

RITTO TRAINING CENTER

Ritto Training Center



Ritto Training Center

1028 Misono, Ritto-shi, Shiga 520-3085
Tel: 077-558-0101
(10:00–12:00, 13:00–16:30, except for Mon./Tues./New Year's holidays)

By train or bus:

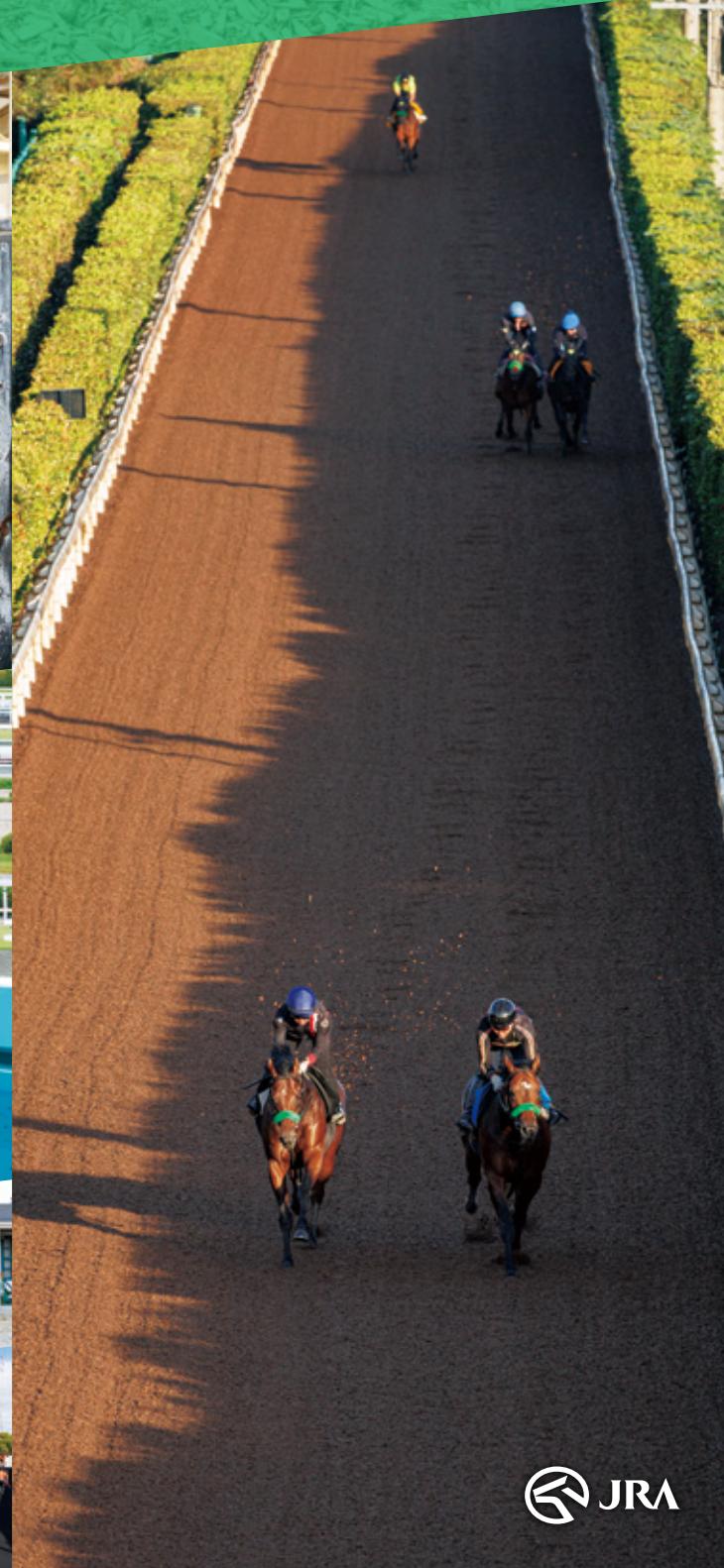
JR Biwako Line (Tokaido Main Line), getting off at Kusatsu Station
Approx. 20 min. by taxi or 30 min.
by bus from the East Exit (Toward "Community Center Konze" and get off at "Toresen Jimusho-mae" bus stop)

By car:

Meishin Expressway
Approx. 15 min. from Ritto I.C.



