

Video: Saddle Up at the UA Equine Center

University Relations - Communications
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Start at the busy intersection of North Campbell Avenue and East Speedway Boulevard and head north. When you have gone about four miles, you'll think you've left the city and arrived in the country, with horses grazing serenely in open fields.

You've arrived at the **UA Equine Center** ^[1], located at the UA's Campus Agricultural Center. There, breezes rustle through the pastures and trees, a dog and cat make their rounds through stalls housing neighing horses, and colts that join their mothers in munching on hay.

The Equine Center is just one part of the Campus Agricultural Center, which was founded in 1909 to offer instructional, research and Cooperative Extension services. Covering 180 acres, the agricultural center is also home to three greenhouse complexes, a dairy research center and meat sciences complex, an animal physiology research complex and an entomological research laboratory.

At the Equine Center, students take classes on horse safety and riding procedures. The facility also breeds and sells horses, and serves as a resource for community members who have questions about horses. About 25 to 30 horses live at the center.

Laura Walker, the Equine Center's manager, loves her job.

She started working at the UA in 2001. Originally from Texas, she's been around horses since she was very young.

"The joy of the horses are their different personalities," said Walker, who teaches an "Introduction to Horsemanship" course in addition to running the center.

The introductory course is open to students from all disciplines who are interested in learning the basics of riding and caring for a horse.

Students in the class have varying levels of experience with horses, and Walker says it's not uncommon for some of them to be nervous around the animals, especially if they have never ridden before. Walker pairs novice students with more confident riders and teaches them to use body language to communicate with the horses. Most students quickly conquer their fears and are soon able to trot circles around the center's riding arena, Walker says.

When it comes to maintaining the center, a team of student workers assists in caring for the horses, which eat 2 to 3 percent of their body weight in grass and hay every day. The horses get most of their food from grazing in the pastures, although each of them can also put away about 20 pounds of hay twice a day.

You can learn more about the Equine Center in this video, and you can like the center's Facebook page by clicking **here** ^[2].

Source URL: <https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/video-saddle-ua-equine-center>

Links

[1] <http://animal.cals.arizona.edu/equine/> [2] <https://www.facebook.com/pages/University-of-Arizona-Equine-Sciences-Program/182180091769>