

## Stall Cleaning Tips and Tricks

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Although it might seem like a simple, mundane task, the way you clean your horse's stall can have a lasting impact on his or her health. A dirty stall can harbor bacteria and ammonia, putting your horse at increased risk of disease and respiratory problems. Choosing the right bedding for your horse and your management system and understanding how to thoroughly and effectively clean your horse's stall can help you minimize this risk.



### Choose the Right Bedding

The type of bedding you choose can have a significant impact on the health of your horse and cleanliness of his or her stall. The ideal bedding is absorbent, yet comfortable for your horse, cost-effective, easily disposable, and accessible in your area. The bedding you choose might also affect the time it takes for you to clean the stall. More traditional bedding options are wood shavings and straw, but other options include:

- Corn cobs.
- Hemp.
- Leaves.
- Paper products (shredded cardboard, newspaper, etc.).
- Peat moss.
- Reused composted bedding.

These bedding types might be more or less available depending on your location. When choosing the best bedding for you and your horse, be sure to consider any health issues your horse might have, what type of bedding you can access and afford, and what will help you keep your horse's stall clean.



Research results have shown that regular exposure to excess dust is associated with chronic airway diseases. Acute infectious respiratory diseases can be exacerbated and prolonged by dust inhalation. Choosing a low-dust bedding and sweeping and cleaning stalls when your horse is on turnout are some of the best ways to reduce their risk.

## Management Recommendations

- Clean the stall when your horse is not in the barn if possible. (Give them turnout time during cleaning)
- Wash feed and water buckets daily to limit the buildup of mold and algae.
- Use a thin layer of pelleted bedding under your other bedding to soak up urine, especially when using a less absorbent bedding.
- Use an ammonia and odor neutralizer to protect your horse's (and your) airway.
- Place the manure pile in an area that is easily accessible but does not affect the cleanliness of and air quality in the barn.
- Regularly level the base of your horse's stall and assess its drainage.



GETTY IMAGES, BELOW: COURTESY JENNIFER WHITTLE



*The air quality of a barn is often a product of the barn's size and ventilation, along with air temperature and humidity, which should each be taken into consideration when cleaning stalls.*

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