Look here for
more details



Training Facilities /Stable Area

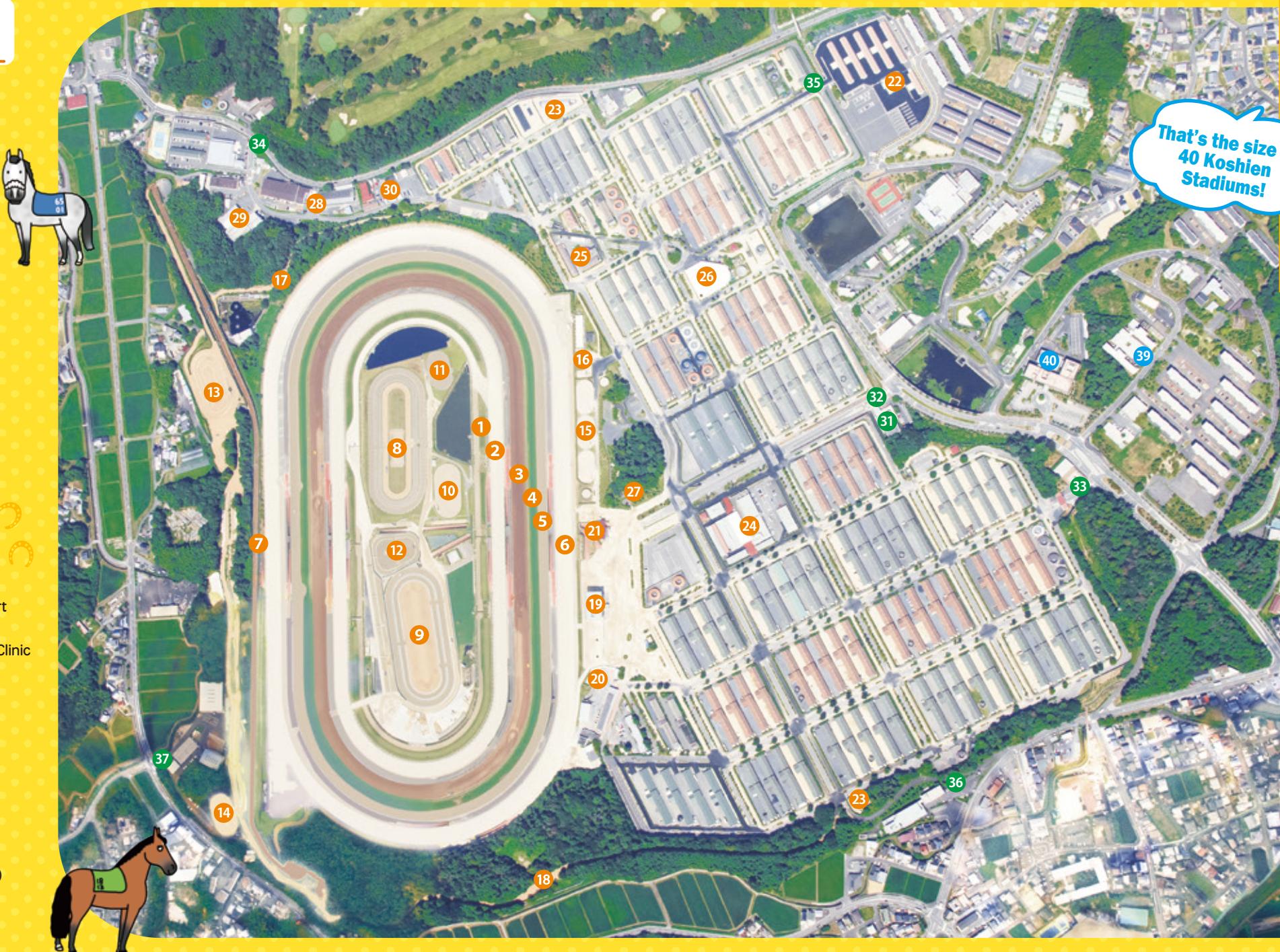
- ① A Training Course
Turf, 1,450m (For Steeplechase)
- ② B Training Course
Dirt, 1,600m
- ③ C-W Training Course
Woodchip, 1,800m
- ④ D Training Course
Turf, 1,950m
- ⑤ D-P Training Course
Poly, 2,038m
- ⑥ E Training Course
Dirt, 2,200m
- ⑦ Uphill Course
Woodchip, 1,085m
- ⑧ West Track
- ⑨ East Track
- ⑩ ~ ⑬ Workout Tracks
- ⑭ Uphill Course Training Area
- ⑮ Training Areas I, RO, HA
- ⑯ Rings A, B, C
- ⑰ West Strolling Promenade
- ⑱ East Strolling Promenade
- ⑲ Trainers Stand
- ⑳ Camera Tower
- ㉑ Groom's Stand
- ㉒ Quarantine Stables
- ㉓ Quarantine Stables for export
- ㉔ JRA Horse Clinic
- ㉕ Private Practitioner's Horse Clinic
- ㉖ Horse Swimming Pool
- ㉗ Horse Shrine
- ㉘ Bedding Processing Plant
- ㉙ Feed Processing Plant
- ㉚ Parking Area for Horse Van

