

Remove horseshoes and assess wear

Overview

This standard covers the removal of horseshoes to assess the wear of the horseshoe and hoof. The assessment allows for evaluation of conformation or abnormalities of gait which provide valuable information that can influence hoof care and be used to develop the hoof care plan.

In order to remove horseshoes and assess wear you will need to approach and handle the equine in a manner that minimises stress and alarm, working in a position that is safe for the equine and anyone involved in the work including yourself. You will need to remove the horseshoes using the correct tools and prepare the hoof so that it can be thoroughly examined.

You need to be aware of your own limitations and confirm that you meet the relevant legal responsibilities for providing your duty of care under animal health and welfare legislation, codes of practice and policies of the business.

The responsible person can be anyone who has responsibility for the equine such as the owner, trainer, groom or hoof care practitioner.

This standard is for UK Equine Hoof Care practitioners.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. work professionally and ethically and within the limits of your authority, expertise, training, competence and experience
2. comply with the relevant animal health and welfare and animal-related legislation and associated codes of practice
3. carry out your work in accordance with the relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, codes of practice and policies of the business
4. select and wear suitable clothing and personal protective equipment (PPE)
5. maintain hygiene and biosecurity in accordance with the relevant legislation and business practice
6. select the method of handling and control required for the equine concerned and its needs, in order to minimise the risks to the equine and anyone involved in the work including yourself
7. select, prepare, maintain, clean and store the required tools and equipment in accordance with the relevant legislation, manufacturer's guidelines and company policy
8. clean and assess the condition of the hoof checking for foreign objects, or damage
9. safely remove horseshoes using the correct tools and methods, taking care to minimise any damage to the hoof during removal
10. examine the horseshoe and assess the implications of the wear pattern and record these findings
11. advise the responsible person of your findings and adjust the hoof care plan accordingly
12. confirm that the health and welfare of the equine is maintained throughout the activity
13. recognise matters requiring the attention of other equine professionals
14. maintain communication with all those involved in, or affected by your work
15. confirm that records are completed, maintained and stored as required by the relevant legislation and business practice

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. your professional responsibilities and the need to maintain professional competence
2. your responsibilities under the relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, codes of practice and the policies of your business
3. your responsibilities under current animal health and welfare legislation, other relevant animal regulations and codes of practice, and the legal limitations of the current Veterinary Surgeons Act regarding diagnosis and treatment of disease or injury
4. the type of clothing and personal protective equipment (PPE) suitable for the activity
5. the importance of maintaining hygiene and biosecurity and the methods for achieving these
6. why it is important to maintain the safety and security of equipment and machinery when on site
7. the safe working limits of the hoof and limb of the equine
8. the types of tools and equipment required for trimming and how to prepare, use, maintain and store them, in accordance with the relevant legislation, manufacturer's guidelines and business policy
9. how to use different methods of horseshoe removal, depending on the requirements of the equine, and the precautions to be taken to prevent injury to the equine and anyone involved in the work, including yourself
10. how to lift, hold and work with equine hooves
11. when to involve other equine professionals
12. the factors that may affect behaviour of different types of equine during hoof care
13. how to assess equine conformation
14. the importance of maintaining communication with those involved in, or affected by, your work and how this should be done
15. the records that need to be kept and the importance of completing them in accordance with the relevant legislation and business practice

Glossary

Equine: a horse or other member of the horse family including donkeys, mules, hinnies and asses.

Locomotion: equine locomotion is required for proper joint growth and maintenance, hoof growth and health, as well as respiratory health, circulatory health and metabolism.

Conformation: equine conformation evaluates the degree of correctness of a horse's bone structure, musculature, and its body proportions in relation to each other. Undesirable conformation can limit the ability to perform a specific task.

Hoof care factors to consider including:

- Approximate age
- Behaviour
- Type/condition of hoof
- Activity level

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Developed by	Lantra
Version Number	2
Date Approved	30 Mar 2020
Indicative Review Date	30 Mar 2025
Validity	Current
Status	Original
Originating Organisation	Lantra
Original URN	LANNEHC8
Relevant Occupations	Animal Care and Veterinary Science, Animal Care Services, Veterinary Para-Professional Activities
Suite	Equine Barefoot Care, Veterinary paraprofessional activities
Keywords	horse, hoof, horseshoes, health, equine