

# Housing Your Horse

*By Karen Briggs*

*What makes one barn a delight, and another a dungeon? Factors like safety, comfort, and convenience—all of which can be incorporated with thoughtful design and clever construction*

In the back of your mind somewhere there lurks a Dream Barn. Go on, admit it. You've planned it down to the last luxurious detail—from the Olympic-sized riding arena (with the climate-impervious perfect footing) right down to the automatic fly spray misting system and the heated automatic waterers that never freeze up, overflow, or get jammed. There your horses live in decadent comfort, with every convenience at your fingertips...in the midst of 450 acres of green, rolling hills, tastefully fenced with four-board oak, naturally. Ah...heaven.

Of course, there's a huge distance between dreams and reality (for most of us, anyway!). The bells and whistles of a Dream Barn might be beyond the budget of many of us...but that doesn't mean you have to settle for a barn that is hot in summer, cold in winter, and inconvenient to work around in every conceivable way. If you are building a barn—or even if you're just thinking about it—there are lots of common-sense features that



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you can incorporate to make life for you, and your horses, easier, more comfortable, and most importantly, safer. Most of them aren't a matter of extra expense, just forethought and planning. Let's have a look at what makes a good barn (and perhaps a few things that make a poor one).

### Location, Location, Location

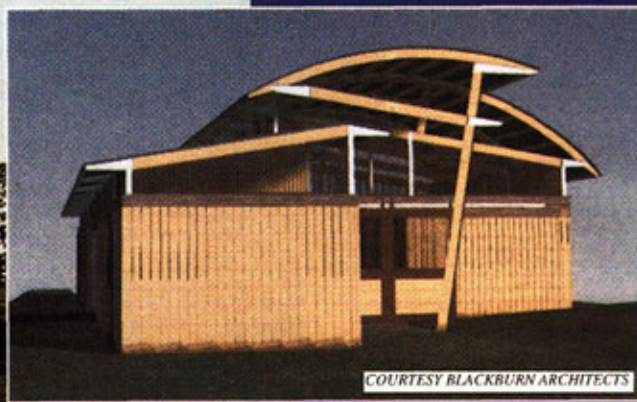
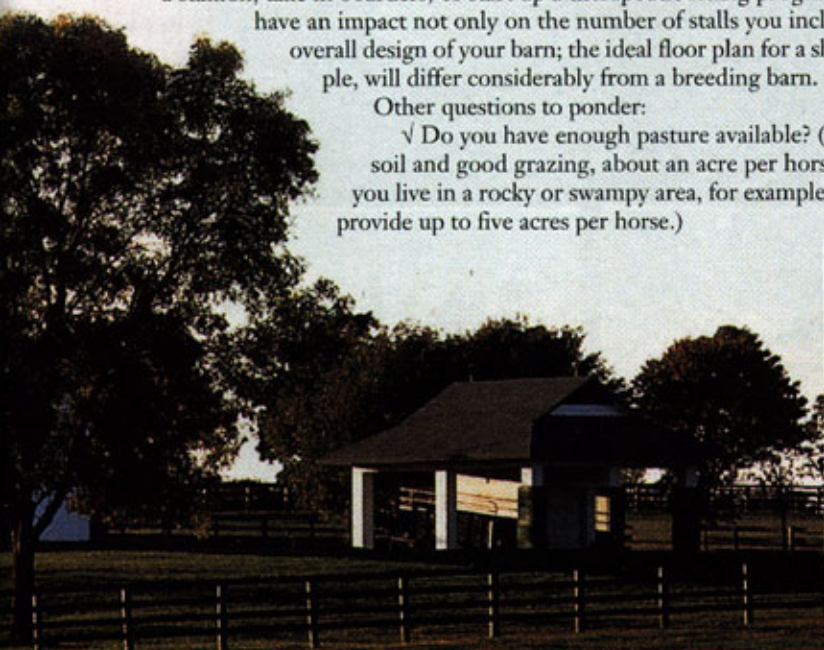
It's a song we've heard many times before, but finding the best location for your barn is the first step toward building a structure you'll be happy with for years to come. Most of us don't have that idyllic 450 acres of rolling pasture to work with, but even small properties can be horse-friendly if you do your homework.