Gates

- ㉑ Security Office
- ㉒ Kachidoki-Mon (Main Gate)
- ㉓ Kurami-Mon (No. 2 Gate)
- ㉔ No.3 Gate
- ㉕ No.4 Gate
- ㉖ No.5 Gate
- ㉗ South Gate

Surrounding Facilities

- ㉘ Equestrian Park
- ㉙ Jockeys' Quarters
- ㉚ JRA Office



Total area

approx. 1,523,000m²

Track : 420,000 m²

Stables : 450,000 m²

Other : 653,000 m²



By the numbers

Ritto Training Center

1,900 horses

During their time at the center, the racehorses live in the stable stalls. One stable has 20 stalls, and each trainer manages 20 to 28 stalls. There are about 90 trainers at the Ritto Training Center. Ninety trainers with 20 to 28 stalls each means that there are always approximately 1,900 racehorses training here.



Take a look at
the training center
from the sky

What is the Ritto Training Center?

The Ritto Training Center has many different training facilities on its vast premises, including six track-style training courses, an uphill training course over a kilometer in length, horse swimming pool, and strolling promenades.

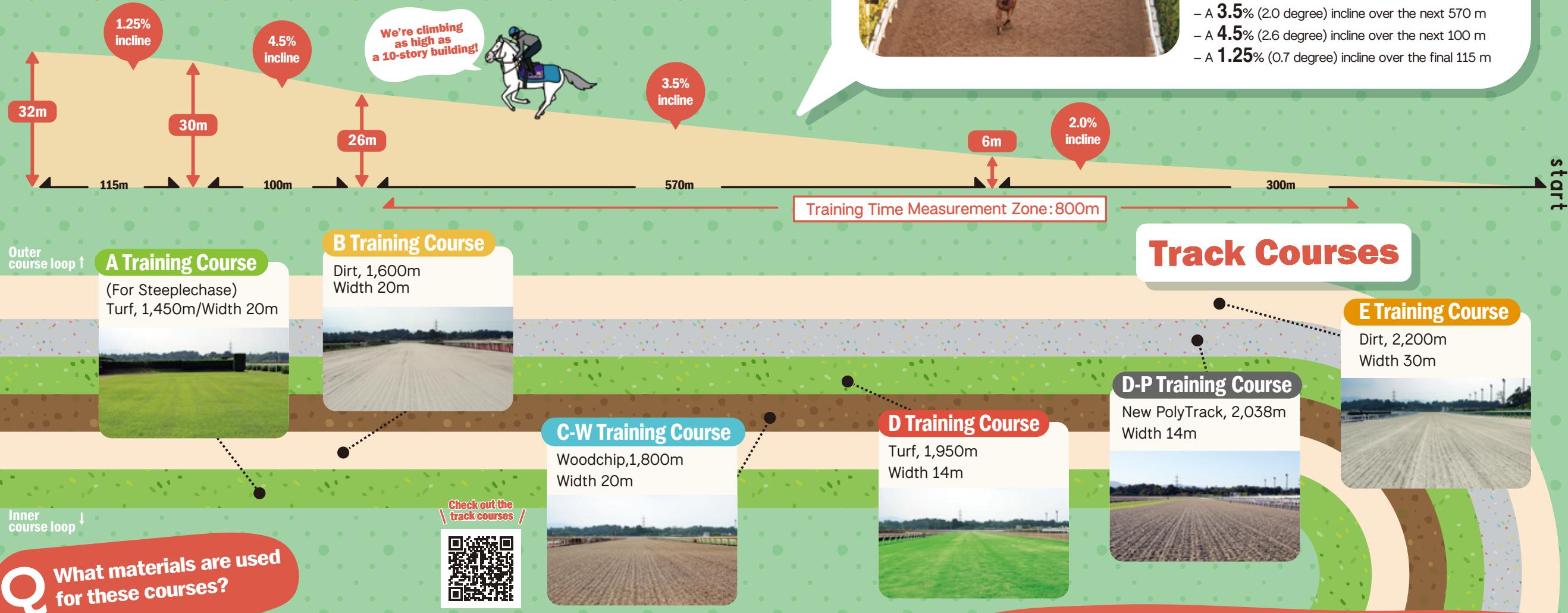
It also offers extensive facilities supporting the racehorses' daily lives, including stables, a horse clinic, the jockeys' quarters, and an equestrian park, among others. We operate these facilities each day in order to develop horses strong enough to take on the world.

Seven Training Courses

There are seven training courses in total, with six track training courses and one uphill course. Training is held on the course suitable to the condition of each horse.

There are four different kinds of courses: turf, dirt, woodchip and New PolyTrack.

These courses are maintained and managed with great care in terms of safety, including anti-freeze during the winter and water sprinkling during the summer, so that sufficient training can be conducted without accidents involving the racehorses.



How we measure training times

The racehorses' number cloths are equipped with IC chips that automatically record times when passing the receptor sensors placed every 200 meters on the C-W training course and uphill course.

