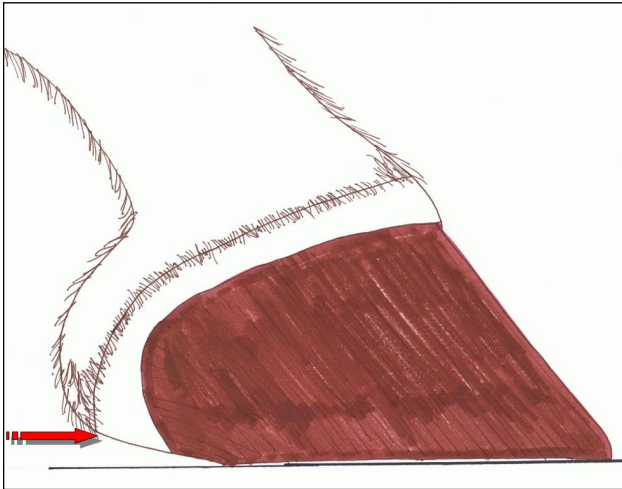


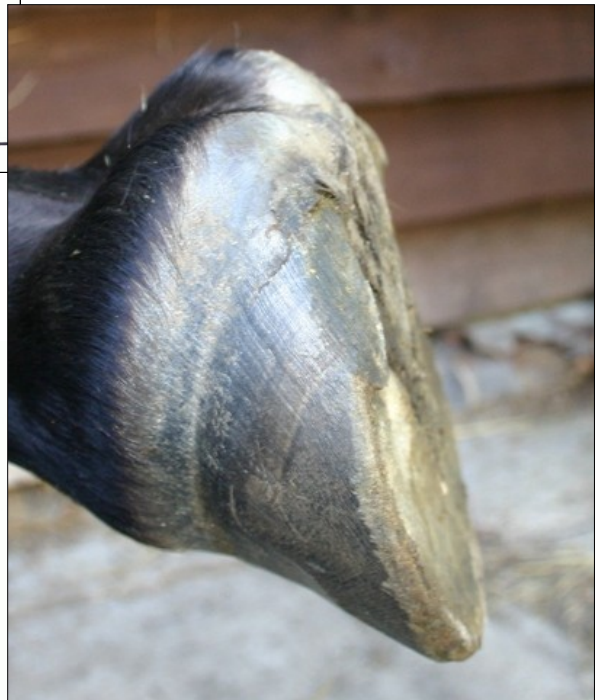


## Underslung heel contraction

The heels have grown forward onto the sole to various degrees. The underslung wall is pushing the bars upwards into the sole which results in a lever on the bulb downwards.



Underslung heels - in the heel region horn tubules running forward towards the front



Left: Healthy heel situation

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Here you can see the heels being pushed forward and very long. It is impossible for the horse to remedy this situation without help.



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## Causes for Underslung Heel Contraction

This contraction occurs commonly with soft-hoofed horses whose hooves have been further weakened by ammonia-rich bedding

Improper posture (head high in a stall situation) results in improper weight distribution and forces the heels forward and flattens them onto the sole

In unshod horses it may be the result of bedding, too soft ground and insufficient movement

## Trimming for Underslung Heel Contraction

While you are lowering the heel you set your scoop in such a way that the last tubules in the heel area meet the ground vertical when the hoof bears weight





Here is an underslung heel with just that kind of scoop.



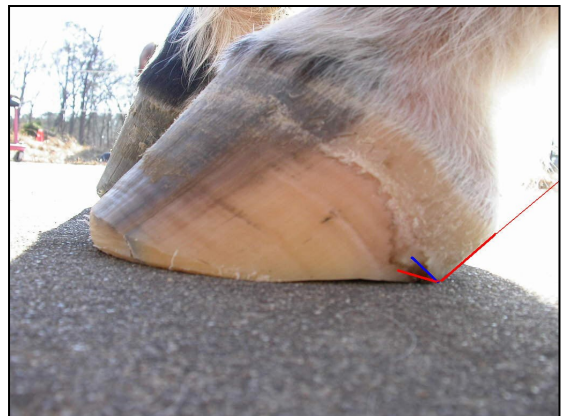
But you must be sure that not only the scoop comes in at a lesser angle than the heel, but also the bar has to ramp up to the heel so that the pressure of the heel cannot push the bar and scoop further down and forward.



Here is the same situation weight bearing. The scoop must come in at a lower angle than the heel. But as you scoop like this towards the heel and incorporate the heel point into this scoop, you will slowly walk the heel out to its correct position.



Underslung with crushed heels. Here you have to set the heel point as far back as possible, carefully incorporating the scoop as described before.

