

How to Construct a Dressage Arena

The following is a guide of how to erect a Dressage Arena to ensure it conforms with the correct dimensions.

- a) place a peg in the ground at one corner of the arena. Measure one long side of the arena (for a small arena, 40 metres) and place a peg at that distance
- b) these are pegs A and C in the diagram at the end of this section
- c) extend the line A-C by, say, three metres to D and measure back from C towards A
- d) using about a 10 metre length of twine (the exact length doesn't matter) tie a small loop at both
- e) ends, then find the exact middle and tie another loop there
- f) place one end loop over the peg at B and the other end loop over the peg at D
- g) holding the middle loop, tighten the string, first to the right and then, as a check, to the left, to obtain points E and F. Peg these points
- h) if this has been done correctly, E, C and F will be in a straight line at right angles to A-C. Extend this line 20 metres from C and the third corner of the arena is fixed repeat the procedure at A to find the fourth corner
- i) this is a quick and accurate method

With practice it will be found that further short cuts can be made, e.g. you can measure A-D (40 metres plus, say 3 metres at each end) at one go and peg B and C en route

Variant (a)

- j) j) using the above method for marking out a right angle, the setting out can be started from a chosen short side or the centre line for the arena if either is preferred as a base to work from

Variant (b)

- k) since the main problem in setting out is to establish lines at right angles, a useful tool for one who is frequently engaged in this work is a wooden set square (easily home-made) as shown at the end of this section
- l) if the apex of the set square is placed on the ground at a corner peg and one arm is sighted to lie along the base line, the other arm will point in a direction at right angles to it and the next corner peg can be sighted to be in this alignment
- m) by using a set square some of the subsidiary measuring is eliminated
- n) furthermore, the ends and long sides of the arena can be quickly laid out by using one or more lines prepared with small loops at each end through which meat skewers or other suitable pegs can be inserted to pin them down as required
- o) such prepared lines become stock material and should be checked for length each time they are brought out in case shrinking or stretching has occurred

