

## How to recognize a healthy foot with a good trim

### Some simple things to look for when looking at different feet on different horses

If I said it once, I've said it a million times....ALL BAREFOOT HORSES ARE NOT THE SAME.

Just because a horse is NOT wearing any steel shoes, does not necessarily make him a sound barefoot performance horse!

**Conventional trimming by a 'trained farrier' is NOT the same trim needed to obtain a sound healthy barefoot horse. The term farrier is defined as "one who shoes horses".**

"As a veterinarian studying the equine hoof for the past few years, I have found that most veterinarians, farriers, and trainers do not know what a normal horse's foot looks like, nor do these professionals have a full understanding of how a normal horse's hoof functions. From pictures in veterinary references to diagrams in farrier texts, the equine foot is represented as a structure devoid of its most beautiful and functional characteristics....." **T.Teskey DVM**

FORWARD FOOT GROWTH



NOT SHOD AND FRESHLY SHOD

Here at Equinextion, we look at hundreds of horses feet per year. The most archtypical foot shape we see is the **migrating forward foot** of varying lengths and sizes. (Shown in picture above) This foot shape is so common it is considered 'normal' and thus 'healthy' by many veterinarians, farriers and indicated as such in MANY text books!! It may be common but it's NOT normal!

Conventional trimming and shoeing cannot help a horse with the migrating forward foot. In the picture above, notice the foot shapes are similar. These do NOT belong to the same horse. Notice also the frog condition on both feet. The heel triangles should be back at the widest part of the frog and the frog should make initial ground contact...they do not.

On the freshly shod foot, the condition of the frog is even worse and looks atrophied and 'rotting'...many shod feet are similar in appearance.

Front and Hind foot same horse same problems



Are these feet trimmed exactly the same??

MAP OF FOOT SHAPE SEEN



BASED ON PICTURES SENT

A horse that gets a regular pasture trim cannot be expected to be a top level athlete or remain sound competitively. This is a non supportive trim.

How come farriers are not well versed on the high performance barefoot trim?

This is a good question. Because their schooling is non supportive of the barefoot. The term 'farrier' in itself is 'someone who shoes horses'...so the schooling is concentrated on that. Unfortunately there is a fundamental problem in the art of shoeing horses. It is NOT good for the horse, his foot or his health.

Why did shoeing start?

There is much speculation as to how and why shoeing started. I believe it had to do with bringing horses into stables and letting them stand in urine and manure and bedding which is caustic and drying to the hoof and foot. Someone decided they needed to do something. Instead of letting the horses out for whatever reason and giving them good footing and a supportive trim, they discovered that could actually nail metal on the hoof wall. This disregards the vital function of the foot and



concentrates only on the hoof wall. Thus the misunderstanding began. The horse has a great capacity to adapt...and he did and he continues to do so, with his feet ironed and in bondage....to a point.

So many things can and do happen because of shoeing, improper trimming and keeping horses in stables that one can look at all the most common illness, lameness and vices of today and directly relate them to the feet, and the lifestyle of the horse.

This picture illustrates many differences. They are both pictures of a hind foot. The difference in concavity can be seen. I think many people don't have a clear understanding of what 'concavity' is. It is NOT the picture on the right. True concavity mirrors the underlying structure...the coffin bone! A truly concave foot with good foot function is a self cleaning foot and you don't need much of a hoof pick to clean this foot.

The difference in contraction is also present. Left side picture has a huge frog with ground contact and wide bulbs. The foot on the right has an atrophied frog and contracted bulbs. Conventional trimming would continue to nip the hoof wall off all the way around the foot ...careful to 'preserve' and not touch much those precious 'heels'.

NAIL HOLE DAMAGE IN THE HOOF WALL



STRETCHING WHITE LINE

The above picture shows in a 'close up' view the damage that is done to the hoof wall via the nails of the shoes. There is no denying that this is a terrible breach in the hoof...the very thing that a shoe claims to protect?!

How does a steel ring nailed to an elastic piece of engineering marvel 'protect' anything? There is over whelming evidence that the application of the shoe restricts blood flow to the foot...and in essence to the entire body of the horse, since the feet are responsible for assisting the heart in pumping blood back up the leg...through movement on sound bare feet...as nature requires.