You can start off with just a halter so that he can be relaxed and you don't accidentally jerk on his mouth if he shies away from it. Let him sniff it and examine it if he wants to do so. When he seems comfortable around it, you can encourage him to walk up to it. Once he does so comfortably, repeat several times.
2. When your horse is comfortable around the mailbox, you can move on to attempting the obstacle from his back. Remember to be calm and confident and that will help your horse to remain calm and confident too. If you ever feel that your horse may become out of control while trying to ride him through the obstacle, dismount and start again from the ground. Confident and consistent approaches will help your horse become relaxed and desensitized to the obstacle. You can enlist a friend to help you like Tammy is helping Josh.





3. After a little practice, Josh and Handsome are checking the mail like pros!



4. After you and your horse master the basic approach and check the mail, you can add variations to keep things interesting. Perhaps you can ask your horse to sidepass to the mailbox, or back up to it. Have mail inside that must be removed and delivered. Be creative!

## Disassembling Your Mailbox

Taking apart your obstacle is fairly straightforward. The part that can become a bit difficult is separating the pipe from the connector if it won't come off by simply twisting them apart. In order to assist with the disassembly process if this does occur, we have included a wooden tap to help you separate the pieces. Simply hold the pipe in question stable (it helps if you have a second person to hold the pipe) and place the wooden tap against the connector as shown. Use the rubber mallet, hitting it against the wooden tap, to loosen the connector from the pipe. If the connector is particularly stubborn to loosen, you may have to rotate the pipe and use the tap repeatedly until it will separate. If you lose your wood tap or it becomes unusable, simply grab any similar piece of wood to do the job.



## Safety Information



*These poles should not be used under excessively cold weather conditions since it is known that PVC becomes more brittle in cold weather. While our products are U.V. coated which helps prevent the breakdown of material due to exposure to the sun, as with the use of any equipment, it is important to constantly inspect the condition of the equipment to ensure that it is undamaged and use it only for the purpose intended. While no specs are published concerning the impact resistance of PVC, we have pictured here one of the PVC poles that was used to stake down an obstacle during the Grace Lakes Ministry Competitive Trail Challenge. It seems this particular pipe received a great deal of abuse from 1200 lb. horses wearing shoes coming down on it. We were thrilled to see that the PVC pipe "smooshed" instead of shattered. No one noticed until taking the obstacle down that the pole had even been damaged because it remained usable and did its job of holding the obstacle in place!*

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