First and foremost, check that the zoning regulations in your proposed building area allow for horse-keeping, for without that thumbs-up, you can't proceed any further. Next, consider how many horses you want to house—not just now, but in the future as well. Perhaps you only have a couple of pleasure riding horses now, but hope in the future to breed your mare, stand a stallion, take in boarders, or start up a therapeutic riding program. These plans will have an impact not only on the number of stalls you include, but also in the overall design of your barn; the ideal floor plan for a show barn, for example, will differ considerably from a breeding barn.

Other questions to ponder:

✓ Do you have enough pasture available? (In an area with rich soil and good grazing, about an acre per horse will suffice, but if you live in a rocky or swampy area, for example, you might need to provide up to five acres per horse.)

There are lots of common-sense features you can incorporate into your barn design to make life for you, and your horses, easier, more comfortable, and most importantly, safer. Shown on this page are computerized drawings of barns designed for various U. S. clients of Blackburn Architects. At top shows a barn, arena, office complex designed for Virginia; bottom left is a barn for a Texas horse farm; bottom right is a barn designed for Florida; and below is a barn designed for California. On the facing page is an outstanding illustration of a Thoroughbred barn in Kentucky, built for beauty, great airflow, convenience, and safety.



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## HOUSING YOUR HORSE

✓ Is there access to clean

water on the property?

✓ Will you be doing all the barn work yourself, or do you expect to hire staff to help you? Accommodations for your groom or trainer might need to become part of the plan.

✓ What sort of road access does your property have? Will feed trucks, hay wagons, and horse trailers be able to get in and out easily? How busy are your local roads?

✓ How far from your own residence will the barn be? It's wonderful to be only steps away from your horses, but consider the impact of having that manure pile right in your backyard.

The topography of your land is the next major consideration. Plan to situate your barn on the high ground of your property. A slope away from the barn will help rainwater and waste drain away from its foundations, an important consideration. Nancy Ambrosiano, co-author (with Mary Harcourt) of the book *Complete Plans for Building Horse Barns Big and Small*, now in its second edition, says that during her research for the book, "I realized in the course of tromping around in dozens and dozens of horse facilities that a startling number of people seem to ignore the importance of footing and drainage when they build. Whether from inexperience or tight funding, they just slap a barn down flat on the ground...then battle water, holes, mucky paths, and damp stalls for years afterward. It's not impossible to improve bad drainage, and even build up the footing in and around a barn. But it's a lot easier to start with a high spot and build upon it."

You'll also want to consider carefully the direction of the prevailing winds. In some cases, whether you situate your barn so that the roofline falls east-west, or north-south, can make a huge difference with regard to whether your barn is a pleasant haven from the heat in summer, or an oven by any other name. Taking advantage of your area's natural air movement also will provide better ventilation throughout your barn—and that means better respiratory health for your horses.

Although experienced builders might be able to take all of these factors into account on their own, for most of us, finding a designer and/or contractor is a wise investment when it comes to barn building. It's much easier to correct design mistakes on paper than when the barn is up. Try to find a builder who specializes in horse barns; he

All barns should be designed for proper ventilation and safety, but natural lighting is a valuable asset for aesthetics, as well as improving the environment in the barn. Below are a modular barn and hay storage shed designed by Barnmaster; opposite page top is a manufactured barn/office complex; and opposite page below is a covered outdoor arena that also could be used for stabling in appropriate climates.



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or she will know what you need in terms of drainage, ventilation, and strength of materials, and will also have an understanding of safety features—things like minimizing projections on which a horse could injure himself, nailing fence boards to the horse's side of the fence posts, and hanging doors so that they swing outward from the stalls, not inward.

According to Ambrosiano, building a small barn might be a project well within the scope of many horse owners' talents.

"Lots of horse folks are, or are married to,

or are friends with, persons with good building skills," she says. "For such folks, merely having a 'consciousness-raising' about zoning and barn issues, requirements, and features may be enough to get them rolling. They may well be able to produce their own project, start to finish.

"More often, though, we horse people are pretty good at most things, but not brilliant at the whole enterprise. A cooperative effort with a barn builder and an architect can turn out to provide the best final results in these





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cases. If cost is an issue, then options such as doing your own finishing work, painting, and so forth, can help a great deal. Also, building in increments can help—perhaps getting the stalls ready for horses now, but holding off on the tack room till next spring.”

