



HOOF BOOTS: OVERVIEW

Authors: Olga Korolkova and Anna Deli



From authors

This book provides an overview of hoof boots. The authors are not manufacturers, dealers or boot specialists. Some materials are taken from open sources on the Internet with permission to publish. We do not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of the information provided due to progress in hoof care. All information reflects the point of view of the authors and not necessarily the point of view of the reader.



Contents

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 4. What are hoof boots? | 82. 2 or 4 hoof boots? |
| 5. Story of creation | 83. Hoof boots care |
| 12. Types of hoof boots | 85. Ventillation and drainage |
| 20. Areas of use | 87. Seasonality |
| 21. Indications for use | 88. Competitions |
| 23. Shoeing or hoof boots? | 90. Hoof boot life time |
| 27. Hoof boot brands | 91. Maintenance |
| 56. Special hoof boots | 92. Purchasing |
| 64. Additions to hoof boots | 93. How to store |
| 70. Hoof boot fitting | |

FAQ



What are hoof boots?

Hoof boots are a form of protection for horse hooves. They differ from iron horseshoes by the material of manufacture, the absence of attachments in the hoof wall and its functionality.

They have some similarity with non-metallic horseshoes - a low level of obstruction to the work of the hoof mechanism.

Hoof boots along with horseshoes pursue the goal of helping the horse to cope with an aggressive environment, yet not requiring difficult daily care manipulations and simplicity in daily use.



Story of creation

The story of the creation of hoof boots as well as the story of horseshoes begins in ancient times. From the very beginning of the friendship with horse people strove to help it to endure heavy loads. Thus, even before the first horseshoes were found by archaeologists prototypes of hoof boots already existed - so-called hipposandals.

Archaeologists know many types of hipposandals especially in ancient Asia and the northwestern countries of the Roman Empire.



Story of creation

In the beginning people tried to attach to the hooves of horses some pads made of bast, reed, flaps of leather and other improvised materials. The whole structure was attached to the lower legs with ropes or leather straps. Metal in ancient times was a very valuable material, so people started to use it much later for hoof protection.

Different variations of hipposandals appeared later – since that time had a metal base, but the principle of fastening remained the same. History also knows winter variants of hipposandals with spikes on the sole.



Hoof boot for medical procedures. Dd XIX century





Hoof boots. England, dd approx. 1850





Hoof boots. Produced supposedly at Victorian era.





Story of creation

Hoof boots began to acquire their modern look in the seventies of the last century. Dr. Neil Glass from the USA who faced with the ailment of his own horse patented various variants of boots from 1969 to 1970. Since 1971 active testing of patented boots has already been carried out by EasyBoot company.

Many boot producers will later start developing hoof boots because their own horses were lame and horseshoes could not improve the condition of the horse.



Story of creation

Horses in such a hoof boots have been taking part in long endurance runs (100 miles and more) and used to win while keeping their hooves naturally healthy. But boots have been created not only for riding, but also for treatment.

The closer the turn of the century approached the more developments appeared in different parts of the world: HoofWings in 1987, Cavallo in 1993, Marquis in 1999, EquineFusion in 2005 and it was just a beginning! It's worth to note that the first patents for hoof boots were registered as early as 1894 and 1898.



Types of hoof boots

Currently the entire global range of hoof boots can be roughly divided into the following types: :

- boots for treatment and rehabilitation;
- boots for moderate riding;
- boots for intensive riding;
- boots for shod hooves;
- boots for transportation;
- glue-on boots.



Types of hoof boots

Therapeutic hoof boots can be divided into two categories: rehabilitation and treatment kind of boots.

Treatment boots are used for soaking and medications. Some models can help to protect horse foot during bandaging by keeping foot clean and protecting it against injury. Treatment shoes can be used singly. Not suitable for riding.



Types of hoof boots

Rehabilitation boots perform the protective function of the hoof after serious illnesses (laminitis, founder; after abscesses, trauma or surgery). They can also help with transition from horseshoes to barefoot living. These boots are not suitable for riding.

Pair use is mandatory.

Some models can be used for light riding, if of course horse can carry such a load (for example during a transition into barefoot).



Types of hoof boots

Moderate riding boots are designed for light use, for example you can use them for riding lessons, hacks, for work on long reins or lunge line. These boots are ideal for a horse if he gives only several riding lessons / hack per week.

These boots are a very good option for horses that do not encounter aggressive terrain very often and don't require to be in boots 24 hours a day.



Types of hoof boots

Boots for intense riding are generally designed for endurance, daily activity on hard-terrain, jumping loads. These models have been repeatedly tested under extreme operating conditions and are designed to protect your horse when it needs to move intensively and/or a lot.

Such a boots come with a reinforced outsole structure and provide more cushioning and stability.



Type of hoof boots

Hoof boots for shod hooves are suitable for use by shod horses. Sometimes shod horses need extra protection, and this type of hoof boots are geared towards extra support.

These boots will protect the horseshoes from mechanical breakdown and minimize the shock from the contact of the iron horseshoe with the ground.

Outsole of such a boots is designed to withstand the extra pressure from the horseshoe.



Type of hoof boots

Transport boots will protect your horse during long journeys and flights by giving it a static contact with the floor in moving vehicles.

Also, these boots will keep the hooves from intense abrasion if the horse digs with its foot from stress during transportation or flight. Transport boots will prevent damage to your transport if the horse kicks into the wall.



Types of hoof boots

Glue-on hoof boots is another innovative design that allows the hooves to be in the boots without covering the coronet area.

