

Why are some horses SENSITIVE to nailing?

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I have had many email enquiries about nailing, and the time has come to address these matters.

Horse owners and farriers often find that horses become a bit haunted around the feet when it comes to nailing the shoe on. Invariably it is nothing to do with the horse having a bad attitude to shoeing, in actual fact it is simply the result of a bad selection of nails to fit the shoe.

got a large enough selection of nails and uses the wrong nail. For example, a size 4 concave shoe will only take a slim 5 or a BH4, but too often people are using a full size 5 nail with a square head or a bevelled head, and the nails are sitting up to 1/4" above the ground surface of the shoe.

Common sense should tell you that if the nail is too big for the shoe, the shank of the nail is going to be too thick for the hoof and cause too much distortion of the white line as it is being nailed through. This is when the horse tends to get a bit haunted or spooked, and can you blame him? As soon as you start to tap or nail, the horse starts to get very nervous and pulls the hoof back, and I make the comment 'well why wouldn't they?' as you are causing it pain.

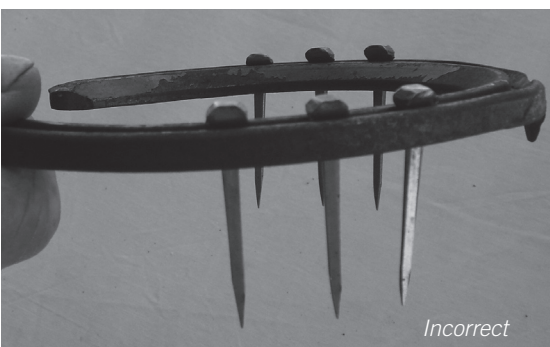
You haven't actually pricked the horse, you have quicked it. In an X-ray, you will find that under each nail nailed in this oversize nail pattern there is a distortion in the white

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the point – the problem lies in the fact that you have used too big a nail and it has hurt the horse in applying the shoes and distorted the white line. The simple fact is that the horse requires his feet to sit flat on the ground; if the nails are protruding, it becomes like a rocker shoe under the horse's foot and he can't get stability, so apart from hurting him, you are ruining his confidence anyway.

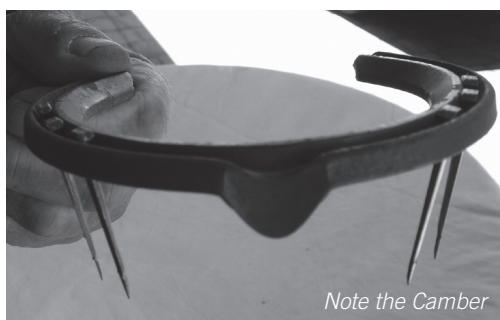
If you are having trouble with the horse not wanting to stand kindly while he is having shoes nailed on, then just go back and have a look what nails you are actually using. You may find it is a whole lot better to go back down a size in nails for the sake of the horse and to achieve a successful and calm completion of the job.

There is absolutely no reason for a horse to become nervous or jittery when the shoes are being nailed if it is being nailed with the correct selection of nails into the correct shoe for that size hoof after the hoof has been correctly balanced. 🇦🇺



If you study a normal factory made shoe, you can see that the nail hole is cambered to fit the profile of the hoof capsule (ie Slanted in). If the hoof is correctly balanced and shaped, and the correct size shoe is then correctly fitted to that correctly balanced and shaped hoof, you will see that on a concave or a flat shoe the nail holes actually line up dead in line with the white line where the nails have to go. There is never a question whether your nails are inside or outside the white line. If the hoof is prepared properly and the shoe is prepared properly, then the nails are EXACTLY in the right place – this is the way the horseshoe manufacturers have designed it, and they have spent millions of dollars getting it right.

The nail should sit into that forged shoe or the flat shoe with the bevelled head of the nail just proud enough to be tensioned with the hammer and clinching block. But so often the person shoeing the horse hasn't



line lining up with every single nail that goes through that hoof. It is a tragedy of misunderstanding by the person applying the shoes. Just hand your mate your nail scissors, and ask them to trim your fingernail down to the quick – I bet you start wriggling too.

I have often heard the comment "OK so the nails are a bit proud – it will only take a day or two walking on hard stuff for him to wear the nail heads down". That is not