When you develop your plans, decide which features are essential, and which you can live without. Do you need a wash rack, for example, a breeding shed, or a set of stocks? Is it essential that your indoor riding arena be attached to the barn? Do you need

to provide a washroom, a heated viewing lounge or office, or living quarters? Do you require space to park carriages or a tractor—or your husband's boat? Some sort of storage area for tack and equipment is important for most operations, and an enclosed feed room that is inaccessible to horses also is a good idea. Some sort of provision for the storage of hay and bedding also is required—and housing these in a separate building is a better idea, safety-wise, than storage in the stabling area or an overhead loft. (See sidebar

on fire-proofing your barn on page 26.)

What are the most important things to think about? Ambrosiano lists her priorities: “Drainage, drainage, drainage, followed by (a) guaranteed water (source), ventilation, sturdiness, and safe access to horses from several directions in case of a fire, flood, or tornado. The best barns seem to have been planned with worst-case scenarios in hand. For example, if El Nino brings us more rain than we've ever had, where will the runoff go, and will it undercut my stalls or foundation? If the drainage off the hill above the barn gets severe, do I have a swale and ditch in place



to handle it, or will that extra water sweep in under my tack room door?

"If we have a ferocious hot, humid spell, how can I guarantee air flow through the stalls? Same if we have a severe blizzard and the horses are kept in for days at a time—can I ensure good air flow without an arctic blast directly onto them? By the same token, if a hurricane removes our power for a week, can I still get water from the well using a generator or hand pump? If the well's contaminated, where else can I get enough water for all my horses for days at a time? If a tree falls across one side of the building, or fire is at one end, can I still get to every horse from an alternative entry?"

### Construction Materials

Lumber, of course, is the traditional material for barn-building in most locations, and it can be a very effective choice, but it's not your only option. Steel-framed barns are far less flammable, and stand the test of time; there's also brick (expensive, but durable), concrete block, and a host of combinations of these. Several companies also offer "prefab" barns, which can be ordered in a number of configurations. A British company called Goodricks recently introduced a steel-frame construction modular barn, the Concept 2000, which offers superior ventilation features over most barns made of traditional materials, and can be adapted to a variety of different climate conditions. Simplicity of construction is one of the system's main selling points. Company president Peter Goodrick says that the barns can be erected anywhere in the world without mechanical assistance.

What sort to choose? That's a matter of aesthetics, of budget, and of what's most appropriate to your location. Time and again, wood, despite its higher fire risk, reaffirms itself as the most popular choice. As Ambrosiano observes, "Metal barns are great if you have a morbid fear of fire, but have you ever tried to hang up a bucket in one, or fix a busted door hinge? You have to have a welding torch on hand if you want to do anything. And they drip condensation on you all winter!"

A ceiling that drips is a sign that the ventilation within is inadequate. In order to allow six to eight air changes per hour in your barn, you'll need to position inlets (where cool air enters) and outlets (where warmed air exits) throughout the structure (the exact placement of each will depend on your climate and the local topographical features and prevailing winds). Under some circumstances—for example, if your barn is sheltered by a hill, or surrounded by other buildings—it might be necessary to supplement the natural, or passive, ventilation with fans and/or air filtration systems. You also

can space your barn's doors and windows to take advantage of maximum airflow (but keep in mind that fresh air and drafts are not the same!). In hot, humid climates, you might want to install additional vents about two feet from the floor of the barn (an approach that is especially good for foaling stalls, since foals don't benefit much from airflow through windows high in the walls). It's far easier to incorporate these design features into your barn from the start than it is to try and install them later. So, consider ventilation a priority when you design your layout. Cupolas in the roofline are one attractive way to go; in cold climates there are elaborate louvered vent systems that can be adjusted to let in more or less air, depending on the wind chill. (For more on ventilation, see "The Air In There," in the March 1998 issue of *The Horse*.)