These boots can be used if the horse has trauma, mud fever or other soreness around the hoof capsule, coronet area, heel area or fetlock.

Glue-on boots can be used during competitions where boots covering coronet area are not allowed.

In most countries (depends on legislation) you will be able to install and fix glue shoes yourself without help of a specialist.



Areas of use

Hoof boots can be used in any kind of equestrian sports and games, for horse racing and endurance, for driving, for ground work and work-in-hands, long reining, for hippotherapy sessions and vaulting lessons, transportation etc.

Please note that the conditions for using boots in competitions are determined by organizers individually.

Also special hoof boots can be used for horses with hoof problems, for recovery purposes, medical treatments etc.



Indications For use

You can use hoof boots if your horse:

- shows sensitivity on hard (or any kind of) ground;
- prone to sole and/or frog bruising;
- is in a transitional period after removing horseshoes and shows sensitivity in the hooves;
- has hoof deceases such as laminitis and its forms, navicular decease, cysts, keratomas, etc.



Indications For use

Hoof boots are not suitable to those equines who:

- need serious prosthetics of the hoof wall;
- need orthopedic shoes after operations, in case of correction of the axis of the lower limb, posture, etc.;
- have strong deformations of lower limbs;
- have the severe deformities of hoof capsule of a natural or artificial nature.



Shoeing or hoof boots?

Well known that shoeing on traditional metal horseshoes seriously limits the hoof mechanism. Horseshoe keeps the hoof in the most narrow state (since it was applied while the feet was non-weightbearing in the air), and any metal is practically motionless and does not participate in biomechanical processes of the hoof capsule.

Hoof boots is the invention with a soft flexible yet durable sole, through which the horse can explore the terrain unimpeded for its anatomy. Unlike horseshoes hoof boots don't fixate hooves motionlessly allowing hoof mechanism to work.



Shoeing or hoof boots?

Hoof boots can be used when needed, for example you can put on before work and remove after when additional protection for the hooves is not needed. Horseshoes are attached to the hoof 24/7 and the horse is forced to be in them even when sleeping, walking or just standing in a stall.

Hoof boots will protect the whole sole from injuring and bruising unlike a horseshoe (if shod without pads)



Shoeing or hoof boots?

Thus, from a physiological point of view hoof boots are a much friendlier way to protect the hooves.

Please note that protective mechanism of hoof boots vs horseshoes is completely different.

Boots cannot replace special shoeing with stems and compensatory elements, which are used for example to correct the axis of the lower limb. Hoof boots are not an alternative to hoof wall prosthetics. On the other hand horseshoes can't provide to hooves that level of flexibility, shock absorption and working hoof mechanism like hoof boots.



Shoeing or hoof boots?

From financial point of view hoof boots pay off quickly. Typically your pair of boots will last quite a long time up to several years. In the long run it is much cheaper to buy boots than regularly put shoes on, even with the expense of regular hoof trimming that will still be necessary to make.

To avoid any problems it's best to have a spare pair of boots if you live far from hoof boot shop or can't get them quickly delivered.



Cavallo www.cavallo-inc.com

These are one of the most popular boots in the world that will fit almost every horse. Cavallo currently produces 30 boot models in eight lines. There are boots for regular and intensive riding, suitable for rehabilitation, for small and large hooves, transport boots. There are differences in the thickness of the sole and the shape of the boot.



Swiss Galoppers www.swiss-galoppers.com

Patented hoof boots from Switzerland Swiss Galoppers currently have one base model and one long hoof model with optional winter sole. The sizing chart covers only common hoof sizes. These boots are for riding only.



Equine Fusion www.eqfusion.com

Worldwide popular hoof boots from Norway Equine Fusion currently produces 12 models of hoof boots in six lines and glue-on boots. The range of boots covers needs of horses for transport and rehabilitation, for moderate and intense riding, and is produced in sizes from small to large hooves of different shapes. Winter options are available.



Renegade www.renegadehoofboots.com

These are hoof boots produced in USA and well known all over the world. Today Renegade produces one boot model in two lines, as well as glue-on boots. These boots are not supposed to be used for therapeutic or transport purposes and may not fit too small or too large hooves. A unique patented system is used in the heel area of the boot.



Easy Boot www.easycareinc.com

The world's first patented hoof boots from the USA Easy Boot is presented in thirteen models in three lines. The products cover the needs of large and small hoof sizes, treatment, therapy and rehabilitation boots. Also there are fully adjustable boots and options for winter. Easy Boot has developed non-ferrous horseshoes, glue-on boots and some other materials for hooves.



Flex Hoof Boot www.flexhoofboots.com

An innovative ultralight hoof boot designed in Finland Flex Hoof Boot is available in one horse model and one pony model.

There are glue-on boots in the line. These boots are not intended for rehabilitation or transport and may not fit too large hoof. There are also some options for winter.



Explora Boot www.explorahorseboots.com

An adjustable and adaptable shoe designed in Spain Explora Boot comes in two models, not intended for treatment or transport. The range includes glue-on boots. The sizing chart does not cover the needs of too small or too large hooves There are winter solutions offered.



Evo Boot www.evo-boot.com

These boots developed in Spain adapt to unevenness and shape of the hoof. The company is currently presenting one hoof boot model for riding only. The manufacturer points out that the Evo Boot can be turned into therapeutic boots. The sizing chart does not cover the needs of too large or too small hooves. There are winter options.



Floating Boot www.floatingboots.com

An adjustable and adaptable hoof boots designed in Spain Floating Boot are currently available in two models of hoof boots for riding only, and one model of glue-on boots. The sizing chart is not suitable for too large hooves. There are solutions offered for for winter season.



