

Series 2:

Farrier 101 Handout

What is a farrier? A hoof care specialist.

What is a blacksmith? Someone who does all kinds of iron work, not just horseshoes.

Why do we need a farrier? Because rocks or concrete can wear down horses' hooves causing a need for horseshoes to be put on.

- In the wild, horses move approximately 20 miles per day and they are not running on concrete and gravel like domesticated horses, so their hooves remain in relatively good condition naturally.
- Domesticated horses are not worked as much as wild horses, so their hooves tend to be less sturdy than the horses in the wild.

How often does the farrier need to trim your horse's hooves? About every six weeks

Farrier Tools:

- 1. rasp-**File used to file down the hoof. Also used for finishing work.
- 2. nippers-** Act as a giant finger nail file. Used to cut away excess hoof.
- 3. pull-offs-** Used to pull the horse shoes off.
- 4. crease nail pullers-** Pulls one nail out of the shoe at a time.
- 5. hammer-** Used to hammer in the nails.
- 6. clinch cutters-** Unbends nails for removal of shoe.
- 7. hoof gauge-** Measures the angle of the hoof.
- 8. clinch block-** Tightens the nails to the hoof.
- 9. nails-** Holds the shoe to the hoof.
- 10. hoof knife-** Used to trim excess hoof and frog.
- 11. hoof stand-** Holds hoof up while farrier works on it.
- 12. anvil-**A heavy steel faced iron block on which horse shoes are hammered.
- 13. shoe shaping hammer-** Used to hammer the shoe into correct shape for accurate fitting on the hoof.

Parts of the hoof:

1. frog
2. bars
3. white line
4. sole
5. hoof wall

Steps in Shoeing:

1. Use the hoof knife to trim out the sole.
2. Use nippers to clip off the excess hoof wall.
3. Use the rasp to file down the hoof.
4. Trim the frog with the hoof knife
5. Shape horseshoes on the anvil.
6. Check the fit of the shoe against the horse's hoof.
7. Check the angle on the hoof and compare it to the adjacent hoof.
8. Nail shoe onto the hoof into the white line.
9. Twist the nails off that have protruded out of the top of the hoof with the hammer.
10. Use clinch block to tighten the nails.
11. File under nails with the rasp.
12. Hammer the nails down
13. File the top of the nails to make the hoof smoother.
14. Trim the back hooves the same as the front.

****Corrective Shoeing:** Some horses may need corrective shoeing.

- Acrylic: Used to fill in the worn part of the hoof. It is then filed down to the normal shape of the hoof.

Helpful shoeing tips:

- Barefoot means your horse wears no shoes.
- It takes approximately one year for a hoof to grow out completely from the coronary band.
- Some horses may need back shoes, while others may not. If a horse is worked lightly and the rear hooves stay in good shape- your farrier may suggest that rear shoes are optional.
- What is the cost? It can range on average between \$25-\$100 depending on which services have been performed.
- What are side clips? They are used mostly for jumper horses to prevent their shoe from slipping back. They also take the stress off the nails allowing the shoes to last longer.