

Bandaging a Hoof

Keep your horse's foot protected until the farrier arrives

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If your horse wears shoes, you've probably had one go missing at some point. Horse shoes often get stuck in the mud and twist off. If your horse has a long stride, he can pull a front shoe off with his back hoof. Or if it's been a while since his last visit from the farrier, one may simply come loose.

When a shoe falls off, it can take a chunk of healthy hoof with it. This can make it more difficult—and more expensive—to re-shoe your horse since the farrier may need to rebuild the hoof. Additionally, horses that are used to wearing shoes are often more sensitive and prone to lameness if they are suddenly barefoot.

When your horse loses a shoe, it is important to act quickly to protect the hoof from injury or breakage.

First, examine the hoof and look for partially broken or uneven pieces of hoof. Using a farrier's rasp, file down any sharp pieces of hoof that may cause further damage.

If you are going to turn your horse out before the farrier can replace the shoe, you should bandage the hoof for extra padding and protection. Medium-sized diapers provide just the right amount of padding and are easier to use than sheet cotton. Wrap the diaper over the hoof so most of the padding covers the sole.

Secure the diaper by wrapping elastic bandage all the way around the hoof.

Wrap the entire bandaged hoof in duct tape. This will secure the bandage and provide an added layer of durability.

If your horse roams many acres of pasture, finding the shoe may be a challenge. However, it is important to search for the wayward shoe because the attached nails now pose a threat to your horse and all his turnout buddies.

A lost shoe is an almost inevitable inconvenience that comes with horse ownership, but if you know the steps to take, you'll have no problem protecting your horse's hooves.

Learn how to keep your horse's hooves healthy and strong with 8 Hoof Care Myths.