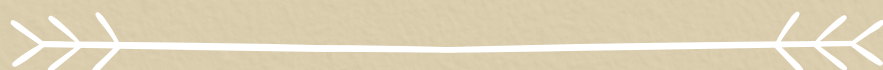
Scoot Boots www.scootboots.com

An ultra-light and durable, snug fit boot designed in Australia. Scoot Boots are now available in a one model suitable only for riding, but the manufacturer recommends them as therapy boots as well. The sizes do not cover the needs of very small and very large hooves. Scoot Boots also produces glue-on boots and offers winter solutions for their hoof boots.



Hoofstar www.hoofstar.com

These are lightweight and adjustable hoof boots have been designed in Germany. Hoofstar is currently available in the only model suitable for riding. The size grid does not cover the needs of hooves that are too large or too small. There are also glue-on boots and solutions for the winter exist. Please note that the sole of these boots is not partly opened.



DallmerClog by Dallmer

One of the first boots in the world - were designed in 1977! The line includes one model for horse riding, one model for horses with laminitis, glue-on shoes and orthopedic glue-on shoes, including those for foals. The size grid does not cover the needs of too small and too large hooves, and the main specialty of Dallmer boots is the open sole.



Turf King II www.kraemer.de

Popular budget hoof boots from Krämer.

There is currently one riding boot model and one therapeutical boot in production. The sizing guide will not cover the needs of hooves that are too large or small. There are no shape variations and no special solutions for the winter season.



Marquis www.marquis-vetec.com

These are hoof boots created by veterinarians from Germany in 1999. Marquis are currently available in seven riding models. The sizing chart will not cover the needs of hooves that are too small or too large, but there are models available for steeper hoof capsules and some solutions for winter. Marquis use a unique heel capsule system.



Soft Ride www.softrideboots.com

These are equine hoof boots designed in the USA. Soft Ride comes in just one boot model, but can be used for horses with pathologies, for riding and transport (thanks to gel orthoses of different densities what could be inserted into hoof boots interior). The sizing chart is suitable for small and large hooves of different shapes. This company also have introduced Ice Spa therapeutic products and non-ferrous horseshoes.



TK Horseshoe www.tk-hoofcare.de

These are patented hoof boots developed in Germany. TK Horseshoe is currently available in two models: equestrian and therapy (laminitis support) lines. The size range is quite small, so the boots will not fit ponies or horses with large hooves.



Engl www.sattlerei-engl.de

These are German hoof boots designed not only for horse hooves but also for donkeys! Today Engl presents three models of hoof boots: donkey boots, riding boots (horses and ponies), rehabilitation boots. The sizing guide is not suitable for hooves that are too large.



Swiss Horse www.swisshorseboot.com

These are hoof boots designed in Switzerland. For now Swiss Horse has one patented riding boot model that can be adapted to different shapes of hooves. These boots are not suitable for treatment and transportation. The sizing chart will not cover the needs of hooves that are too small or too large.



Theo Boot www.hufschuhdokter.de

These are hoof boots made in Germany. Theo Boot currently has one model of riding boot. These shoes are not suitable for treatment. The sizing guide will not cover the needs of hooves that are too small or large. Solutions for winter use are presented. Theo Boot is notable for its hoof attachment system, which eliminates the use of the crown area.



Black Forest www.loesdau.de

This is German hoof boot brand by Loesdau. Currently, the Black Forest boot model is sold not only by Loesdau, but also by companies such as HKM, Covalliero, Waldhausen, Pfiff and possibly some others with a brand name change. These boots are for riding only, their size grid will not cover the needs of hooves that are too small or large.



Delta by Cavallo

Delta is a brand of hoof boots by Cavallo designed in the USA. There is only one hoof boot model available. These boots are only applicable for riding. The size chart will not cover the needs of hooves that are too small or large, there is no difference in shape.



Hoof Wings www.hoofwings.com

Hoof Wings hoof boots were designed in 1986 in USA. They are suitable for horse riding and rehab. Currently there is one boot model and 34 variants of soles including an oval one. They have full range of sizes and also solutions with improved grip.



Atelier Cuire www.ateliercuire.ch

These are boots for donkeys, ponies and horses, custom-made by a craftsman from Switzerland. It's a multipurpose product: for riding, rehabilitation, transportation. A large number of sizes are available due to tailoring when ordering. There are solutions with improved grip for slippery conditions.



Shings www.shings.se

Shins is a brand of hoof boots developed in Sweden. They are suitable for horse riding and therapy. Currently there are two models of boots for winter and summer in a limited sizing.

Shings uses tendon and ligament support technology. The boots have built-in elements that work in parallel with the lower ramification of the superficial and deep flexors tendons.



Castle Hoof boot www.well-shod.com

These are hoof boots made by an American company that manufactures plastic products for horses' hooves. The boots can be used for horse riding and rehabilitation. The outsole is made of unformed polyurethane. Castle Hoof boot come in a small number of sizes to cover the average hoof diameter.

There are no winter solutions.



CrossBoot www.crossboot.cz

These boots are designed and manufactured in the Czech Republic. CrossBoot hoof boots are suitable for moderate to intense riding. Currently there is one model of boots available in a limited size grid. These boots can be used in muddy and wet conditions without additional anti-skid elements. The CrossBoot boots have reflective elements.



Note: these boots are out of production. Can be bought individually or second-hand.

