

Autumn Leaves – New Term Agility/Boldness Challenge

Welcome to the first of our Autumn Term Agility challenges – those Autumn leaves are falling – Fill a bucket or container with shredded paper – or crisp autumn leaves if you have them!

- Your horse should stand quietly while you throw the leaves over them from a height.
- If you are riding, have a friend shower you with the leaves. Your horse should stand quietly.

For advanced level, see how far you can go, how long will your horse stand while you shower them without you having to redirect them.

Rake up the Leaves

- Set up a circular area using a hula hoop, lead rope, or make a loop with a pool noodle or pipe insulation.
- Place a lead rope approximately 2m (6ft) away as a clear line.
- Have your horse stand with two front feet inside the hoop while you rake the 'leaves' up for a count of 10
- If you are riding you can hop off at this point to do your raking

For advanced level increase the duration in 5 second increments.

The Mounting Block

- Set up a mounting block or some solid box etc
- Your horse should line up nicely beside the mounting block so that you can easily lean over the saddle or climb aboard if riding.
- Again your horse should stand quietly while you climb/lean – a small weight shift to allow for adjusting to your weight is fine but no more movement than that.

Advanced level can you walk away and have your horse remain where you have placed him.

Crunch through the Autumn Leaves.

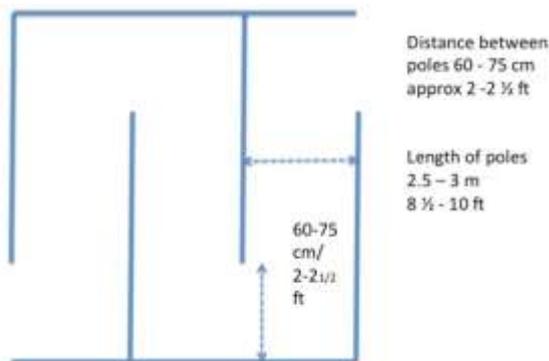
- Prepare an area approx. 1m x 2m (3ft x 6ft) with poles or lead ropes etc as boundaries
- Fill the area with squashed plastic containers or equivalent crackly material
- Walk your horse through from the side of the obstacle.
- Riders should be on a completely loose rein

Advanced level from the end of the obstacle without stepping out of the container (minimum 6ft)

Through the Maize

- This obstacle is also known as the S bend. Ideally done with jump poles, you can use other timber to create the walls or even rope but it's important that we can then see if your horse bumps or touches the rope. Have a look at the pictures and diagram below for set up.

Advanced level – narrow the poles to 2ft (60cm)



Stepping Stones

- Set out 4 "stepping stones" approx. 1 m (3 ft) apart. The stones should be approx. 1 1/2 ft (0.5 m square)
 - You can use carpet squares, floor mats, pieces of plywood, even cardboard, etc
- Walk from stone to stone, having your horse pause with his/her front feet on each stone for a count of 2 seconds.

Advanced level (can you tell we are working on duration) – 5 seconds per stepping stone.

Oops Dead end

- Make a dead end using the side and end of the fence or arena by adding a reasonably big barrier on the side.

(See picture below for an example). The width should be approx. 1 m (3 ft)

- Walk your horse into this area while you remain outside then have them back up to come out.
- The example in the picture is at liberty but it can also be done using a lead rope or ridden.

Advanced level, increase the length of the backing – see how far you can go. This can be done at liberty without the obstacle if a bigger "dead end" is not practical. Minimum cues, loose rope – you know the drill.

Make the most of these Autumn days – and have fun.

