



How To Prepare Your Horse For College Life: *Put Yourself In Their Hooves!*

So you are bringing your horse to college with you. Going off to college is fun, exciting and it is often your first opportunity to spread your wings and learn about your independence. But for your horse the transition may be difficult and stressful. Here are a few things to consider and some tips to help make the move easier:

- 1) Talk to the school or boarding facility where your horse will be moved to find out the following information:
 - What kind of environment will be provided: stalls with turn out, pasture, shared pens, etc. Ask if pictures are available online or if the facility is close enough, take a day trip to check it out before moving your horse.
 - Feeding: Find out the schedule, options for supplements, what kind of hay is provided and how often. Will you be able to keep your horse on his/her current feed?
 - Veterinarian: Is there a vet onsite? Who do they use in case of emergencies, get the contact information.
 - Discuss any special needs your horse has ahead of time to make proper arrangements.
 - Get a list of local farriers that come to the barn.
 - What are the barn rules? Are boarders responsible for any maintenance, chores, hours of operation, use of facilities, etc?
- 2) Once you know the type of hay and feed that will be provided for your horse at school, determine if you are able to get a similar type locally. Start to transition your horse two weeks to a month before departure so the change is not such a shock to her system. Bring two weeks worth of hay with you and use it to transition by mixing in your hay with the hay that is provided, especially if the source comes from a different region. Do the same with the feed, giving a month for the transition. The process can be important to reduce potential of digestive issues such as diarrhea and colic. It will also reduce the stress your horse will go through by having one less major change occurring. If it is not possible to complete the transition at home, bring enough of your current feed and hay to get him through the transition at school.
- 3) Raindrop Technique: Have a Raindrop Technique done on your horse a week or two before you leave. This process only takes about 45 minutes and uses a combination of massage techniques and essential oils to help boost the immune system, reduce stress, and increase circulation. Have another session about a month after he has settled into his new home. Additional maintenance sessions can be done two to four times/year.
- 4) Help your horse learn her surroundings. Not only is the environment new, but she has to fit into a new heard.
 - If you are bringing more than one horse, move them into the same pen or put their stalls next to each other at your current facility. Having a buddy will make things much easier.
 - Visualization exercise with your horse: visualize what the new place looks like with your horse and what the new routine will be. Just take a few minutes when you are near your horse to show her what things will look like. She will appreciate having an understanding of her new surroundings and what will be expected.
 - Spend time daily with your horse during the move. You will be the one familiar thing she knows, and she will look forward to seeing you. It will calm her and let her know she is not alone.
 - Use Peace and Calming or lavender essential oil if your horse is anxious. Using these essential oils will cause a chemical reaction in the body to release endorphins that help calm the animal. Apply to the tips of his ears, under chin and/or on his chest. Use 2-5 drops/application. For maximum results, apply to your horse during times of calmness

and comfort. This will enhance the effect of the reaction as your horse will learn to associate the smell with that emotion.

- 5) Establish a Routine: The faster you establish a routine for you and your horse, the faster she will transition. Set a schedule for yourself of when you are going to visit, ride, have the trainer work with her, etc.

Enjoy college and enjoy having your horse with you, it will be an experience for you both! Good luck!



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