Bosana hoof boot

Bosana hoof boots have been designed in Italy. They are suitable only for riding and for protecting hooves from mechanical stress. Bosana is a boot for shod hooves that covers a small part of the hoof capsule without affecting coronet during fastening. The size chart covers only average sizes (by horseshoes) of hooves.



Note:
these boots are out of
production.

Alpha Horse boot

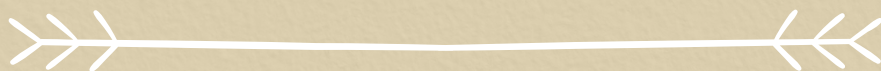
These are hoof boots have been created by German developers. There is only one model of hoof boots made by materials which allow Alpha Horse boot to be resized in length and width making them a multitasking boot. These boots are collapsible and easy to replace. There were four boot sizes planned and with two-year warranty.



Note: these boots are out of production. Can be bought individually or second-hand.

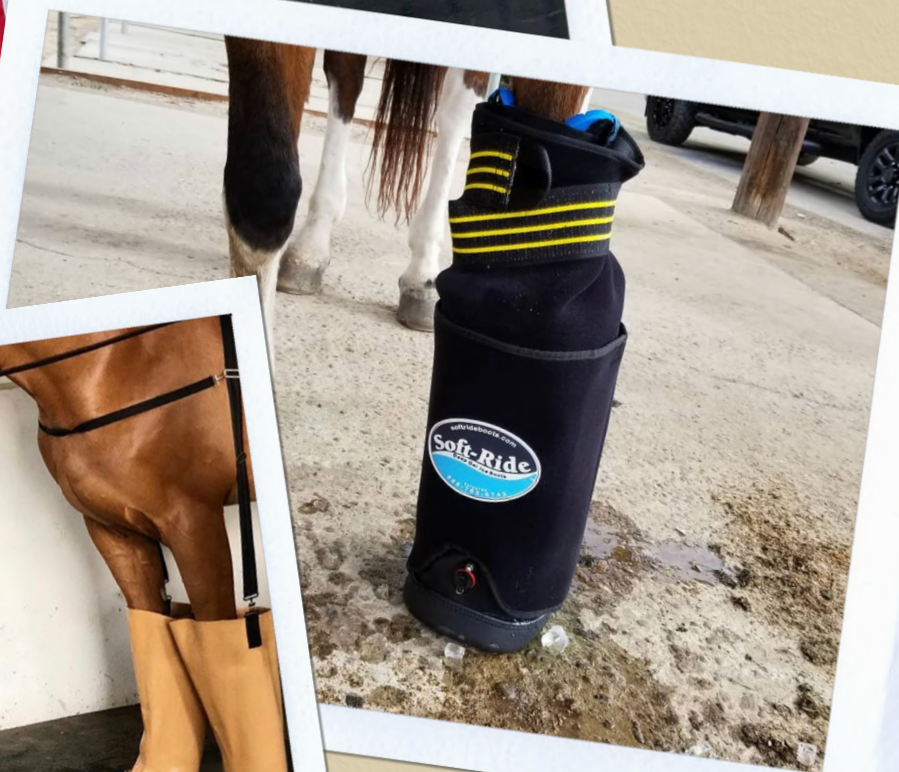
Boa horse boot

A boot model by EasyCare what we can't skip to show! Boa horse boot is a patented boot with a unique lacing system that is based on the construction used in snowboard boots. This model was produced in a wide range of sizes with special gaiters and a spare lacing system.



Treatment hoof boots

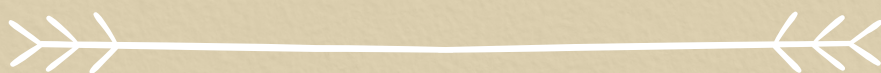
Treatment shoes are used for the application of medicines, therapeutic baths, rinsing and soaking in a static position or for a staying in a paddock. This type includes boots by brands like Easy Boot, Davis, EasySoaker, Hoof Wraps Soaker, Smart™ boot, Tubbease, Dura Tech and possibly others.



Cooling systems

Cooling systems are designed for lower limbs therapeutic cooling sessions and represented by sleeves made of small pockets with ice or cold water inside (The Drew boot, Ice horse). Another option is when such a sleeves are connected to a compressor that creates aeration and/or provides massage effect (Jacks Whirlpool and Soft Ride Ice SPA).

Dura Tech Cooling Gel System is a boot with no sole.



Physiotherapy systems

Physiotherapy systems are widely used in equine therapy. ActivoMed Impulseline System and boots by Sarah Mergen work by using pulsed magnetic field. There also other types of physiotherapy systems like Game Ready active compression cold therapy (sole-free), Cobble Hill Equine and Equine Light Therapy using infrared light therapy (also no sole "boot").



Bandages boots

Bandages boots are intended to protect the hoof which needs compresses, bandages for example for an solar open wound healing. The horse booted into such a bandages will be able to move freely / rest while being treated. And no need to worry without the bandage that it may fall off or clog up (Such a bandages boots are produced by WoofWear, HorseCroc3 , HOOFix boot, Equine Slipper, Hoof Wraps Bandage, Easy Boot Zip, Turf King, Waldhausen, SmartPak, etc.)



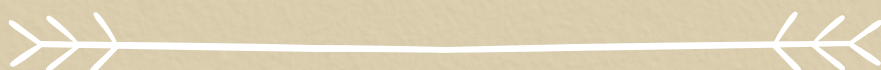
Rehabilitation hoof boots

Rehabilitation shoes are used for rehabilitation of horses with laminitis, founder, navicular disease, sesamoiditis and actually any chronic pain in the hoof area. Equine Fusion Recovery are special with its sole and shell material, Easy Boot Cloud boots feature is to be used with a special padding, Soft Ride boot and Eqboot are used with orthopedic insoles.