These times are announced to the media and others as training reference times.

Facilities Inside the Training Center

The Ritto Training Center includes not just the various training courses but also many other facilities.

Watch the training from here

Trainers Stand

Many people involved with the racehorses watch their training from this area to the side of the track course.

The first floor has a reception room for jockeys and stable workers. The second floor has seating for trainers, and the third and fourth floors have rooms for the media.

There is also an interview room used for G1 Racing joint press conferences.



Great for stress relief too!

Horse Swimming Pool

There are three pools: a circular pool (50 meters in perimeter, 3 meters wide and 3 meters deep), a straight-line pool (32.5 meters in length, 3 meters deep), and a acclimation pool.

These pools are used for improving cardiopulmonary functions, stress reduction and injury rehabilitation.



Circular Pool Diagram

Entrance/Exit Ramp Area

Width: 3 m

Check out the horses swimming



The horses' comfortable home



Check out the stables

Stables

Supporting the lives of approximately 1,900 racehorses, these facilities serve as the horses' home during their time at the training center.

One stable has stalls for 20 horses, as well as a horse feed storage area and a washing area where the horses get showers.



Standing MRI



Blood chemistry tests with automated analysis equipment



A general hospital for the horses' health

JRA Horse Clinic

This general hospital for racehorses handles veterinary management for racehorses, diagnosis and treatment of sick or injured racehorses, prevention of infectious diseases, assessment of the condition of the racehorses scheduled to race, consultation services related to training and feeding, and health and sanitation services.



Can horses swim?



All horses can float if they get in the water. There may be some horses that don't like water, but most are born able to swim.