What about insulation? Studies have demonstrated that insulating the walls of your barn will not only help it stay warmer in winter, but cooler in summer. In addition, because insulation contributes to a temperature difference inside the barn vs. outside, it can aid in keeping air circulating nicely through the structure. The amount and type of insulation you use will vary according to your climate and building materials; unless you're very experienced at this sort of thing, this probably is a question to pose to your contractor or architect.

### Nor Any Drop To Drink

The next major consideration is water. The average horse requires between five and 15 gallons of water a day—and that's not counting all the extra H<sub>2</sub>O you'll need to

rinse bits, soak beet pulp, cold-hose injuries, and bathe mud-covered critters. If you intend to install a bathroom or a washing machine, your water needs will be even greater. If you intend to draw from an existing water line or well, you'll need to assess whether the supply is adequate for the demand. And if you dig a new well for the barn, you'll want to test the water for chemical and bacterial contamination.

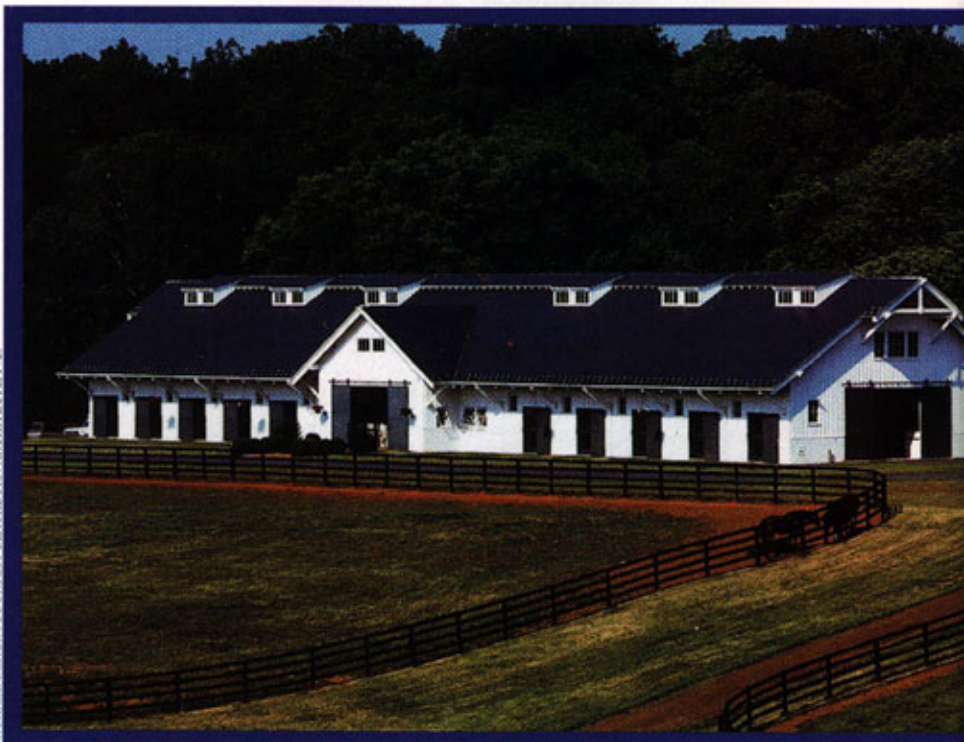
Ambrosiano suggests, "You might like to run more water pipes underground than you think you'll need—for all potential waterer and spigot areas now and in the future."

Laying pipe is, of course, one of those things that are much easier to do while the building is still in its unfinished state. Anticipating your future needs might save you ripping out flooring and walls in future years. Rugged metal pipe is advisable in all locations where a horse might come in contact with the plumbing, as it's far harder for a horse to destroy with his teeth. (If you live in an area where freezing is a problem in winter, wrap the pipe with electric heating tape in areas where horses can't reach.)

Do you want to install a hot water heater for your barn? Many consider such an item a luxury, but in Ambrosiano's view, hot water is relatively inexpensive and a positive godsend in some circumstances. A relatively small tank will do the job for most operations, and you might wish to investigate renting or leasing the unit to keep costs reasonable.

