



**The term 'cold-backed' is used to describe a horse displaying symptoms of a sensitive or painful back**

horse's feet and teeth checked, to ensure that there aren't any problems here that are causing knock-on effects.

### Prevention

There are measures that can be taken to help stop your horse developing back problems in the future. Here are the top five:

**1** Have your saddle checked annually as a horse's shape can change throughout the year and may not be the same as when it was fitted

**2** Always warm up properly before exercise and remember to cool down when you've finished as this will allow the muscles to adjust to your weight and help avoid any damage

**3** If your horse is particularly sensitive, tack up and walk him around for five minutes before mounting, as this will give the muscles a head start and ensure he's comfortable when you get on

**4** Always use a mounting block as mounting from the ground can place extra stress on the back. Often, when a horse won't stand still for mounting, it's an indication that he finds it uncomfortable, so take care as you get on

**5** When schooling, ensure you do sufficient work on both reins. This will benefit the whole body, not just the back, as it will help your horse to remain flexible through both sides of his body

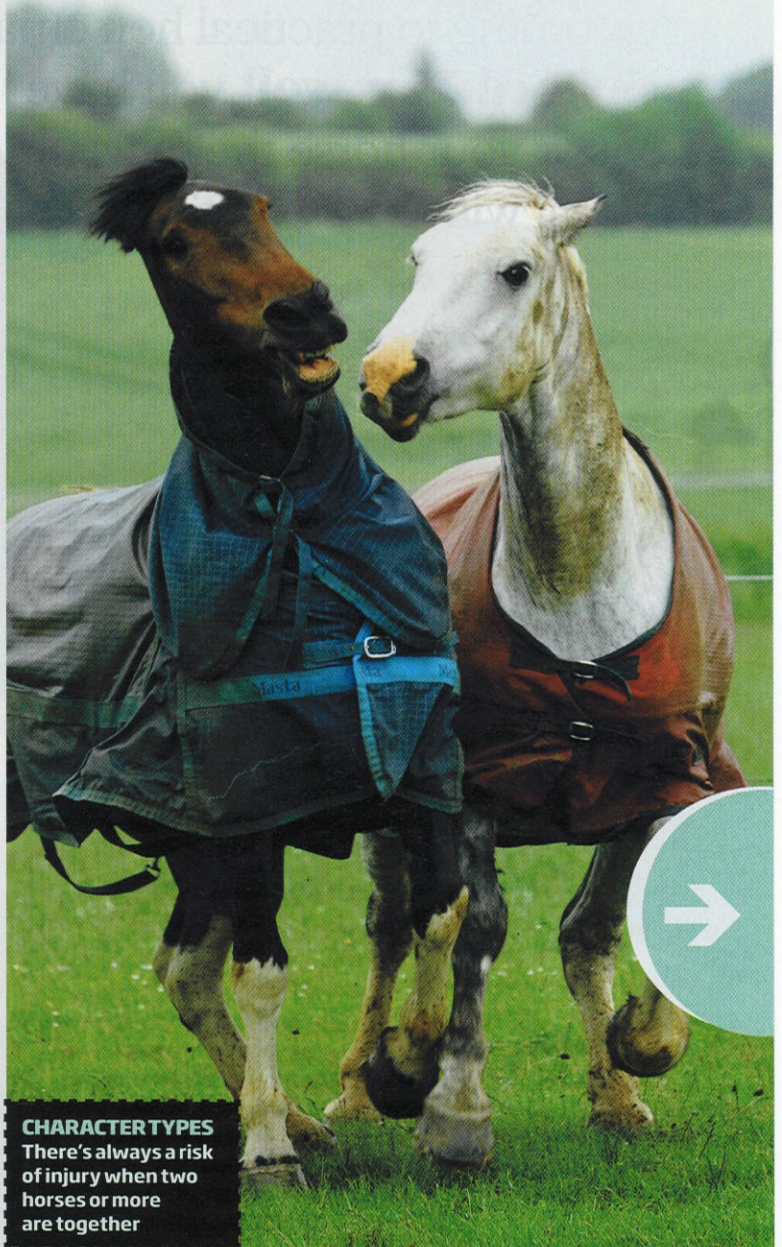
### LEGAL

## Can I claim for kick injury?

**Q** My horse was injured recently by a neighbouring horse who broke through some electric fencing and got into his field. My horse was kicked quite badly and needed veterinary attention. The other horse is a known escape artist and his owner had failed to charge the battery on the fencing. I think she should pay at least some of the vet's bills as she was negligent in allowing her horse to break into my field, but she refuses. Is there anything I can do?

**A** *Hanna Burton says*  
The Animals Act 1971 covers damage to property as well as to people, and it seems arguable that one of its criteria is met either because the horse had the predisposition to do what it did, or that any normal horse might kick in the particular circumstances of two horses being together.

The latter may be more productive because we would have to show that the characteristic leading to the damage, which may not be escaping, was known to the keeper. Ultimately this is a straightforward claim in negligence, which would hopefully be covered under the defendant's household insurance policy.



**CHARACTERTYPES**  
There's always a risk of injury when two horses or more are together