

Tips for Jumping at Home

- Always have someone on the ground “spotting” for you. This person doesn’t have to know anything about jumping or even about horses, just someone able to call for help if something were to happen. This person is also helpful for moving/raising jumps so you don’t have to dismount.
- Make sure to allow your horse a complete warm up – at least 20 minutes of walk, trot, and canter before you start jumping.
- Check the footing of your jumping area – there should be fairly flat ground with no mud, holes, or big dips, especially directly around the jump or on the line you will need to take to approach/land from the jump.
- Start every jumping session with trot poles, then a small cross rail, and then raise from there depending on your experience and comfort level.
- If you don’t have ‘real’ jumps, you can still make safe things to jump out of natural obstacles, or wood poles raised by objects around the barn. Just make sure your “poles” are made of wood and at least 6-8 feet long, and your “standards” are something the poles can easily be knocked off of. Stay away from PVC poles as they break easily and can injure your horse. Also stay away from cinder blocks as these ‘lock in’ the pole and do not allow it to fall if hit, making it unsafe to jump.
- Limit your jumping sessions to ½ of all your riding sessions – if you ride 4 days a week, only two of those should be jumping, etc.