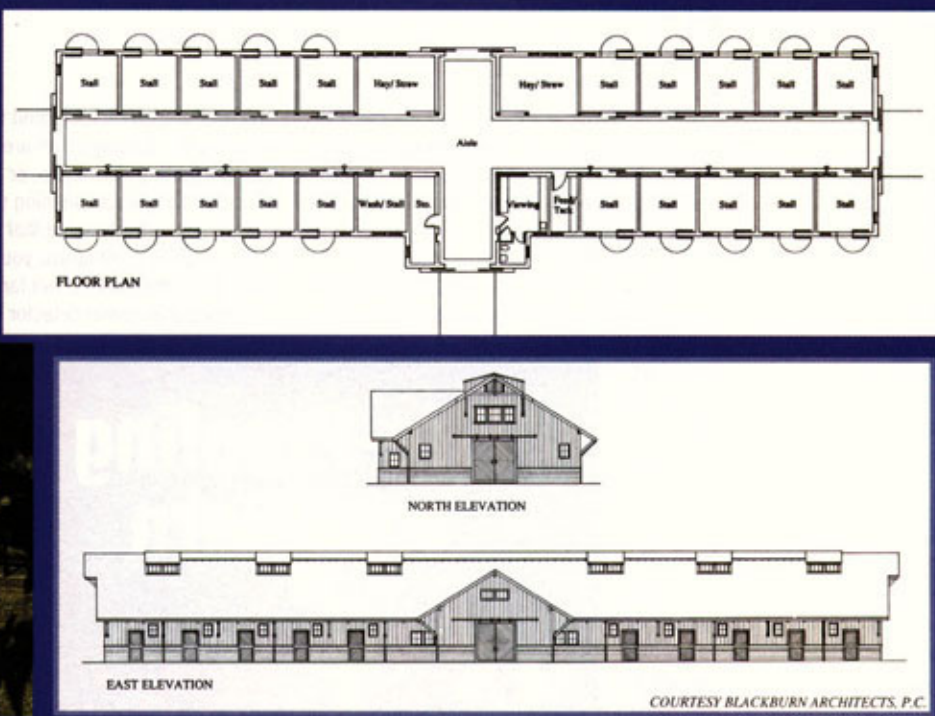
Then there's the age-old debate of how to water your horses: by bucket, or with automatic waterers? Waterers certainly are convenient, but they do have their draw-

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A cooperative effort with a barn builder and an architect can turn out to provide the best final results. Shown at right are the architectural blueprints for the beautifully finished product seen at left on Morven Stud Farm.



backs. One, they make it very difficult to monitor your horses' water intake, and two, they have an uncanny ability to freeze up, overflow, and cease to function in any number of other creative ways. If you decide to use them, buy the heaviest-duty hardware you can locate, and install each with a separate shut-off valve, which might help you avert a disaster when the waterer is sat upon by Old Dobbin and breaks off the wall! If, on the other hand, you choose to go with the more traditional buckets, consider the placement of your interior faucets so that filling those buckets is as painless as possible. Hoses and hose reels can make light work of that chore in the summer months, but in freezing conditions, they might be quickly retired in favor of lugging buckets by hand. Use a drain-back valve on your faucets to minimize muddy spots around the tap (these also will keep water from sitting in the pipes where it can freeze in winter).

If you install a wash rack, you'll want to consult with some experts about an appropriate drainage system for your soil conditions. Ambrosiano notes, "If you set up your drainage so that it's foolproof and easily cleared out, you'll be happy later when the rinse water backs up (because) you can get right to the blockage. I always keep in mind that hay, manure, string, tail hair, rodents, and much more will be going down any pipes I have.

"Folks who let their house builders do their barns might do well to remind them that burying small-diameter pipe in concrete is just asking for a drainage problem—this isn't a little garage with a bit of dust or oil here and there. At (United States Equestrian

Team eventer) Phyllis Dawson's barn, she and her mother, Grace, have thought things out thoroughly and beautifully over the years. The wash stall drains, not through the floor, but slopes to one corner of the wall, where a small piece of PVC pierces the concrete and releases the water to the outside. Clogs are nearly impossible."

Ambrosiano adds, "Paul Mellon's lovely racehorse barns in Middleburg, Va., also feature this type of water handling, especially in the broodmare barns where one likes to wash out each stall with disinfectant. A discreet concrete gutter runs along the outside of the stalls, into which all stall runoff can drain."

