

Published based on [Key Facts Concerning Horse Racing Welfare](#)

# **Key Facts Concerning Horse Racing Welfare**

There is a lot of misunderstanding when it comes to the welfare of racehorses in the UK. In actuality, there have been countless protective measures put in place by the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) which monitors the condition of racehorses and performs investigations and assessments to ensure that each animal is safe, healthy, and receiving the best level of care from its racehorse trainer, jockey, owner, and others involved in the sport.

Included in the BHA Rules of Racing, the [racehorse trainer](#) is subject to the Animal Welfare Act which serves to safeguard the horse from scenarios that can lead to injuries, disease, pain and/or suffering. This responsibility falls on the racehorse trainer and the vet to ensure that the horse is fit before taking part in any race.

It is in the best interest of everyone involved in the sport to make sure that the racehorse is in top condition. The racehorse trainer would not run a horse which wasn't at full fitness, not only would the horse not race well but it may also jeopardize its future racing career.

The BHA also inspects course surfaces to minimize injuries, reviews obstacles such as hurdles for safety, requires all courses to provide horse ambulances and equine veterinary surgeons for rapid treatment. There are strict regulations in place regarding the use of performance enhancing drugs or drugs which may mask pain, horses are tested for the presence of such drugs ahead of racing. There are also rules in place with regard to the use of the whip by the jockeys, over use of the whip will result in disciplinary action, horses are also vetted after the race.

Horses in training are typically exercised no more vigorously than they might naturally run, gallop, or jump amongst the herd. Horses do not participate in jump racing, which is more physically demanding, until they are at least three years old.

Animal welfare organisations such as the RSPCA, SSPCA and WHW support the horse racing industry. Every effort is made to avoid accidents, mend fractures when possible, and minimize dangers that can lead to fatalities. While there is still inherent risk involved, just like any sporting activity, there are only about 2 fatalities occurring for every 1000 horses.

Despite rumours to the contrary, horseracing isn't a cruel sport. The horse trainer, owner, breeder, jockey, veterinarian doctors, and administrative staff are all invested, motivated, and committed to providing excellent care that produces stronger and healthier horses more capable of performing at their best with a reduced risk of needless injuries or illnesses.

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