

Three reel system advice



MERIEL YOUNGER from Electric Fencing Direct tells you everything you need to know about versatile and movable three reel systems

Why would you use a three reel system?

There are many applications for three reel systems and they are employed for many different reasons: to facilitate strip grazing, to fence off winter sheep grazing, to protect walls or hedges, and as a temporary barrier. These fences are quick and easy to put up and likewise take down and store. They are a semi-permanent solution to livestock containment and can be made into any configuration.

Which animals can be contained by a reel system?

Cows, sheep, goats, pigs and even poultry can be contained by reel systems. There are variations on the main theme – ie goats require taller posts, sheep require the most powerful polywire or wire as they are well insulated. Poultry being kept on a larger scale can be contained behind an eight wire system. Three fixing posts with eight reels would be required and these would be situated in serial next to each other and the wires would be guided to the first post and then run out through insulators on tall metal posts.

Can three reel systems be added together to cover greater distances?

Yes three reel systems can be added together to cover greater distances. Most three reel systems on the market today are about 500m in length. To cover a 1000m stretch the end of the first fence and the start of the second fence need to overlap slightly. Line to line connectors are used to transfer the power from the first fence to the second fence and then from one horizontal line to another. One of the most important things to check when increasing your fence size would be that your energiser is capable of powering this extended distance. Check the output joules and the energiser's general capacity.

As with any electric fence a little planning goes along way. Pace out your fence and work out which form of power, ie mains, battery or solar, are best for your fence. Most three reel systems are sold as readymade kits – you just need to add the energiser. Kits do vary and so it is always worth checking if you are comparing like for like. ■

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What does a three reel system consist of?

A basic kit list:

- 1 x reel fixing post
- 3 x reels pre wound with polywire or wire
- 3 x reel fixing brackets
- 1 or 2 x metal end or corner posts
- Plastic posts
- 1 x 2 pack hart clip line to line connectors



MANY three reel systems don't come with an energiser and earth stake.

The thoughts behind this are: some people already have an energiser, others may be unsure as to whether they will use mains, battery or solar power, and lastly different animals often require a different strength energiser. The type and strength of energiser will vary depending on the length of fence and the type of animal the fence is to contain.

The reel fixing post has three reels containing either polywire or wire attached to it - these reels are attached by reel fixing bracket (not all reels will require a fixing bracket – some screw on).

As these reels are fixed in one place on a strong post it is easy to run the polywire or wire out from this spot around the perimeter of the containment area. The reels keep tension in the fence stopping any fankles and store the fence lines when not in use.

Often these kits come with polywire or wire pre-wound on to the reel which makes for super-fast installation. Plastic posts are then used to carry the polywire or wire along to the metal posts at corners and the end (metal posts add tension and stability to the fence). The hart clip line to line connector ensures that power is passed to each horizontal line.

Top tips



- Measure out the area to be fenced before you buy.
- Get extra plastic posts if you think the area is exposed or undulating to help maintain tension in the fence.
- Make sure you have the correct energiser ie that it is powerful enough to power three lines and is compatible with the type of animal being contained.

- Use a fence tester to check the fence on a regular basis. This will help to tell you if there is shorting or perhaps a low battery or maybe even if the energiser is not working properly.
- Extra wooden posts with screw in insulators or corner pulleys can be used to help tension the fence if it is covering a long distance or has many corners.