### Flooring Options

Wall-to-wall plush carpeting it might not be, but the floor under your horse's feet is of major importance in your barn. It needs to be non-slip, provide good drainage, be tough enough to take abuse from a thousand-pound animal (sometimes with a predilection for digging his way to China), contribute minimal dust and noise, and be easy to muck out and to sweep or rake clean. You might want to consider different types of flooring for the stalls and the aisle(s) of the barn. For the former, comfort and durability are the major considerations, while navigability (by wheelbarrow or tractor) and ease of cleaning are paramount in the aisles.

One of the simplest options, in the stalls at least, is dirt flooring. It's forgiving to equine limbs, but not quite as low-maintenance as it first appears—because unless your soil is extraordinarily well-draining, you'll end up with swampy areas where

urine has pooled through the bedding. To avoid this, dig a drain field in each stall: make a hole about three feet in diameter, and deep enough to reach a well-draining layer of soil (usually a couple of feet), fill the hole with big chunks of gravel, or alternating layers of sand and gravel, tamp it firmly into place, then cover the hole with dirt to make a smooth surface. Alternatively, you might wish to lay a six- to 12-inch layer of fine gravel or stone dust under the whole of the stall floor. It also will help to pack your flooring in a gentle slope (about three degrees at most—any more will put a strain on your horse's legs) from front to rear in each stall, or toward one corner, where you can provide a drainage outlet to the outside. "Baseball diamond" type hard-packed clay is the best soil to use for a dirt floor, as it only needs to be reworked about once a year. Pack it firmly with a heavy pounding tool or motor-driven "settler," keeping water and some extra loose clay on hand to adjust the consistency of the floor as necessary.

If a dirt floor just won't work for your operation, you might look at something more durable, like concrete (tough, but cold and very hard on equine limbs, and slippery as well unless you texture it with a rough surface when you pour it), wood (easier on your horse's body, but slippery and prone to rotting), or asphalt ("warmer" than concrete, hard on the legs, but provides a good, non-slip surface, especially if you use the porous "popcorn" asphalt, which has large particles and is raked on installation, rather than rolled). In the aisles, you may also want to consider decorative flooring such as

interlocking brick (very attractive and durable, and easy to hose down, but difficult to sweep because dirt, hay, and bedding tend to become trapped in the crevices). If you must lay a hard surface such as concrete or asphalt in the stalls (as you might if you have a breeding operation and need to be able to strip and disinfect stalls from top to bottom), consider the use of rubber matting to help cushion the floor; and bed deeply in order to make the floor more comfortable.

## Let There Be Light

Lighting (or the lack of it), as Ambrosiano points out in her book, can make a barn either a delight to work in, or a dungeon. Quite apart from your own troubles, if you continually are groping in the gloom, horses are instinctively afraid of dark, enclosed spaces—so it's important to make your barn look airy, bright, and inviting. Here again, good planning is key. Use natural lighting as much as possible—it's cheap and it's pleasing (not to mention that sunlight is a powerful deterrent to many airborne viruses and bacteria). Incorporate lots of windows throughout your barn, and consider installing skylights over your key working areas (such as the tack room and the cross-ties where you groom) for extra sunny ambience. (Ambrosiano particularly likes the type that open for extra ventilation, but she cautions that you should get a no-leak guarantee when they are installed!) Another popular plan is a clear Plexiglas border, sometimes called a "skylight," which can be installed just under the roofline down the length of the barn.

Even with good use of natural lighting, you'll still need to install some light fixtures for those after-dark (or before-dawn) chores. Whether the fixtures you choose are incandescent or fluorescent is a personal choice; their positioning is the important factor. Better to err on the side of too many fixtures rather than too few; you should plan for a minimum of one light every 10 feet in the aisle, and one per stall (unless your stalls have only partial dividers, in which case you can position an overhead light above the partition and illuminate two stalls for the price of one). Remember that horses cast large shadows, so they will block substantial amounts of light from a side-mounted bulb. Better to locate the light fixtures directly overhead whenever possible, protecting the wiring and the bulb itself from curious critters by enclosing it in a wire cage, plastic shield, or other protective arrangement. (And place them as high as possible—a rearing horse or a carelessly wielded pitchfork can break a bulb or fluorescent tube more easily than one would suspect.) A rule to remember: no exposed

wires or bulbs—ever.

