

Lands Insights...

Lloyd's top tips for course building at home

To kick off our first edition of #landsinsights we looked no further than our resident course building expert, Lloyd Hunt.

It's hard to replicate a competition environment at home, but the more you can train for the technical questions of a course, the more confident you will feel on the day!

Below Lloyd will outline the best way to use what you have, and set yourself out some challenging courses at home.



Be resourceful

As professional course builders we have access to various kinds of fillers and fences designed to surprise and challenge you, but you don't have to break the bank buying replicas at home!

You can use all kinds of things lying around the yard to have the same effect. Bales of shavings or straw, feed buckets filled with picked flowers, and jackets hanging over poles all make for scary fillers to use in training. A rug on the ground with a pole either side works well as a "ditch". Get creative!

The idea is not to strew your entire tack room across the arena, but for your horse to build confidence with experience in approaching new things they won't have seen before!

Get creative

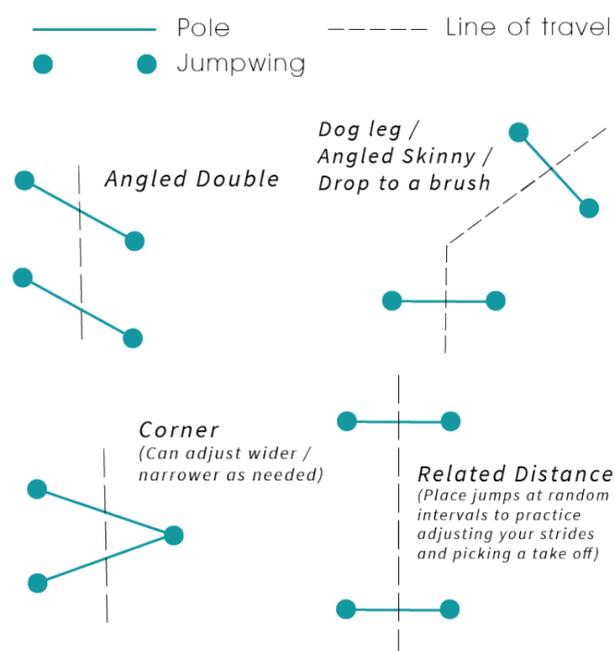
You don't have to hire an arena full of show jumps, or a high level cross country course to train every week. There are endless options with an at home arena and a couple of jumps, you just have to get creative with your sessions!

Think about the more technical parts of the jumping phases; doubles, related distances, angles, corners... these are all easily replicated at home with a couple of jumps and a bit of planning.

We've highlighted a few examples on the diagram opposite, but have a think about the aspects *you* find most difficult or daunting, and how you can replicate them.

Don't be limited by your surroundings - if you plan ahead, and maybe team up with a few other people on your yard to help and pole pick for one another, you can do a lot with very little!

(And don't forget to chuck in the odd scary filler as above!)



Push Yourself

It's very easy at home to get complacent, we are all guilty of it. It feels great to be pinging around a course with ease, or comfortably repeating a dressage test for the 50th time. We all love a confidence boost here and there! But how is this going to serve you moving forwards?

Competition environments are always stressful - you want to do well, you've spent time and money to get here, this is the big climax! But this added pressure tends to set us, and our horses, back on the day. The nerves kick in, and all of a sudden you can't remember your left from right!

Pushing yourself at home, in the comfort of familiarity, support, and lack of onlooking crowd, can be key to your success on the day. Start to think about training at the higher end of the level you wish to be competing / the lower end of the level above, so that when these nerves and unavoidable troubles happen on the day you're still well within your range to go out there and smash it.

Always start off simple, then when it feels easy begin to challenge yourself - can you make the angle sharper? The corner wider? A more variable distance? The more confident you feel, the easier you'll find it on the day!

Always remember, the most important part is to enjoy yourself!
Stay safe, look after your horses, and best of luck at our next event.

- Lloyd Hunt