

Practical Tip: Hard standings

Poaching around feeding and drinking areas can lead to soil damage, as well as stock welfare and pollution problems, particularly during wet periods. Simple management changes can help you to benefit from:

- Improved stock health and lower vet bills
- Reduced soil damage, erosion, run-off and watercourse pollution
- Improved grass production and nutritional value
- Reduced sward restoration costs

If you are able to consider creating hard standing for drinkers and feeders, here are some tips on their construction.

- Choose a location on free draining land and carry out construction in dry weather.
- The soil should be excavated to a minimum depth of 150 mm or to a depth below this at which a hard surface is found, this will vary according to the type of ground.
- The excavated area around the drinking trough should extend to a minimum width of 2.5m.
- The hardcore area should be well compacted by rolling to a minimum depth 150 mm. If there is a requirement for more than 150 mm depth of hardcore, each successive layer should be well compacted.
- The hardcore area should be blinded with at least 50 mm of a suitable blinding material. Timber can be used to provide an edge to the hard base so as to help retain the hardcore.
- The livestock drinker and feeder can then be relocated to the hard standing.



Source: West Country Rivers Trust



Source: Environment Agency