

# Provision for Horsebox Parking

Many riders and carriage-drivers who can afford to run a horse transport vehicle look forward to using it to access new areas to ride or drive. Some will need to transport to open spaces every time they go out because their local area lacks opportunities for hacking or driving. Parking areas for horseboxes and trailers with access to good networks or long distance routes will be very welcome.

Transport for horses varies from a two horse trailer towed by a large car to lorries accommodating ten horses. The larger lorries are more likely to be associated with either horse transport businesses or competition horses. People using their transport to take their horse to a good riding or driving area are more likely to have a trailer or small horsebox for economy and ease but there are people with only one vehicle that has to fulfil all functions.

The parking area provided will be dependent on the location and the land available. In many situations, it is accepted that it will only be possible to accommodate smaller vehicles.

In providing a parking area, there are four factors to consider:

1. Height (usually entrance restrictions)
2. Turning circle or the space for the vehicle to manoeuvre
3. Space for a ramp and loading/unloading
4. Surface

## Dimensions

The figures in the table below are a rough guide from averages; there are taller trailers, and smaller boxes based on a van body (e.g. Sprinter). For manoeuvring trailers, much depends on the turning circle of the towing vehicle as well as the overall length; for lorries there are many variables depending on how the vehicle is set up.

The unloading space is calculated as an average 2m ramp length plus length of horse.

	Trailer	Small Horsebox	Large Horsebox
Height	2.6–3 m	2.8–3.2 m	3.1–4 m
Turning circle	12–15 m	10–14 m	11.5–20 m
Unloading space	4.5 m	4.5 m	4.5 m

## Height

Height may be constrained by the need to also prevent fly-tipping or travellers and will need a local solution as any constraint that will permit a horse vehicle will also allow vans, small lorries and caravans.

Commonly a code operated barrier that restricts width is effective because 'problem' vehicles are very likely to be wider as well as higher so a width restriction can work as well as a height restriction although cars will need to take greater care in passing through the gap and need space to ensure they are accurately aligned.

## Area

Turning circles vary widely and some large vehicles, because of the axle ratios, have wide turning circles and will be difficult to accommodate in a reasonable parking area. In practice, a 15x15m square has been found to offer parking for three trailers or small boxes and some cars. As with any informal parking area, how people park will affect the number of vehicles that can fit into the space.

In planning how many vehicles can be accommodated, it is necessary to think of the space needed for a ramp to be lowered. In the UK, most horses are loaded into a vehicle via a ramp which may be dropped from the side or rear of the vehicle. In addition to space for the ramp, there will need to be an area in line with it in which the horse can be turned to point up the ramp or to step off it before turning. Some horses will step easily on or off a ramp from an angle if necessary, others need plenty of space to be aligned with the centre of the ramp and to be fully off the ramp before turning.

## Surface

As with parking cars or lorries, the land needs to be level (flat and horizontal) so that vehicles are able to park without being across a slope. The surface should be firm, well-drained and, ideally, able to sustain use all year, although summer-only parking is still welcome. The surface should be even so that when a ramp is lowered, its corners or edge are supported across its width. (Some ramps lower onto their edge, most have corner supports.)

**IMPORTANT** This guidance is general and does not aim to cover every variation in circumstances. The Society recommends seeking advice specific to a site where it is being relied upon.