Transport boots

Transport hoof boots are used during the flights and travels. They will relieve fatigue, give additional support to the hooves and help to avoid hoof damages. Such a boots are Cavallo Transport Air Hoof, Equine Fusion Recovery Shoe and some other multi-purpose boots (Soft Ride boots, Eqboot, Millers Harness, etc.).



Temporary hoof boots

Temporary hoof boots are created as a replacement for a lost/broken hoof boot or a horseshoe. Temporary boots are produced by Davis Barrier Boot, Shires boot, Tough 1 hoof boot, GK's, The Natural Hoofshoe and possibly others. Such a boots are not suitable for regular and intense riding but they will be able to support the horse for a while until you'll be able to buy/fix a normal hoof boots/horse shoe.



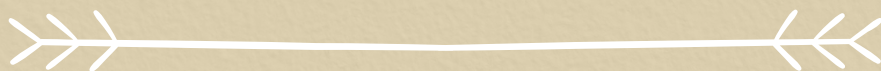
Glue-on hoof boots

Glue-on hoof boots have been invented for horses with soreness or injuries in the upper part of the hoof at the coronet or/and heel area. Also these boots can be used in competitions where boots that cover the entire hoof and the coronet line are not allowed. Glue-ons are produced by Renegade, Equine Fusion, Easy Boot, Flex Hoof Boot, Explora Boot, Floating Boot and possibly others.



Additions: hoof boot tools

Some of hoof boots require tools to be used. The Floating Boot and Evo Boot offer a versatile tool for their boots including a mini rasp, wrench, set of spikes and a hoof pick. Also when you buy a pair of Marquis hoof boots you get a heel support pump included.



Additions: spare parts

The vast majority of boots are collapsible and have easy-to-replace parts so you can purchase additional spare parts like a new outsole, screws, studs for the outsole or a complete winter sole etc. if any of the elements are worn out or lost and you need to replace them. Do not forget that some shoes are still non-collapsible and are unlikely to be repaired.



Additions: socks

The hoof boots socks are used underneath the boots to help to keep the foot clean after riding, to improve foot grip inside the hoof boot and can prevent possible rubbing. Some manufacturers (Cavallo) offer branded socks and wraps but you also can buy woolen socks for tourist sport and use them, - this method is recommended by experts (Lassley Carrig of High Desert Hoof Care).



➤➤➤ Additions: flexible inserts ➤➤➤

Many hoof boots manufacturers offer additional flexible inserts for their boots. It's supposed to help to absorb ground concussion, stimulate circulation in the hoof and allow the boot to fit even more closely to the hoof, tailored to the individual sole. Flexible inserts come in a variety of thicknesses, hardness, and sizes.



➤➤➤ Additions: winter solutions <=<=<=<

Most of hoof boots producers take care of the grip of their boots in slippery unstable periods and offer screw-in studs or winter soles for boots additionally. Generally studs can be installed in any boot with a sole thick enough. You can install and remove such a studs simply yourself.



➤➤➤ Additions: fit kit sets ➤➤➤

Hoof boot producers understand the importance of fit kit sets, therefore in order not to be confronted with the wrong size or model of boot fit kits are presented in the assortment of stores. Fit kit is not a whole boot but a part in a shape of a sole, in different sizes and sometimes models. You try them on and choose the right one. There are fit kit mixes in some stores.



Hoof boot Fitting

When choosing hoof boots first of all you should be guided by the needs of your horse and answer the following questions:

- what does this horse need it for;
- how often and how long your horse is going to wear it;
- what is the issue with the horse, for example complains of soreness in its feet area or, perhaps, it's chronically lame for a long time;
- can the horse currently walk on firm ground barefoot, feeling confident.



Hoof boot Fitting

Most of hoof boot shops have a free consultation offering to help with hoof boot size fitting based on photos and hoof measurements. For a successful fitting of hoof boots be sure to take measurements and photographs as described below. Each hoof boots brand has a sizing chart that allows you to determine the correct size yourself which is easy with healthy hooves without shape deviations.



Hoof boot Fitting

Hoof measurements should be taken within 2-3 days after the last trimming as follows:

Width Measurement: the hoof from the sole (orange line) must be measured at its widest point, including the width of the sole and the thickness of the walls on both sides.

Usually the widest point is about $\frac{1}{2}$ of the total length.

Make sure your ruler or measure tape measures straight across the hoof and not slightly diagonally as this will affect your measurements.



Hoof boots Fitting

To measure the length of the hoof it is necessary to determine the extreme points of weightbearing. Generally this place is where the hoof wall ends excluding the heel bulbs (upper black line). Starting here measure the straight line (green line) to the outermost part of the toe (bottom black line). Typically this line goes through the middle of the frog dividing the hoof in two pieces (which may not be symmetrical). Note that this measurement is for a healthy foot and may not be suitable for a horse with a deformed heel.



Hoof boot Fitting

If your horse has any hoof capsule abnormality and you are in doubt about the choice of hoof boot size or model please contact a fit specialist. They will ask for measurements and additional photos, possibly drawings.

If the horse has extreme deformities (for example, twisted hooves in chronic laminitis), then none of the boots will work for it. In such cases the horse needs to be trimmed properly first.



