

Exercise

Natural Hoof Care is all about movement, which is very “Natural”. There is a way to exercise the horse without having to ride it constantly. This idea was formed by Jamie Jackson and is called “Paddock Paradise” it is a great way to care for a horse's hooves. Paddock Paradise provides movement that the horse needs so drastically to help keep the hooves strong and healthy. It provides a “Track” all the way around the outside edge of a pasture, paddock, or arena. The track can be anywhere from 10 feet wide to 40 feet wide, used as a loafing area. Rocks, logs, and pea gravel are put in the track to toughen the hooves and allow drainage of excess water. Hay piles are spread out in all corners so that the horses are required to move. Studies show that the average horse takes between 16,000 - 18,000 steps a day in a Paddock Paradise, 4,000 - 6,000 in a regular paddock, and only 800 steps a day in a stall. (Dr. Bowker clinic January 2007)

According to Dr. Thomas G. Teskey D.V.M. “Healthy horses can work over any terrain, if conditioned on that type of terrain.” Have the horses live in their riding condition.

Get the horses out of the mud! Haul in some material to give the hooves a dry out and hardening place. Hooves do need moisture- not manure. Water area down by water trough or have them drink out of a creek or pond. All the rest of the Paddock should be dry (All Year). Use your imagination!!!! Anything goes. If your horse is scared of mail boxes-add one. How about tarps? Railroad ties built up into a small hill? Keep it clean. Manure is one of a horse's worst enemies. Ride a lot!!!!

I built this for my personal horses when I lived in the city and had minimal ground for them to move around on. I was amazed by the changes in their feet. My horses circled the track all day long exercising themselves. Horses naturally want somewhere to go- you just need to supply it for them. I trimmed less off of their hooves every trim. This makes their feet that much stronger. I used electric fencing in the middle, it is inexpensive and very easy to install. I added pea gravel, cobble stone, one inch gravel, sand, and built a little forest of logs for them to cross over. Also, some logs they had to walk around. Of course, I spread out their feed so they had to move.



Our land in Roosevelt, Utah was the best so far for my horses. Our pasture was on the top of a hill and our water (in a creek) was down the hill 1/2 mile away over cobble stone, ravins, sage brush and desert. Yes-even cactus! So, they traveled one mile a day up and down hills just to get water. The horses paddock paradise was 35 acres of very dry land.

