
Does my horse need a balancer?
Bella Fricker

Does my horse need a balancer?

Published May 28, 2021

Providing a balanced diet plays a key role supporting long-term health and well-being. On the flip side, an unbalanced diet may contribute to many issues including poor hoof quality, a dull listless coat or a compromised immune system.

Balancers are a low intake feed (typically 500g per day for a 500kg horse) designed to provide a concentrated source of vitamins, minerals and amino acids to balance a forage-based diet, without excess calories, making them the ideal option for good doers.

If you are feeling unsure about whether a balancer is the right option for your horse, the following advice may help:



1. Does your horse maintain weight easily on forage alone?

Although many horses and ponies maintain weight easily (or too easily!) on forage alone, forage only diets may be lacking in key nutrients including copper, zinc, selenium, vitamin E and lysine - this is where feed balancers come in.

Product tip: When choosing a balancer think about which functional ingredients may be beneficial to your horse. [SPILLERS® Original Balancer](#) is an enhanced multi-vitamin and mineral balancer with added digestive, hoof and immune support. If on the other hand you are looking for added joint and digestive support you may wish to consider [SPILLERS® Supple & Senior Balancer](#), even if your horse is not yet senior! [SPILLERS® Ulca Balancer](#) contains natural calcium, lecithin, pectin and FOS to support gastric health as well as pre and probiotics to support digestive health.

2. Are you using feeds without added vitamins and minerals?

Although typically designed for good doers, balancers are also a great option if you prefer to use feeds that don't contain added vitamins and minerals such as alfalfa, sugar beet and grass nuts.

Product tip: When choosing a balancer think about which functional ingredients may be beneficial to your horse. [SPILLERS® Original Multi Balancer](#) for example provides nutrients to balance the diet plus added digestive and immune support. If on the other hand you are looking for added joint and digestive support you may wish to consider [SPILLERS® Supple + Senior Balancer](#), even if your horse is not yet senior!

3. Are you feeding less than the recommended amount of compound feed?

Compound feeds (as well as some fibres and mashes) already contain added vitamins and minerals so if you are feeding recommended amount, there is no need to feed a balancer on top. However, many horses and ponies maintain weight easily on less than their recommended ration of feed and as a result, are likely to need a top up of vitamins and minerals. A good rule of thumb is to feed half the recommended amount of balancer if feeding half the recommended amount of compound feed, but our nutritionists are on hand if you would like more specific advice.

Product tip: If you are looking to provide straight up vitamins and minerals without functional ingredients such as joint and digestive support, consider [SPILLERS's Daily Balancer](#).

4. Unsure about the difference between a balancer and vitamin and mineral supplement?

In most cases, balancers come in pellet form and vitamin and minerals supplements in a powder. This means a balancer can normally be fed on its own (although we generally recommend feeding a balancer alongside short chopped fibre to help extend eating time) whereas a powdered supplement needs to be mixed into a small amount of feed. Although the feeding rate for a pelleted balancer is typically higher than a powdered supplement, the recommended amount of any balancer (except stud balancers) contributes a negligible level of calories to the total diet so won't affect your horse's waistline. One benefit of choosing a balancer may be quality protein – the recommended amount of a pelleted balancer often provides higher levels of amino acids than products labelled as 'vitamin and mineral supplements'.

For more advice on feeding a balancer contact the SPILLERS Care-Line

Source URL: <https://www.spillers-feeds.com/does-my-horse-need-a-balancer>