Hoof boot fitting

It's always very helpful to take photos of actual hooves since it give an idea of the shape of the hoof and the possible fit hoof boot. Be sure to remove sand and dirt from the entire hoof wall!

Shoot on a clean, level and solid surface. Ask someone to help you to hold the horse to stand still, to hold its feet. Concentrate on the process and follow the basic rules of photography - do not curve the horizon, do not bend the camera forward or backward. Take a lot of pictures to be able to choose the best ones out of it.



Hoof width - orange line, hoof length - green line, end points are indicated by black lines.

Photo: Anna Deli.





Sole View: Hold the camera directly in front of the foot, use the measurement tool. This hoof is pathologically narrow.

Photo: Olga Korolkova.



Sole View: Hold the camera directly in front of the foot, use the measurement tool. This hoof is pathologically narrow.

Photo: Olga Korolkova.





Profile View: Keep the camera directly in front of the hoof, a short distance from the horse's leg. Remove excessive coronet hair. Photo: Anna Deli.



Front View: Keep the camera directly in front of the hoof, a short distance from the horse's leg. Remove excessive coronet hair. Photo: Anna Deli.





Hoof boot Fitting

Please, regardless of the brand and model of the chosen boots (only if they are not therapeutic), remember that your horse needs to get used to wearing boots gradually. If you managed to choose the right size then the boots will not twist or get lost and your horse will feel comfortable in hoof boots.

Give your horse time to get familiar with the boots. All manufacturers recommend starting with 30 minutes a day gradually increasing the time.



2 or 4 hoof boots?

If you are looking to give your horse an extra protection and support while working you can use 4 hoof boots on all 4 feet.

If your horse is feeling sore with hind feet too then be guided by his needs and provide boots for hind feet too. Back, front, or all four - the cases are different.

Remember that working under the horse adds the rider's weight mostly to the front of the horse, this is why the most popular is to use only 2 hoof boots for front feet.



Hoof boot care

Most of hoof boots are easy to take care of. You should rinse them with water, brush dirt and sand away and dry them at room temperature for further use.

Some boots like the Cavallo are machine washable. To disinfect Evo Boots recommends treating hoof boots with a 5% solution of vinegar combined with water in equal proportions.



Hoof boot care

Cavallo recommends mixing 50% vinegar with water in equal proportions to reduce the risk of bacterial build-up in boots and spray regularly into boots and soles.

If you leave a horse unattended with riding boots beside remember that the horse can play with the boot, scratch it and damage it.

Please read the care instructions for your pair of boots!



Ventillation and drainage

There is ventilation and drainage system present in almost every shoe model. Producers try to make keeping horse's hoofs clean inside the hoof boot easy even when moving in different weather conditions.

In hoof boots made of flexible materials generally there is built-in drainage. As for the closed solid type of hoof boot check information accordingly.

If the boot is correctly sized and the hoof is properly placed inside then no any large stones can come inside and any debris between the boot and the foot is almost completely excluded.



Ventilation and drainage

If most of the time you ride on sand and sandy paths then you better you choose shoes where sand will be able go through (like a through sieve).

If you don't really ride on sand then you can use socks in combination with boots. Socks will reduce the chance of rubbing and keep your horse's feet clean after the ride. Anyway, try to keep your hoof boots clean inside when riding and be prepared to stop and check your horse's boots.



Seasonality

When it comes to seasonality you need to remember about the physiology of the hooves.

The hoof tends to expand and contract depending on the ambient moisture level. Since the hoof retains water it means that the hoof will be slightly larger in wetter seasons than in drier seasons with no change in hoof grooming interval or trim.

Consult a hoofed boot specialist if you live in an area subject to severe seasonal variations in weather conditions.



Competitions

Endurance competitions are the most common activities where hoof boots are commonly used. Riders have spare boots for each route.

At the traditional competition site you can warm up before the start with your boots on but you will have to take them off if they are prohibited by the organizers. To avoid disqualification please ask the competition organizer.



Competitions

Many competition organizers explain the ban on the use of boots by the fact that boots can hide hoof injuries or illness which is contrary to the rules of performance.