Horses swim in their own unique style, alternating between their front and back legs on the same side.

The People Working at the Training Center

Many different people work at the Ritto Training Center, such as stable staff like jockeys, trainers, assistant trainers and grooms, as well as other professionals like farriers and veterinarians.



Take a closer look!



Jockeys (around 70)

A jockey rides not just in races but also in daily training when requested. Some jockeys belong to a stable, and others are freelancers.



Stable leaders

Trainers (around 90)

Trainers determine training plans for the racehorses entrusted to them by their owners and put them in races. These trainers hire assistant trainers and grooms, and they are responsible for operating the stables.



Equestrian training pros

Assistant Trainers (around 950)

The training assistant rides and trains the horses according to instructions from the trainer. The training assistants include work riders who specialize in training and groom/rider staff who do both stable work and training.



Note

During training at the Ritto Training Center, each rider is required to wear a helmet in the designated color.



Jockey Course Student



Trainer/Training Assistant

and more...

Specialists looking after the horses

Grooms (around 250)

Under the supervision of the trainers, the grooms conduct stable work for the horses in their care, such as health monitoring, exercising, grooming, and maintaining clean stalls.



Doctors who treat horses for injuries

Veterinarians (around 40) *including veterinarians in private practice

They treat horses for illness and injury, and monitor the condition of horses competing in races.

At the racehorse hospital, JRA veterinarians do complex scans such as MRI scans, and conduct procedures such as bone fragment removal and open abdominal surgeries.

JRA veterinarians also do important work such as preventing infectious disease by administering vaccines and handling quarantine procedures for horses entering the stables, as well as checking the medical condition of horses entering races and monitoring medications to ensure fairness.



Technicians protecting the horses' hooves

Farriers (around 70) *including farriers in private practice

Technicians who specialize in equine hoof and leg care, farriers mainly handle trimming the horses' hooves and replacing their horseshoes.

Correctly balancing the hooves supports the horse's performance and contributes to healing or reducing the risk of illness and injury.



So many different people are involved with the horses.



What does it take to become a jockey or groom?

Jockeys

During the approximately three-year program at the [JRA Horse Racing School](#) Jockey Course, students live in an on-campus dorm and [learn various skills and subjects to become jockeys](#). When they pass their [jockey license exam](#), they become official [JRA jockeys](#).

Applications are accepted from May to July each year, and certain conditions such as weight and vision apply.

Students complete a six-month program at the [JRA Horse Racing School](#) Stable Staff Course, where they learn about basic horse techniques and horseracing techniques.

When students graduate from the school and pass the [Japan Trainers' Association](#) employment exam, they become official [JRA grooms](#).

Applications are accepted twice a year: for the spring terms (starting in April or July) and for the autumn terms (starting in October or January).

By exam day, students must have [a total of at least one year of riding experience on racehorses, training horses and riding horses](#). They must also be able to independently in three speeds of walk, trot and canter.

Grooms

A Day at the Stables



4:30 Physical Check & Saddling

Early in the morning, we check the health condition of the racehorses and prepare them for training.



Getting ready for training

4:30

Circling the course slowly to loosen up

5:00



5:00

5:30

5:30

Cooldown Exercises and Shower Area Care

When training is over, the horses do cooldown exercises and return to the stables. The horses get showers to wash off their sweat in the stable washing area.



Washing off the horses' sweat and checking their physical condition

5:00 Warming up

The horses do light Warming up and get ready for tough training.

5:30 Training

We have the horses run on the course to improve. There are various types of training, not just having the horses constantly run at full speed, but improving their physical condition with slow running and teaching them to move as instructed by their rider.

Training improves ability



Final Workout

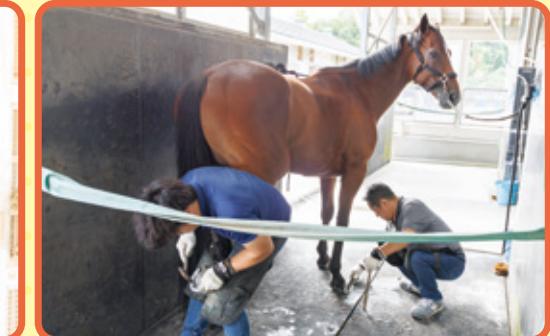
Workouts often involve having the horses who will enter that week's races run on courses at a fast pace on Wednesday and Thursday.



