

# Construct a good fence

The fencing of paddocks for horses, differs from that needed by other livestock in two essential elements. Firstly, the risk of injury to a horse is greater, and secondly, there is the possibility that a horse will jump the fence. There is no such thing as a good fence for horses, because all are designed to restrict their wandering nature, thereby creating a potential hazard to the horse. However, horses can be safely contained by a variety of satisfactory fences.

The secret of a successful horse fence is strength, height and tightness, and this is accomplished by correctly setting the posts – particularly the corner, gate and brace posts. Wood fence posts are still the most popular and should at least be 2,5 m long and set 1 m in the ground. Corner posts should be set even deeper in the ground, with adjacent posts to which braces are attached. Some fence builders prefer to set corner and adjacent brace posts in concrete for greater strength.

## Types of horse fences

- **Post and rails:** These remain the first choice of most horse keepers, but they are expensive to erect and the cost of maintenance is high
- **Strands of plain wire:** Stretched taut between posts, these provide efficient fencing for horses. The use of barbed wire is dangerous unless taught and preferably backed with timber. The lowest strand should be no less than 30 cm from the ground, otherwise the horse may put his foot over it
- **Electric fencing:** This is becoming increasingly popular and is especially effective when used in conjunction with a wooden or wire fence. Horses quickly learn to stay away from the fence
- **Tubular steel:** Steel fences or even reinforced concrete fences, are sometimes used and although effective, can be very expensive.



A well-constructed wooden fence. It would, however, have been better to have the rails on the inside of the posts. This would minimise the chances of injury even more

If you have any unique and fool-proof tips relating to keeping horses that you would like to share with other readers, please let us know by sending us a 300-word essay with at least two good illustrative photographs, preferably in JPEG format. The essay must describe the materials needed, exact measurements, as well as the exact method of construction. The best article will be published in the next edition of *SA Horseman* and the writer will receive a gift copy of the historical *Trekperdpioniers van Suid-Afrika* by Hennie Basson. So, get your pens out and start writing! Send your entry to [izak@horsejunction.co.za](mailto:izak@horsejunction.co.za) SAH

