

# WINTER MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

## *For Your Arena Surface*

When it comes to getting the most out of your surface, **preventive maintenance is always better** (and more cost-effective) than a cure!

Whilst it's important to increase your maintenance routine during periods of extremely dry weather, particularly when it comes to non-waxed surfaces, combating cold, frost, and snowy weather conditions also requires some additional care and effort.

When the weather forecast predicts frost, or a significant drop in temperature, it's best to **prepare your surface** by dropping the tines into the surface deeper than you usually might, in order to ensure the surface is not too tight or compacted. For example, for a surface that is 5" deep, it's advisable to drop the tines in so that they penetrate the top 2" to 3" of surface. This in turn will help any excess moisture to drain freely through the surface and away via the drainage blanket below, **reducing the risk of the surface freezing over.**

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**Where there is moisture, there is an increased likelihood of freezing, and this applies to both waxed and non-waxed surfaces, so opening up the surface to encourage drainage is key in winter months.**

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Should the surface have standing water, or in the event of your surface becoming frozen over, **do not use your Track Master**, as this will tear at the surface and affect the mix, creating an uneven footing that will require greater attention when the frost has gone. In such an event, you should **wait until the surface thaws** before attending to your maintenance.



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# FURTHER INFORMATION

## *Can I ride in snow?*

It is always best to allow any **snow to melt** before using your arena. If you are unable to wait for your surface to thaw, try to **remove as much snow as possible** manually with a shovel, before using your Trackmaster to grade the surface and reopen the mix for drainage. If you don't remove the snow, it's more likely to freeze further and form patches of ice deeper in your surface, which will not only take much longer to thaw, but it can also make your surface unsafe to ride on.

**Remember to double check for frozen or icy patches** on your surface - if any areas of your arena are frozen, **do not use your grader**, as this will cause damage to the surface mix.

If there is a very light dusting of snow on your surface, you may, with some care, ride on this, but be sure to **exercise caution and check that the snow doesn't ball into your horse's feet**. Using a hoof grease or goose fat on the underside of the hoof can help to prevent the snow from sticking.

On gallops or canters the snow can be rotovated into the surface, but this will need to be **robustly carried out and repeated several times** to ensure the snow melts and the moisture is released in order to prevent the surface from freezing.

It is common for heavy-use training gallops to continue with harrowing the tracks even during snowy periods in order to keep the surface and track in use.