Start Training

Starting practice is another important type of training. They practice from entering the paddocks to starting the race. When entering a race, horses must pass a starting gate examination.

We're always thinking about each horse's physical condition



14:00 Horse Care, Stall Cleaning, Lunch

We try to communicate with the horses during brushing and cleaning their stalls, and are able to understand their condition. Once every two or three weeks, a farrier checks the horses' hooves and adjusts the horseshoes to protect them.



7:00

14:00

20:00



7:00 Morning Feeding and Physical Check

The racehorses are given feed thoughtfully balanced to suit their condition.

If anything seems physically wrong with the horses, they are examined and treated by a veterinarian, and steps are taken to support their health.



Each horse is given food optimized for them

20:00 Afternoon Feeding

The person on Afternoon Feeding duty prepares the horses' Afternoon Feedings. That's the end of the day at the stables.



*The details of the work and schedule shown here are examples.

Note

Racehorse meals

Concentrated feed

Grains (oats), grain by-products (rice bran), etc.

Forage

Various types of grass and hay or green grass

Supplemental feed

Calcium and vitamin tablets, etc.



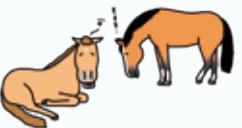
Training Rules and Horse Tack

Racehorse and worker safety is always the top priority at the Ritto Training Center, with measures such as training hours determined by season and differently colored number cloths depending on each horse's age and sex.

Training Hours

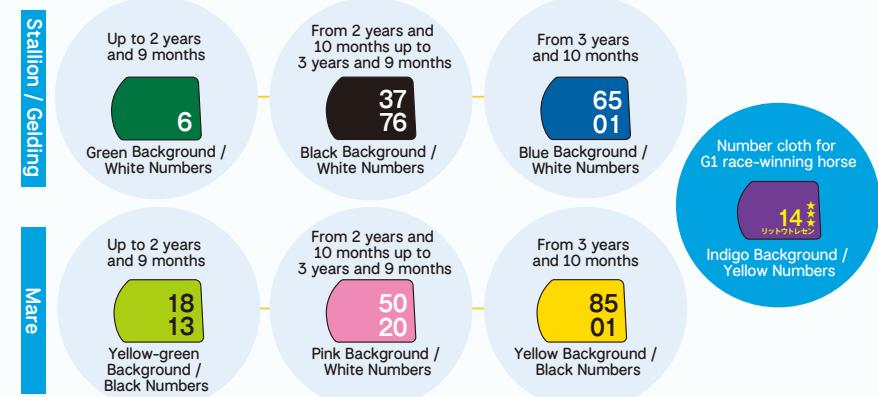


Detailed training hours at the Ritto Training Center vary over the year, but hours are generally 5 am to 9 am in the summer and 7 am to 11 am in the winter. Training is carried out safely in an optimal environment for the horses, with careful consideration to when sunrise occurs and the temperature.



Number Cloths

During training at the Ritto Training Center, each racehorse wears a specific number cloth with a set number. These cloths are separated into different colors according to factors such as age and sex.



How horses walk and run



Walk

At this slowest speed, the horses move at 6.6 km/h. This is how horses move around the paddock.



Trot

Faster than walking, horses trot at about 13 km/h. During warmup exercises, the horses gradually speed up from a trot to a canter.



Canter

Faster than a trot, horses canter at around 20 km/h. The horses move at this speed when warming up after the post parade.



Gallop

Even faster than a canter, the horses gallop at around 60–70 km/h. Racehorses gallop during the races.

Horse Tack (Equipment)

Various kinds of tools are used to more effectively control the racehorses. Corrective headgear, such as a hood, is also sometimes used to help the racehorses concentrate during races and training.



