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## Foal Hoof Care

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**Foals should be handled soon after they are born to get them used to having their legs handled. The mother should be kept separate (but where she can still see the foal) to prevent her attacking the handler**

Foaling season is upon us. If you have a young foal or are expecting one so a good foundation for hoof care. Crooked legs on young horses can be a big it.

Assess the foal's limbs soon after birth. Most mild limb deformities can be lack of cartilage and bone maturity and will improve with time if the affecte the limb, or concerns about the straightness of the legs, your veterinarian sh The hooves should not be trimmed until the foal is at least two weeks old, a

Horses' bones are very malleable when they are young. In fact, most long b each of the long bones there are plates (known as epiphyseal growth plates) important to treat limb deviations before the epiphyseal growth plates of the months (long pastern), and nine months (distal cannon bone). After these pl trimming or shoeing. It is questionable how much change can actually be m be eliminated by corrective trimming or shoeing. Serious problems may rec the horse should be considered in making this decision as its athletic career

A foal's feet should be checked by a competent farrier by the time it is two by (1) teaching the foal to stand and lead, (2) picking up and holding the fo the foal's hooves, (4) having an experienced person hold the foal for the far hand.

Imprint training should be started as soon after birth as possible in order to this, rub down the legs and pat the bottom of the hoof with your hand 40 or weekly and finally monthly. It is also important to clean out a foal's feet eac

Regular foot balancing will allow the foal to grow as straight as possible. T evenly distributed over the limbs. The foal's hoof may be trimmed more oft wall is trimmed down to the level of the sole at the toe.

Keeping the hoof length the same on the inner and outer sides of the leg (m foal frequently wears one side or the other unevenly. The animal will learn to compensate for minor structural protection from the coffin bone. Trimming one side lower in an effort to straighten legs produces sheared

Medial or lateral extension shoes made from aluminum or plastic may be glued or nailed to the feet of the horse. Shoeing the foot may protect it from wearing away faster than it grows and sometimes it is growing months, shoes should be reset frequently (every 3 to 4 weeks) and progressively larger shoes applied

Having the hoof trimmed out of medial/lateral balance in an effort to straighten bones is not a good practice. A noticeable effect will be the creation of a sheared heel. This may cause circulatory disturbance and lameness. Avoid chipping.

When a young horse begins serious training, regular trimming and hoof care should include shoes that protect the type of horse.

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