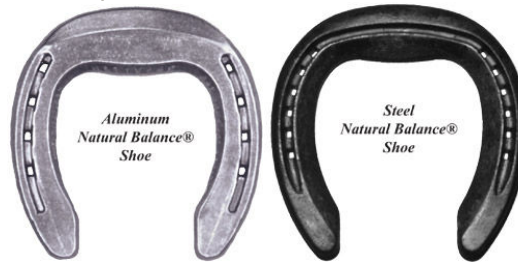


Natural Balance?

Natural Balance is more than just a horseshoe! It's a **hoof science** that takes into account the entire biomechanics of the horse and treats each foot as an individual. The shoe is just one component in the protocol of helping a lame horse become sound and keeping the sound horse healthy. In fact, sometimes the protocol doesn't even call for shoe!



In our farrier practice, we evaluate each horse before and after shoeing to look for signs of tension on the deep digital flexor tendon, symptoms of pain in the toe or heel region, and any other signals that can help us discover problems that may be causing stress on the laminae or on the ligaments of the navicular bone.

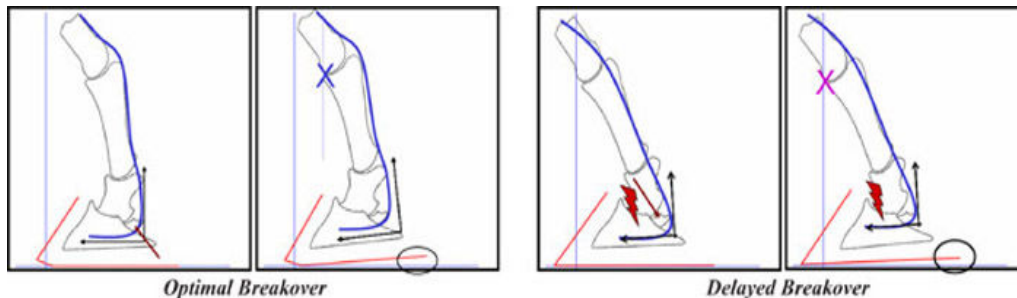
Not every horse has a perfect build but every horse can be trimmed and shod to best meet its unique conformation. Our objective is not to maintain the toe and match the "hoof/pastern angle" to every foot but instead, to **manage the toe** by identifying distortions and offer a healthy "functional angle" that will distribute the load evenly. This naturally takes undue stress off of key tendons and ligaments while providing maximum blood flow for a healthy laminae, and the correct biomechanics that will impact the skeletal system from the coffin joint all the way through your horse's topline. The wall of the toe was never intended to bear weight! The result is a sound and happy horse that can maximize the potential of the conformation it was born with.

Using these ingredients, we've had amazing results treating horses with lameness issues such as severe laminitis, Cushing's disease, navicular problems, club feet, stumbling, forging and other soundness problems and pathologies.

We believe in educating our clients in the process to help them better understand what's going on inside the hoof capsule. Along with a pre- and post-shoeing evaluation, we will map out the bottom of your horse's foot to show you its condition. This includes finding the location of the coffin bone, identifying any distortions in hoof growth, and monitoring positive changes in sole, heel and frog depth as your horse is introduced to proper support and correct breakover of forward movement. We also believe in working closely with your equine veterinarian to determine the best course of action in severe pathology cases.

Natural Balance science can trace its roots to the wild horse research and studies done by Gene Ovnicek in the 1980's and its "common sense approach" to identifying the differences between Mother Nature's wild foot and the domestic foot. What's the difference between the foot of a foal born in the wild and a foal born in a stable? Nothing! It's what happens directly after birth that causes the changes that so drastically occur with time. Even though our horses don't live in the wild, by using cutting-edge science and technology, we can come close to offering the same kind of support system and functionality that Mother Nature intended for Her horses to keep them sound and happy.

What is "Breakover"?



Breakover is most simply described as 'The pivot point for forward movement'. Our feet are hinged at the ball of our foot, and if you look at a lateral view of our shoes, almost all have a rolled toe. Now, imagine that the ball of your foot was fused, so you couldn't bend it, then strap on a wooden plank that is 2 sizes too big, sticking out a couple inches beyond your toe. Now try to walk. Now try to run!! Imagine the stress that puts on the tendons and soft tissue up the back of your leg, through your hips, and up your back.

If your horse is shod full to the toe on a distorted foot, the "breakover" point is out at the tip of that shoe. If the shoe is rolled like a Natural Balance shoe, and/or set back, like a square toe Eventer, the breakover point is moved back underneath the foot.

If your horse has excess distortion of the toe, and if you continue to shoe that distortion, is it any wonder we get topline issues? How about sore hocks, stifles and hips? Just some things to think about.

In a domestic environment horses do not have the same opportunity to go through these natural processes. In this situation it is our job as hoofcare practitioners to help service those needs of the equine foot. Having an understanding of the natural guidelines and life cycle of the foot can assist us in serving those needs and accomplishing our goals for soundness whether the horse is shod or barefooted.

For more information or demonstration don't hesitate to give me a call.

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