1 Reins

This tool for staying in contact with the horse can be used to give instructions, such as which direction to go or to stop.

2 Bit

This tool is a metal bar that goes inside the horse's mouth. The horse gets instructions from the reins through the bit and moves accordingly.

3 Bridle

This tool reaching from the horse's head to its chin, cheeks, above the nose and nape of the neck is used to appropriately position and keep the bit inside the horse's mouth. When leading the horse, a rope is attached to the bridle.

4 Saddle

Placed on the horse's back, this tool lets the horse carry people or objects. Saddles used for racing are made to be much smaller and lighter than ordinary horseback riding and equestrian saddles.

The saddle's weight is also included in the weight carried during a race.



Hood



Shadow Roll



Cheek Pieces

5 Stirrups

A tool for holding the rider's feet on horseback.

6 The Abdominal Belt

This belt is wrapped around the horse's abdomen to prevent the saddle from slipping.



Bay



Dark Bay



Brown



Black



Gray



Chestnut



Dark Chestnut



White

Spending Time with the Horses



At the Ritto Training Center, we conduct activities aimed at attracting more people to horseback riding and teaching people about horseracing.

Equestrian Park

At the equestrian park, we host activities such as youth team sports with the goal of introducing more people to equestrian sports. We don't just teach horseback riding, but also teach people how to connect with horses by taking care of them, such as cleaning the stables.



Parent-and-child Interactive Training Center Tour (for elementary school students)

Intended for elementary school students and their guardians, these tours let participants see inside the training center. By viewing the facilities inside the training center and spending time with the horses, tour participants can experience the world of racehorses.



Training Center Workplace Tour (for junior high school students)

This is a tour for junior high school students and their guardians to see jobs related to racehorses and horseracing. Recommended for anyone interested working in horseracing.



What powers the Ritto Training Center?

Bedding Processing Plant

After being used in the horse stables, straw and woodchips (wood shavings) are burned in the boiler of the bedding Processing Plant. The steam created in this process generates electricity.

Ritto Training Center History

1965	Dec.	Land purchase contract concluded with Ritto-cho
1966	Jun.	Formally named Ritto Training Center
1967	Nov.	Preparation of building site started
1969	Aug.	Horses and staff moved from Chukyo Racecourse to begin training at Ritto Training Center
	Nov.	Horses and staff moved from Hanshin Racecourse
	Nov.	Ritto Training Center opens
1970	Dec.	Horses and staff moved from Kyoto Racecourse, all stables of western Japan (Kansai region) concentrated at Ritto Training Center
1972	Aug.	Strolling Promenade completed
1975	May.	Ritto Training Center visited by Emperor Showa and Empress Kojun Their Imperial Majesties observe training
1981	Aug.	Equestrian Center completed
	Oct.	Equestrian events of National Sports Festival held at riding grounds
1985	Nov.	394-meter uphill course completed
1987	Jan.	MICS system for managing racehorse veterinary information begins operating
1988	Aug.	Horse Swimming Pool completed
1989	Sept.	Woodchip course (2,063 m around) completed (D-W training course)
	Oct.	Advanced Lap time Information System (ALIS) for the uphill course completed
1992	Nov.	Uphill course length extended to 1,085 meters in total by three construction projects
1995	Sept.	C training course improved from dirt course to woodchip course (C-W training course)
2001	Oct.	Ritto Town, Kurita County becomes Ritto-shi
2003	Jun.	New compost processing plant completed
2009	Oct.	D-W training course improved to new poly course (D-P training course)
2013	Dec.	New JRA Horse Clinic completed
2017	Oct.	New trainers stand completed
2018	Nov.	Camera tower completed
2019	Oct.	New Bedding Processing Plant completed
	Nov.	50th anniversary
2021	Dec.	Advanced Lap time Information System (ALIS) implemented for the C-W training course
2024	Jul.	New quarantine stables completed

Before the training center was completed, we trained at the racetrack.



Our facilities continue to evolve each year.

