



The BHS provides this handy checklist advising what to do:

- Look at local newspapers and local shops' notice boards and listen to the local radio station to find out where the displays will be in your area.
- Wherever possible, tell neighbours and local firework display organisers that there are horses nearby, so they can ensure fireworks are set off in the opposite direction and away from them.
- Decide whether to stable your horse or leave it in the field. It is sensible to keep your horse in its familiar environment, in its normal routine, with any companions to make it feel secure if it is not close to the firework display area.
- If stabled, check thoroughly for anything that could cause potential injury, such as protruding nails and string. Ensure the hay net is secured so that your horse can't get caught up if they startle.
- If your horse is to stay in the field, check the fencing is secure and not broken and there are no foreign objects lying around.
- Ensure that you, or someone experienced, stays with your horse if you know that fireworks are being set off.
- If it is necessary for you to leave your horse in the care of another person during a firework display, then be sure to leave clear instructions and contact details for both you and your vet should any problems arise.
- If you know your horse will be stressed, talk to your vet about sedation, or perhaps consider moving your horse for the night.
- Playing music on a radio positioned outside the stable can often mask sudden noise, distract attention and be soothing. It is a good idea to get your horse used to the radio before the firework display.
- Try to remain calm yourself and keep positive, as horses will sense unease in a person and this may make things worse if the horse is startled.

- It may seem common sense but be aware of your own safety; a startled horse can be dangerous.
- Whatever you do – don't risk riding when you think fireworks might be set off.
- Check if there will be a bonfire near your yard. If there is, make sure you have an emergency fire procedure in place. If you have any doubts, talk to your local fire safety officer.
- Make sure that you have adequate third-party liability insurance. If your horse is frightened and escapes, causing an accident, then you could be held liable for compensation.
- If your horse really panics during firework displays and some are planned locally to you it may be necessary to sedate them for their own safety. It is better to talk to your vet in advance to plan this.

What are the laws regarding fireworks near horses?

There are no laws regarding individuals setting light to fireworks on their property for their entertainment. However larger public displays require a permit. It is illegal to set off fireworks by a private individual between 11pm and 7am except on certain nights of the year including New Year's Eve.

It is an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to any domestic animal, so fireworks deliberately lit to stress an animal would be a police matter.

If you do have issues with fireworks, please report the incident to the British Horse Society.

What do I do if I suspect my horse has eaten part of a firework?

Please ring us as soon as possible. It can potentially be fatal for your horse. The materials that the firework are made from and the chemicals in the firework can be very dangerous for your horse.

What do I do if my horse has been hit or burnt by a firework?

Please ring us as soon as possible. It can potentially be fatal for your horse. Burns are classed under different degrees like they are in people. The more severe burns are classed as fourth degree and involve damage to the tissues beneath the skin such as the muscle or bone

The degree of the burn impacts what is the best course of action to take to treat it. Burns can be a mixture of different degrees. It is vital not to put anything on the burn other than to cool it with water before a vet has seen it. Your horse may require intravenous fluids if it has a third or fourth degree burn to combat the fluid loss and shock so the sooner we are able to attend your horse to evaluate it the better.

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