

Groundsperson

Racecourse

Job Summary

A grounds person works as part of the racecourse team to ensure that the racing track is kept in premium condition, this involves maintaining a safe racing surface, applying nutrients or pesticides, cutting grass and dealing with issues caused by the weather such as a waterlogged track. On race days they replace divots after each race.



Main Duties

- Assist in the preparation and restoration of the racing surface by appropriate grass cutting, careful use of machinery and replacement of divots and filling holes with appropriate soil/sand mixtures;
- Assist in the preparation of fences, rails and buildings;
- Apply fertilizers and weed control materials to appropriate strength;
- Apply the racecourse watering policy;
- Prepare stables, parade ring and general grounds for all occasions including racedays;
- On racedays perform fence repairs between races and make emergency repairs on the track;

Job Level

Entry Level Role

Typical Employer

Racecourses

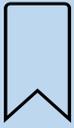


Case Study

Ireland's Racecourses

Many racecourses are owned by local bodies, including companies, trusts and charitable organisations, meaning their objectives are not concentrated solely on profit maximisation. Four racecourses – Leopardstown, Navan, Fairyhouse and Tipperary – are owned by HRI, with the remainder independently owned. The majority of racecourses host both jump and flat racing with some prominent exceptions, including the Curragh - Ireland's premier flat racing venue and Punchestown, which hosts the leading jumps festival. The only all-weather racecourse is at Dundalk, which enables flat racing to take place all year round.

[Source: Economic Impact of Irish breeding and racing 2017]



Competencies (Behavioural)

- A love for horses, horse riding or horse racing is the No. 1 motivating factor why people work within the horse racing industry (HRI Education & Training Survey 2020);
- Intrapersonal skills (perseverance; initiative; self-motivation), Critical thinking skills (problem solving), Interpersonal skills (communication; teamwork);

Knowledge & Skills

Equine Knowledge & Skills

Facility management & maintenance;
Horse care & welfare;
Equine transportation;

People Knowledge & Skills

Communication skills;
Self-development skills;
Health & safety regulations;

Racing Knowledge & Skills

Racing industry knowledge;
Racing rules & regulations;
Integrity of the sport;
Raceday Operations;
Race planning/Racecourses and racing calendar;

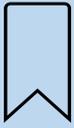
Business Knowledge & Skills

Admin, compliance & law;
Marketing, PR & networking;
I.T. / digital Skills;

Education

While no specific qualification is required to become a grounds staff on a racecourse, studies in landscape & sportsturf management focuses on the science behind developing and maintaining Ireland's designed landscapes, golf courses, tennis courts and sport pitches.

Course options include: Level 6 Golf and Sports Turf Management (Course Code: 6M4330), Level 7 Sportsturf Science in Waterford Institute of Technology, and Level 8 Horticulture Landscape & Sportsturf Management (Course Code: DN272).



Career Path (Alternative Careers)

- Head Groundsperson;
- Yard Staff;
- Race Day Official;

Experience

An experienced racecourse grounds person has practical experience of soil and grass management, and is trained on the use of agricultural machinery.

Job Availability

Job availability is limited. Follow www.equip.ie for information on job opportunities within the breeding, racing and racing administration.



Certification

Drivers licence is required.

Working Conditions

Outdoors in all weather.

Pay & Benefits

Generally, the amount of pay you receive for working is a matter of agreement between you and your employer. These negotiations normally occur when you receive a job offer.