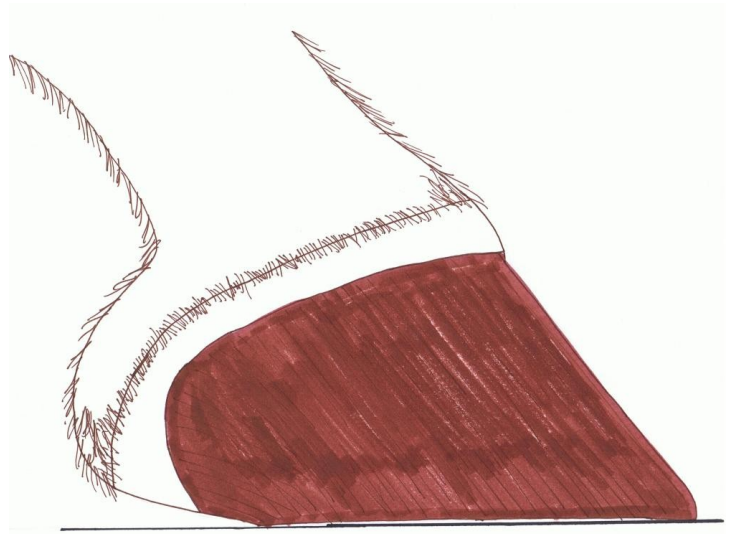


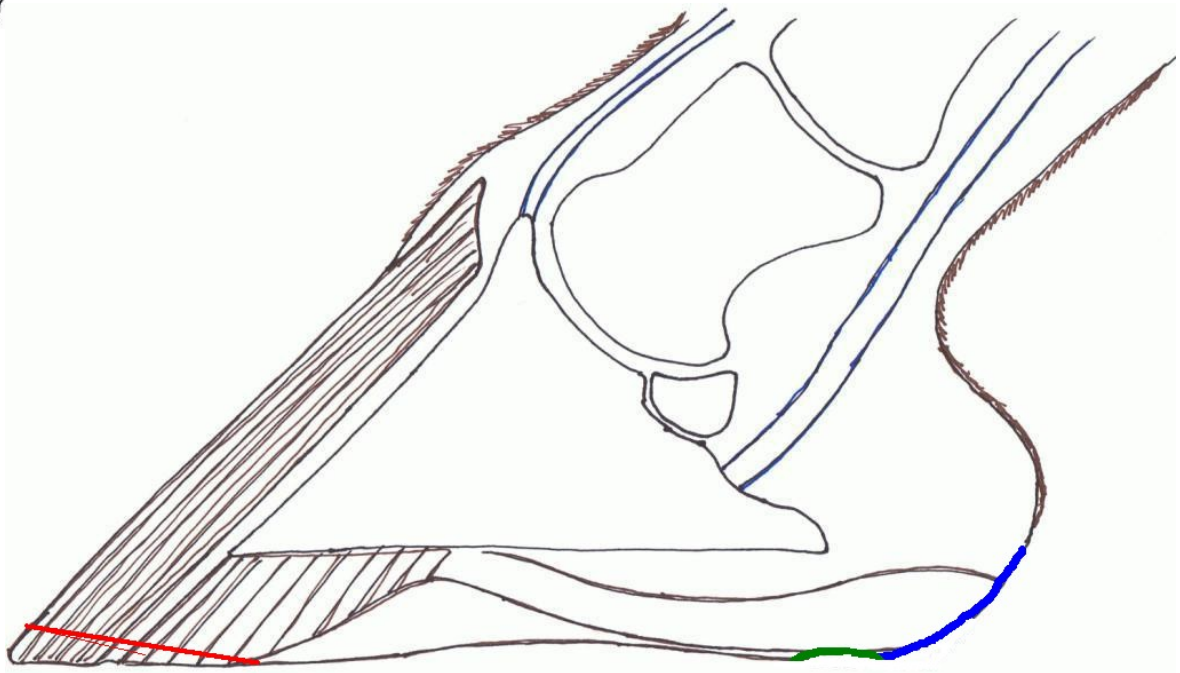
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The further you can set the weight bearing heel-bar triangle back on an underslung hoof, the more surface the hoof has to stand on. Naturally you cannot set it back further than you have heel height available.





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Sometimes leaving the heel a little higher (a few mm) and putting a real short scoop right in front of the heel point will help you remedy an underrun heel. Provided you have enough toe height, you may want to consider to lower the toe from the bottom, thus changing the balance front to back in such a way that the heel is relieved from excessive pressure. This will cost you some toe height for a while. Once the heel has grown into a more upright position, you will be able to adjust the hoof to grow more toe again, this time with an upright heel. Most likely you will gain the toe height without any further effort as the heel grows straighter.