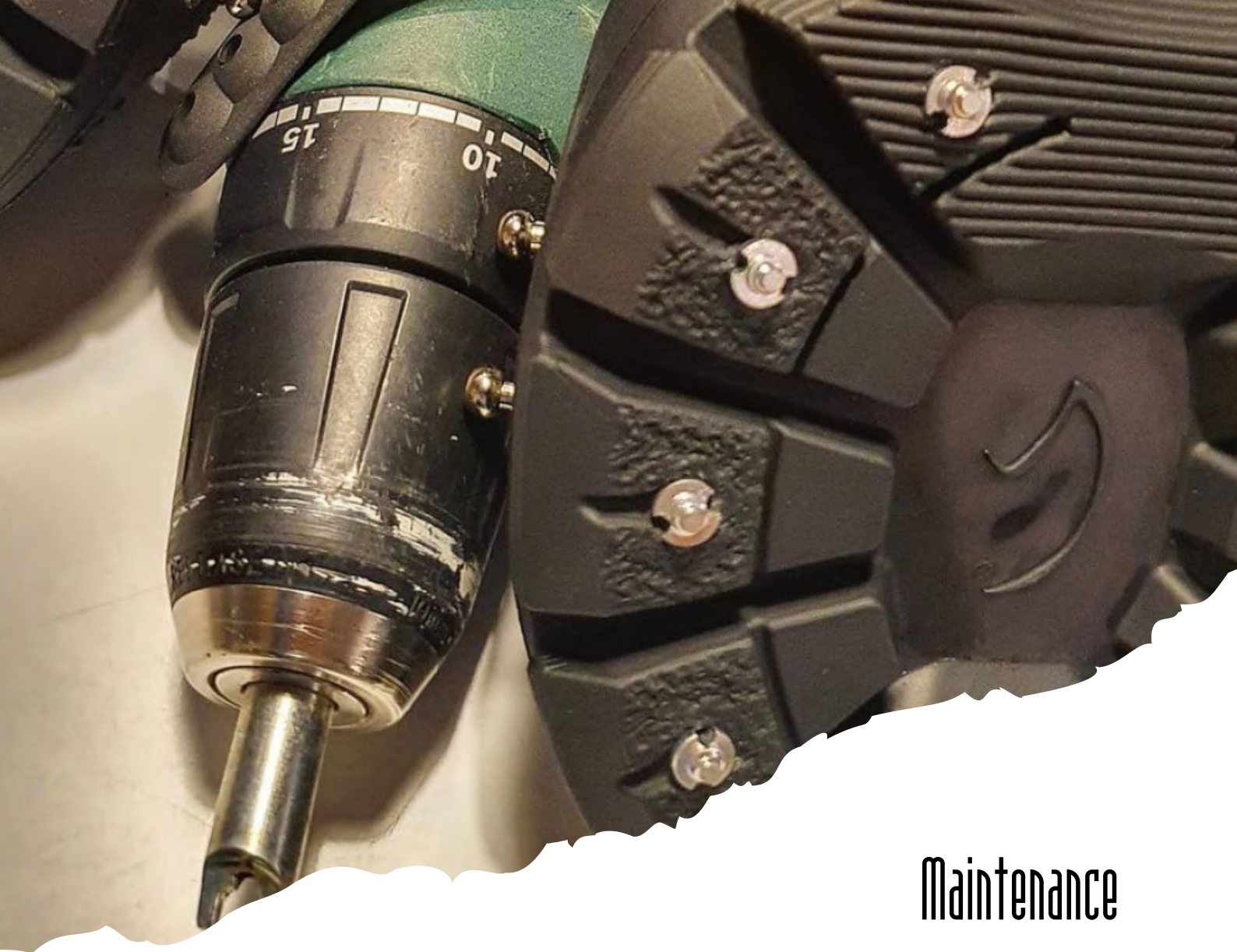
In order to be sure to compete you can choose boots that will not cover more than $\frac{1}{3}$ the height of the hoof capsule and whisk. You can use glue-on boots - which is a great solution if you are not ready to buy suitable boots for competitions or they are prohibited!



Hoof boot life time

All patented hoof boots have passed many performance tests, including durability tests. Remember that hoof boot lifespan depends on the type of soil, the frequency and intensity of use, care, storage conditions and even the style of movement of the horse in some cases.

Generally life time of hoof boots is described mostly in miles or kilometers but sometimes also in years. The following parameters are commonly found: up to 2000 km, from 6 months to two years, from 1 to two years, from 300 to 1200 miles and others. Check with the boot producer specification for the exact details.



Maintenance

One day you may be faced with a complete boot replacement or boot repair (by the manufacturer or yourself).

Replace your boot if:

- the cost of replacement parts is close to the cost of a boot;
- the sole protector is badly worn out (one-piece boots);
- the horse's hoof has changed shape or size;
- a replacement part is not available for purchase.

Repair the boot yourself if you have replacement parts on your hands and the damage is minimal.



Purchasing

Almost all hoof boot companies provide shoes for fitting or a fitting kit for rent for a certain amount. When trying such a boot on take care and do not make them dirty or broken - you may need to return them.

You can buy hoof boots via official producers' websites or simply in horse shops and specialized hoof boots online shops. In this case you need to be careful when choosing the size. Shoes can also be purchased at local and international trading platforms both new and used.



Purchasing

Some large hoof boot companies have special client programs.

For example you can purchase a pair from Easy Boot with a 50% discount if you give them your old boots produced by another hoof boot company. Cavallo gives a lot of discounts for subscribing to their news, Scoot Boots does free shipping worldwide. Of course all hoof boot companies understand the possible complication with hoof boots fitting when buying online and create flexible conditions for return or exchange in case of an unsuitable pair!



How to store

Boots are sold in cardboard boxes individually or in pairs in one box.

After use you should thoroughly clean and dry your shoes and insoles to avoid the possibility of mold. You can store boots in special bags separately in order not to deform the components. Avoid prolonged exposure to extreme temperatures, uncontrolled wetting and sun. Label your boots if you are going to store them in a shared tack room.

A HOOF BOOT AFFECTS TO THE HOOF MECHANISM?

The ability of the hoof to expand to absorb the horse's weight is called the hoof mechanism. Hoof mechanism needs to work properly to absorb impact from the ground. Quality hoof boots do not limit this function. Hoof mechanism doesn't function in the metal horseshoe. Luca Bain proved that metal transmits vibration at a frequency of up to 800 Hz into the hoof capsule and further up to the leg. Such a vibration can severely destroy living cell tissue.



Answered by
Carole Herder,
creator of
cavallo-inc.com

WHAT ARE THE MOST DURABLE BOOTS?

As the most durable hoof boots you can count Epic and Glove models from Easy Boot and Renegade.

They are designed for unlimited work loads during the week and made of a material similar by its characteristics to the car tire materials.

However, they can wear out faster if your horse stumbles or clings to the ground.



