



Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Lines on equestrian activities under the Steps Regulations

- Step 2 means no earlier than 12th April
- Step 3 means no earlier than 17th May

29 March

1. Outdoor riding arenas are permitted to open from 29 March. People can use these venues in a group of up to six people, with people from the same household or support bubble, or in a group of any size from up to two households.
2. From 29 March, formally organised outdoor sport, including outdoor riding lessons, training and competitions, are also permitted. Such organised activities can include a larger number of participants, provided that appropriate steps are taken to make them COVID-Secure in line with the law. At this stage, these gatherings must only include participants, not spectators or the parents of participating children.
3. Indoor riding arenas remain closed until Step 2 (no earlier than 12 April). A place is classed as indoors if it would be considered to be enclosed, or substantially enclosed, for the purposes of section 2 of the Health Act 2006(a), under the Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006(b). The smoke-free regulations definition can be found here: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/3368/regulation/2/made>. In practice this means that we define indoors as a place that is considered to be enclosed, or substantially enclosed for the purpose of the smoke-free regulations. A structure would likely be outdoors if more than 50% of the area of its walls are open.
4. However, the closure of indoor arenas does not prevent access to indoor arenas for training or competition by elite sportspeople, for the purpose of providing veterinary services in relation to any animals at the riding centre, or for the care or exercise of any animal by its owner at the riding centre. Employees of the riding centre may continue to access indoor arenas, including to maintain the property and care for or exercise the animals located on site.
5. Horse hire to the general public for outdoor use can take place from 29 March, subject to social contact rules.
6. Organised indoor horse riding for disabled people who are not elite sportspeople is permitted, where provided by a business, charity or public body and where the organiser takes the required precautions. The closure of indoor riding arenas does not prevent access to such venues for the purpose of fitness-related activity for persons with a disability.

Step 2

7. Use of outdoor arenas remains restricted to a group of up to six people, people from the same household or support bubble, or a group of any size from up to two households, unless as part of formally organised outdoor sports, subject to the conditions set out above.
8. Indoor arenas are permitted to open for use as a single household or bubble indoors. Indoor activities such as group riding lessons that bring people together - even if they do not mix with other households - must not run until Step 3. Indoor activities are only permitted if there is an explicit exemption – relevant exemptions include activities that form part of the core curriculum of formal education or professional/work-related training/development, elite sports training or competition, or organised sports for children or for the disabled (with relevant gatherings permitted to include participants, not spectators or the parents of participating children).
9. The intention at Step 3 (no earlier than 17th May) is that riding arenas must only be attended/used in line with the wider social contact limits at this stage - in a group of 6 people or 2 households indoors; or in a group of no more than 30 people outdoors, unless an exemption is in place.

Further detail regarding point 3:

The Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006

Extract:

Enclosed and substantially enclosed premises

2.—(1) For the purposes of section 2 of the Act, premises are enclosed if they—

- (a) have a ceiling or roof; and
- (b) except for doors, windows and passageways, are wholly enclosed either permanently or temporarily.

(2) For the purposes of section 2 of the Act, premises are substantially enclosed if they have a ceiling or roof but there is—

- (a) an opening in the walls; or
- (b) an aggregate area of openings in the walls,

which is less than half of the area of the walls, including other structures that serve the purpose of walls and constitute the perimeter of the premises.

(3) In determining the area of an opening or an aggregate area of openings for the purposes of paragraph (2), no account is to be taken of openings in which there are doors, windows or other fittings that can be opened or shut.

(4) In this regulation “roof” includes any fixed or moveable structure or device which is capable of covering all or part of the premises as a roof, including, for example, a canvas awning.