



Rules of Rasping: Eliminating Wall Flare and Splits, and Run-Under Heels

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Article Summary: How to render a naturally shaped hoof wall.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most controversial facets of hoof care concerns the legitimacy of dressing the outer wall of the capsule. Arguments pro and con for wall rasping range from “no rasping at all” to “take it to and inside the inner hoof wall”. The rationales for these admonitions are numerous and, more often than not, contradictory.

For example, thinning the hoof wall at all is viewed by some as a catalyst for weakening the capsule including its attachment mechanisms to the horse. Thinning is believed to cause wall splits. Contraposing this view is the assertion that rasping the wall eliminates flare, corrects weak growth patterns, and facilitates efficient breakover. Failure to take such action causes wall stress which lead to splits, run-under heels, and tearing of the capsule-to-horse attachment mechanism. I will not reference these and countless other opinions in this article as they can be accessed to no end in either the veterinary or farriery literature.

Natural hoof care practitioners skirt these contradictions and obfuscations by embracing the wild horse hoof model. The wild hoof clearly demonstrates what is natural, and, therefore, in the best interest of the horse. In the wild, where survival is all that matters, a

tough, balanced and split-free capsule is the hallmark of soundness and efficiency, in other words, the true signature of naturalness.

Taking this cue, natural hoof care practitioners like myself simulate this visible and invaluable guide in remodeling the domestic hoof capsule. Experience has taught us success. This article, then, outlines a systematic approach to “naturalizing” the capsule’s outer wall exterior based on the wild model. As in all facets of natural hoof care, the model does not cause harm and brings with it the promise of Nature’s healing powers that underlie natural capsule integrity.

Inseparable from the methodology is the recognition that horse owners must also rise to the responsibilities of genuine holistic horsekeeping practices. Unnatural horse care can counter the capsule’s inherent mechanisms to function naturally, and, thus, undermine the most competent practitioner’s efforts. Current epidemic levels of Supercoarthritis (laminitis) are one example.

Finally, the method presented is placed in the context of the consummate natural hoof care process. The *general guidelines* for natural hoof care are comprehensively presented in my book, *Horse Owners Guide To Natural Hoof Care*. The *special guidelines* are the providence of the panel of Star Ridge Natural

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