Electrical outlets also are a consideration. You'll need them for your clippers, the horse vacuum, the kettle, the washer and dryer, extra fans, heat lamps, the radio, the intercom, your security or foaling video cameras, and for your farrier to run his drill press—and that's just a partial list. Position at least one outlet at either end of your barn, and add more as needed, being careful that they are well out of reach of your horses. (As our sidebar on fire safety suggests, the best type of outlet is the outdoor kind with the spring-loaded cover that snaps shut to keep out dust, water, and curious lips or fingers.)

While you're thinking "let there be light," add a floodlight for the outside of your barn so that you can make your way there on a moonless night without breaking your neck. The type that activates on a motion sensor will save you electricity and help protect against burglary as well.

It goes without saying that *all* electrical wiring in a barn should be encased in metal conduit to protect it from the predations of horses and rodents. One chewed wire has the potential to kill a horse and burn your barn down in one fell swoop. Unless you are an electrical expert, wiring is one area of the building process you should leave to the professionals. Safety measures here are of crucial importance.

## Stall Design

According to conventional wisdom, the minimum size for a box stall for an average-sized horse is 10 feet x 10 feet; 12 feet x 12 feet is considered a better bet for most animals. (Foaling stalls should be a minimum of 14 feet by 14 feet, and many people use this size for stallions as well.) As you enlarge the size of the stall, you increase the comfort factor for your equines, but you also increase the amount of building materials you need; and later, you'll also go through a good deal more bedding in a larger stall.

For safety, you'll want to have your ceiling at least 10 feet from the floor; higher ceilings are even safer and can help encourage good air circulation. Plan on stall doors at least four feet wide (wider if you have draft horses!). Whether you use Dutch doors that swing out into the aisle (never into the stall), or sliding doors (more expensive and sometimes somewhat cantankerous, but much easier to maneuver around) is a matter of personal preference; larger operations often choose the latter because they make it much easier to drive a tractor and manure spreader down the central aisle at mucking time each morning. And you'll have to debate whether you want to provide your horses with a top "window" over which they can hang their heads into the aisle; horses who aren't completely shut in by a grill generally

are happier, but there is always the risk that a passerby (equine or human) will get bitten. In hot climates, doors made completely of steel or wire mesh are a popular option; they allow good visibility and air circulation, but tend to let bedding spill into the aisle. On the whole, doors take more abuse than the rest of the stall structure, so make sure they are rugged...and choose a latch that is suitably "horse-proof" and has no dangerous, protruding edges.

Says Ambrosiano, "I like the traditional look of the sliding bolt with a horseshoe for a handle, although when left projecting from the door edge, they're a hazard. If you have kids in the barn, it's especially noticeable, as they often turn horses too quickly through a door."

"One sliding door manufacturer makes a gravity latch that hooks closed in the track above the door, so no projecting pieces can bump your shoulder or your horse's hips. The handle has a vertical rod that runs up to release the latch in the overhead track, so it's easy to grab the door handle, squeeze the release, and slide the door open."

"Another low-tech way of closing sliding doors without hazards is to just drill a hole, slanting downward through the door edge and into the frame behind it. Drop a large bolt or wooden dowel in when you're latching the door and you have a safe, positive lock in place. If the bolt or dowel is on a string attached to the door, you won't be hunting for it. Now if we could just keep track of hoof picks..."

As for interior fittings, your choices are as many and varied as your local feed store or tack shop can come up with; just keep in mind that you want to have as few projecting surfaces as possible inside the stall. Enclosed screw eyes, with double-ended snaps, are a simple and convenient way to hang water and feed buckets. Corner feeders are another popular option, but keep in mind that if you install a feeder permanently, it will be more difficult to clean. Choose a salt-block holder that has no sharp edges when empty; you never know when a salt block will crumble in the middle of the night. Most people prefer to feed hay on the ground or in a hay net, but if you do wish to install a hayrack, choose one with bars wide enough that a horse can't get a foot caught (yes, it does happen!), and position it so that the hay isn't above your horse's head (a situation that allows particles and dust to fall into his eyes as he eats).

