

Hoof Oils and Hoof Conditioners

The use of hoof oils and hoof conditioners are a common practice to help aid in the creation of healthy well-functioning hoof growth. There are two main reasons to use a hoof conditioner - to harden or to soften a horse's hoof. The consistency of a horse's hoof is determined by living and weather conditions as well as dietary concerns.

A horse's hoof is dependent on natural moisture occurring in their day to day life. This will determine the pliability of a horse's hoof to a great extent. In extremely dry climates it will be important to add oils to help keep the horse's hoof from drying up and becoming brittle. If allowed to dry out, a horse's hooves are more prone to cracking and chipping out. When applying oils to a horse's hoof, it is often recommended to only apply it to the area just below the coronet band. This will allow any natural moisture to be absorbed as well.

The opposite end of the spectrum is a very moist, wet environment. This can provide its own set of problems when dealing with a horse's hooves. The weakening of a horse's hoof structure when living in damp environments should be considered and dealt with accordingly. There are hoof conditioners that are used to harden a horse's hoof in times of extra dampness. Thrush, a rotting of the hoof, will be found more often in this environment due to the bacterial breeding ground a moist environment creates. It is quite common to use a thrush treatment formula when hardening up a horse's hooves as it provides a double edged sword for treating extra moisture, as well as clearing up any bacterial infections. When applying a hardener, it is common practice to apply it directly to the bottom of the hoof.

There are many commercially available products for these purposes.

Written By: Josh Emsley