



香港賽馬會  
The Hong Kong Jockey Club

**Hot Weather Advice for Hong Kong Riding Schools**

1. Hot weather restrictions concerning the use of all horses and ponies in riding schools in Hong Kong should be applied by Riding Schools' management during the hot and humid summer months. This is applicable from ***June to September*** (inclusive). However common sense must be employed in the usage of horses and ponies at ***anytime of the year*** when hot, humid conditions occur.
2. Stable air conditioning units, where available, should be turned on when the air temperature rises above rises above 28°C.
3. During hot and humid periods horses and ponies ***must not normally be ridden or exercised between 11 am and 3.30 pm***, i.e. usually the hottest part of the day.
4. ***On cooler days***, riding schools' management may exercise flexibility in using the horses and ponies during the normally restricted periods, providing points 5 – 11 below are observed.
5. ***Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)*** is widely used to provide an objective measure of the risk of humans and animals suffering from heat-related illness. The WBGT is an ***index measurement*** that takes into account the combined effects of air temperature, humidity, sun and wind on the ability of animals to cool themselves during exercise.
6. In order to provide advice that relates more specifically to risk, from now on the DVCS will advise Equestrian Affairs to provide facilities for actively cooling horses and modify ridden activity according to WBGT index readings. A summary of the advice that will be given is provided here:
  - i. <28 No special precautions
  - ii. 28-30 Extra vigilance required
  - iii. 30-32 Exercise should be of limited intensity and length
  - iv. 32-33 Walking exercises out of direct sunlight
  - v. >33 Riding activities should be ceased

More detailed advice is provided in Annex I.

7. In addition, ***discretion and common sense*** must always be used by individuals. If it suddenly turns hot and humid be prepared to modify your plans.

8. Watch carefully for **warning signs of distress** in the horses such as excessive sweating or reduced or absent sweating when compared with other horses, rapid breathing, flaring of nostrils, anxious expression and unsteadiness of gait.
9. If any of these signs are noted, then **stop riding or lunging** and immediately take the horse to **shade** or an air-conditioned stable if available. **Cool the horse down** by cold water hosing and sponging with iced water all over the horse's body and neck and then scraping the water off repeatedly. ***If the horse is very distressed or collapsing call a Veterinary Surgeon IMMEDIATELY.***
10. As a general principle all periods of riding, schooling and exercise should be of **limited intensity and length** during the summer months.
11. Please **consider the health and welfare of your horses first** at all times.

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## A GUIDE FOR MANAGING THERMAL STRESS IN HONG KONG RIDING SCHOOLS IN HOT AND HUMID CONDITIONS

WBGT Index	Recommendations for Riding Schools	Cooling Facilities / Methods
<28	<b>Low Risk Conditions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No special precautions required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to wash bays with free running water.</li> <li>Shaded areas / shelters.</li> </ul>
28 - 30	<b>Some Precautions Required</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education.</li> <li>Provision of Facilities for Cooling.</li> <li>Utilise shaded areas.</li> <li>Reduce the use of non-grass surfaces.</li> <li>Consider reducing overall effort.</li> <li>Provide water in paddocks for drinking and sponging.</li> <li>Horses with <i>anhidrosis</i> / <i>dry coat</i> must be identified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to the above:</li> <li>Iced water should be available to cool horses if required.</li> <li>Proactively monitor dry coat horses: rectal temperatures should be taken post exercise. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active cooling with iced water if rectal temperature above 39°C</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
30 - 32	<b>Additional Precautions Required</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to the above:</li> <li>Exercise should be of limited length and intensity.</li> <li>The most demanding activities should take place in the coolest part of the day.</li> <li>Actively cool horses during exercise, and provide regular water breaks ideally under shade.</li> <li>Dry coat horses should not normally be ridden in direct sunlight.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to the above:</li> <li>Any horse displaying signs of heat stress will require aggressive cooling measures.</li> <li>Rectal temperatures should be taken post exercise. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active cooling with iced water if rectal temperature above 39°C</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
32-33	<b>Higher Risk Conditions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to the above:</li> <li>Exercise should be limited to walking exercises out of direct sunlight.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to the above:</li> <li>Horse temperatures to be taken immediately post exercise, 10mins and 20mins later.</li> <li>Active cooling with iced water if rectal temperature above 39°C</li> </ul>
>33	<b>Extreme Risk Conditions are probably not compatible with safe ridden activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Riding activities should cease until the index returns to below 33.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Riding schools must consult the duty veterinarian on the risks of heat stress.</li> </ul>