Stall partitions can be solid and up-to-the-ceiling, or stop short of the roof to allow for better air circulation. Being herd animals, horses like to be able to see and smell each other, so a partition that allows some contact (either by providing gaps in the upper boards, or with wire mesh or a metal grill) is a nice choice, although it does mean there



will be some squabbling among neighbors. Make sure, of course, that all corners are rounded and that there are no sharp projections of any kind.

## Feed And Tack Storage

We've looked at feed storage in some depth in a previous article (see *Equinomics: Buying and Storing Feed*, in the October 1997 issue of *The Horse*), so we'll summarize here by saying your priorities are to keep your feed fresh, safe from insects and rodents, and out of reach of your horses. The method you use will depend on how many horses you're feeding, but it's important that you isolate the feed in a separate part of the barn, preferably with a door that locks, so that horses can't break in and gorge themselves sick.

As for tack, a separate tack room will help keep your valuable equipment from getting dusty and/or moldy; this is the place for a few creature comforts, perhaps a few storage cupboards, a sink, saddle (or harness) and bridle racks, a place to clean your tack, a comfortable chair or two, room for some tack trunks, maybe even a small fridge (for storing cold wraps and injectable medications as well as cold drinks and carrots), a microwave oven or coffeemaker, or a washer and dryer specifically for saddle pads, leg wraps, and horse blankets (that way, you won't ruin the washing machine in your house!). Your hot water heater can live in the tack room, too. Many people like to heat their tack rooms, but be cautious if you decide to use a portable space heater to do the job; many do not have automatic shut-offs and can be a fire hazard. Use them sparingly and only when someone is present in the room.

## Bells And Whistles

There are a great many features we haven't touched on here, because what works for one operation might not be applicable to another. But quickly, here are a few more suggestions for a well-designed barn, and a few "nice touches" to consider:

✓ Cross-ties: rig up several sets in your aisle, perhaps with rubber matting underfoot for your horse's security. Rope is quieter, but chain is sturdier; be sure that there is a little bit of room for your horse to move when tied on both sides, but not enough so that he can turn around and cause havoc. Between the end of the cross-tie and the snap end that attaches to your horse's halter, place a small loop of string or binder-twine, which will break if your horse panics. (Don't place this quick-release feature at the other end of the cross-tie that attaches to the wall—if your horse should break it, he will then be panicking with six feet of cross-tie flailing at the end of his nose!).

✓ Shavings storage can be a nightmare, particularly if you have it blown in, in bulk. Many operations just pile it outside the barn with a tarp tossed over top, but this is wasteful and messy. Instead of storing the shavings in the barn, where they can contribute to respiratory problems in both horses and humans, consider building a separate shavings storage bin. Ambrosiano says, "I have developed an appreciation for clever shavings bins. Many of us have dealt with tarpaulins and rubber tires and such for avoiding a wet pile of bedding, and it's lovely to see those high-roofed shavings sheds (with pulley-powered opening roofs) that some facilities have. But a \$10,000 building to dump wood chips in might not be in every budget, and there are ingenious options out there, from a simple enclosure with a hinged, lightweight roof, to sectioned fiberglass panels that lift off."

✓ Hay or straw storage can be done fairly simply by building a separate shelter with a roof only, no sides. Failing this, it is possible to store bales outside with a tarp over the top (and tires to hold it down), but expect considerably more wastage. If you store hay in a loft, try to make sure the stacks are well-spaced, that air circulation is good, and that as little as possible in the way of dust, chaff, and particles sift down to the barn floor. Consider overhead hatches above every stall, or every couple of stalls if you have partial partitions, to simplify feeding hay.

✓ Blanket racks on every stall door help keep winter blankets and summer sheets easily at hand; other pieces of horse clothing can be stored on racks in your tack or storage room, or in sealed trunks.

✓ Collapsible saddle racks, placed at intervals along the aisle, will help simplify tacking up. If you have harness hooks instead, make sure they're installed high enough that a horse would have difficulty injuring his head on one.

✓ If you intend to have boarders, it might be useful to install individual tack lockers rather than deal with a proliferation of tack trunks.

✓ In hot climates, consider an extra-high roof, with large vents under the eaves, to improve air circulation, and a good selection of ceiling fans. ▲



LANE'S END FARM

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