Answered by
Zoya Kopelevich,
creator of
Indrick.ru

WHAT TO DO IF THE BOOTS WERE MATCHED TO SIZE BUT OVER TIME STRETCHED OUT A LITTLE, HOW CAN THE SITUATION BE CORRECTED?

Most of hoof boots can be adjusted with fasteners and with insoles.

However, if the boots become really too large you should replace them with more suitable ones. We believe that this problem can be avoided by taking measurements of the hoof for boot fitting in the middle of trimming cycle to target the average toe length. To reduce the risk of boot sprains, the length of the hoof capsule must be maintained at all times.



Answered by
Christina and **Barbara**,
specialists and creators
of **Team-HUF.de**

HOW MANY SUMMER SEASONS WILL HOOF BOOTS LAST IF USED 6 DAYS A WEEK?

High-quality and correctly selected and fit hoof boots will serve your horse from two seasons and more.

Hoof boot lifetime also depends on proper care and those things like the way your horse wears it carefully, mechanics of the horse's movements and limb positioning.



Answered by
Zoya Kopelevich,
creator of
Indrick.ru

WHAT BOOTS ARE SUITABLE FOR A HORSE WITH A LONG TOE AND A LOW HEEL?

Evo Boot and Floating Boot can be adapted to the shape of the hoof using heat. Adaptation must be carried out by a specialist.

Also Scoot Boots, Soft Ride, Renegade (and Viper), Equine Fusion All Terrain Ultra (Slim Version) can be fit. It's always best to try on a boot on the hoof rather than just relying on a sizing chart or reference to hoof shape based on subjective perception of whether toe is long or short heels.

There is no guarantee for adapted boots!



Answered by
Christina and **Barbara**,
specialists and creators
of **Team-HUF.de**

DOES IT MAKE SENSE TO WEAR BOOTS IF THE HORSE REGULARLY PASSES THROUGH A WETLAND?

If it will only be for part of your ride, then you may choose to take your hoof boots off for the wet ground but put them on again for the dry/hard ground. If you don't want to take your boots off during your ride, then you need to be sure that your boots fit well (so they don't come off) and that they are a type of hoof boot suitable for this type of terrain.

Fabric boots get wet and can chafe from water, so low-rise plastic boots are your best choice.



Hoof Bootique

Answered
by **Liz Hapgood**,
creator of
hoofbootique.uk

CAN I USE BOOTS TO MAKE MY HORSE MORE COMFORTABLE IN SHOW JUMPING?

It isn't usually necessary to wear boots if your horse's hooves are healthy and sound. Using hoof boots for jumping horses specifically really depends on a number of factors:

- the health of your horse's hooves;
- the state of the ground;
- if your horse is showing any signs of sensitivity to the ground;
- if you are needing more grip and want to use studs in the boots.

Answered by
Lindsay Setchell,
editor of **The Barefoot
Horse Magazine**



IF THE SAND OR SOIL IS NOT TRAMPLED DOWN ENOUGH OR IS TOO DRY AND VERY DUSTY, WILL THE GRAINS OF SOIL OR SAND GET INTO THE BOOT AND RUB?

Well fitting boots should not have much spare room inside, to allow any debris to get in. Some hoof boots fit around the hoof wall very closely, and mainly sit below the hairline, so these hoof boots may be best for dry and dusty, or sandy, conditions. Most boots have drainage holes, so any sand or soil that gets in can easily find it's way out again. If the boots sit above the hairline then it may be best to use a sock underneath the boots to prevent any sand rubbing.



Answered
by **Liz Hapgood**,
creator of
hoofbootique.uk

WHAT BOOTS WILL FIT A HEAVY HOODED TRUCK?

The most common models of hoof boots are produced in sizes up to 150-160 mm width. There are few models to fit bigger hooves for larger breeds such as draft horses etc, such as:

1. Hoof Wings;
2. Cavallo "Big Foot Boot";
3. Easyboot "Epic", "Boa", "Cloud" and "RX".



Answered by
Lindsay Setchell,
editor of **The Barefoot
Horse Magazine**

HOW HOOF BOOT AFFECTS TO SHOCK ABSORPTION COMPARE TO BARE HOOF, AND SHOD HOOF?

Some boots do have adequate material to absorb shock and some don't. The sole of the boot must be a technically advanced compound that is durable enough to deflect pressure aggressive surfaces while still internally cushioned enough to absorb shock. Metal shoes always refer shock into the hoof capsule and further to the limb, which can cause internal hoof issues as well as bone and joint disease.



Answered
by **Carole Herder**,
creator of
cavallo-inc.com



We would like to thank

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shings.se

well-shod.com

crossboot.cz

and other...



Instagram:

@hoof_ok

E-mail:

hoof.olga.k

@gmail.com



Olga Korolkova

Olga is a hoof care specialist working in Russia (Sverdlovsk region). She currently studies Veterinary Medicine at South Ural State Agrarian University, and was also trained with programs of "Trimming and Shoeing Horses. Orthopedic Shoeing" and "Orthopedic Measures in the Treatment of Horse Limb Diseases" what took place at the All-Russian Research Institute of Horse Breeding.

Instagram:

@anna_shp_hoofcare

E-mail:

annahoofcare
@hotmail.com



Anna Deli

Anna is barefoot hoof care specialist working primarily in Cyprus. Educated as engineer-physicist and a specialist in nuclear physics (NRNU "MEPhI"), Anna initially studied trimming with Hiltrud Strasser, and in the process of further work she adapted the method for the Cypriot hard rocky ground, taking into account the needs of horses and their comfort as a priority.