



DONKEY RUGS

Keep your donkeys warm.

 14 July 2021 [Read on The Donkey Sanctuary website](#)

The best way to keep your donkeys warm is with bespoke donkey rugs.

The Donkey Sanctuary has worked to design the bespoke rugs based on crucial physical differences between donkeys and ponies.

These differences can make horse rugs unsuitable and even dangerous for donkeys to wear.

WHY CAN'T DONKEYS WEAR PONY RUGS?

Donkeys have narrow shoulders, chests and necks in comparison to ponies, and older donkeys also have narrow hind quarters.

Due to this, pony rugs tend to slip and rub, while the leg strap can rub the donkeys' sensitive skin between their hind legs. Pony rugs also drop below the shoulder blade, which restricts a donkey's front leg action and can actually trap them when they lie down.

With this in mind, The Donkey Sanctuary developed a design suitable for our resident herd of donkeys.

BUYING BESPOKE DONKEY RUGS

The design ensures that the front section does not hang down to their knees for better ease of movement. The adjustment buckles on the chest also feature quick-release clips. The crossing belly straps and shaped tail flap ensure that the rug does not slip, and therefore it requires no leg straps.

The neck section has a fleece-lined, elasticated top and a Velcro fold-over flap. The fabric is lightweight, waterproof and breathable, and comes as a lightweight cotton-lined rain sheet or as a quilted rug suitable for a clipped or elderly donkey to wear.



Look out for a donkey-specific rug when purchasing for your own donkeys.

HOW SHOULD DONKEY RUGS FIT?

Watch our video below which shows our donkeys wearing correctly fitting rugs.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WINTER RUGS FOR **ELDERLY AND SICK DONKEYS**

Young and healthy donkeys are unlikely to need a winter coat or rug as their coats will naturally thicken as we approach winter. But if your donkeys are old or sick they will find it harder to maintain body heat so they may need a rug to keep warm.



Elderly donkeys may also benefit from having a heat lamp in their stable for extra warmth.

Rugs should be removed daily and your donkey's coat brushed before the rug is replaced. It is advisable to have a spare rug in case one gets particularly wet or damaged. On warm, dry winter days we recommend leaving your donkey's rug off for an hour or two, but make sure they do not become cold or wet.

MORE **INFORMATION**

Our skilled and experienced team of welfare advisers are on hand to give advice and appropriate support during office hours. If you're having problems caring for your donkeys or mules, [contact our welfare team](#) or telephone 01395 578222 and ask to be put through to the welfare department.