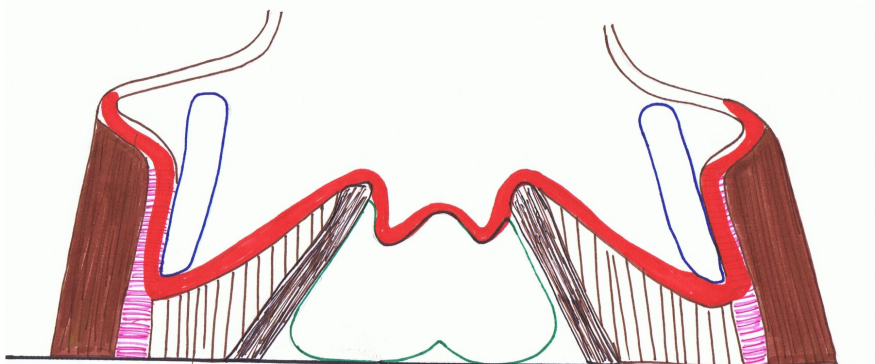




Sole contraction

In a hoof with sole contraction the sole corium or large parts of the same are under permanent, unphysiological pressure.



Schematic of a hoof with full sole and long bars

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Sole contraction on the right side, left side is trimmed, maybe even a bit too thin, but hard to tell from this picture (supplied by johnthevet.com). You can see the various layers of the sole contraction. The first and second layer may well come off easily as "exfoliating sole".



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Left: Full sole contraction and high bars

Below: Heel view of the same hoof with full sole contraction



Note:
Sole contraction is always paired with other contractions



Causes for Sole Contraction

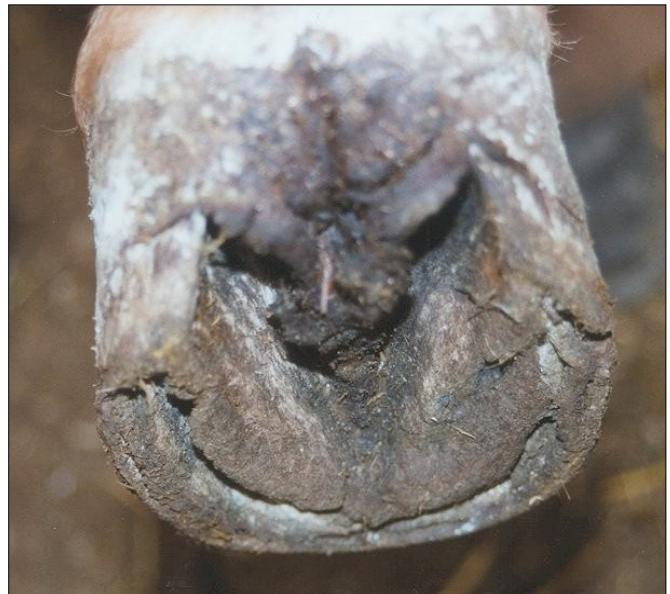
Too much horn left on the entire sole

Parts of the sole are too thick

The entire hoof is too long

Bars are too long

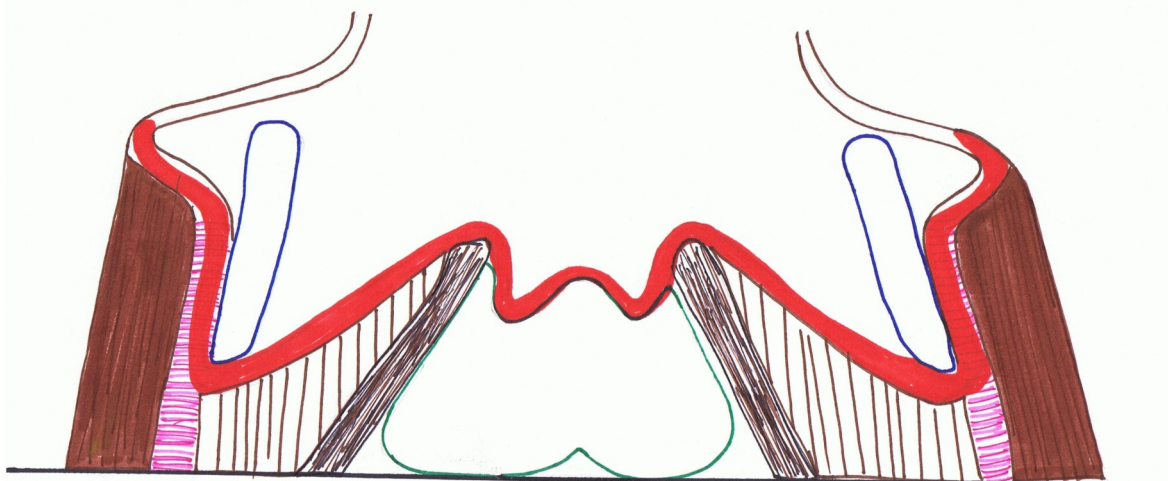
Shoeing



Trimming for Sole Contraction

There is much discussion about how and why to trim the sole in barefoot trim camps. Whenever you examine these theories, please keep the initial teachings in mind. The sole needs to be flexible enough to flex upon weight bearing. As the coffin bone descends within the hoof capsule, the sole needs to flex away from the pressure, thus avoiding bruising and enabling hoof mechanism. A thick sole does not allow for hoof mechanism but crushes the corium upon weight bearing.

To remove sole contraction, which is present with most all other contractions, you clean out the dirt line to the true juncture where the frog meets the sole. From there you trim a flat plane to the white line of the wall. This ensures in most cases an adequately flexible sole.



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The sole should be evenly thick between the frog and the wall. No bumps should be visible. If you leave the sole thicker towards the edge of the wall you still may get some hoof mechanism, but the sole will push in under the frog and that is potentially painful for the horse (and creates thrush).

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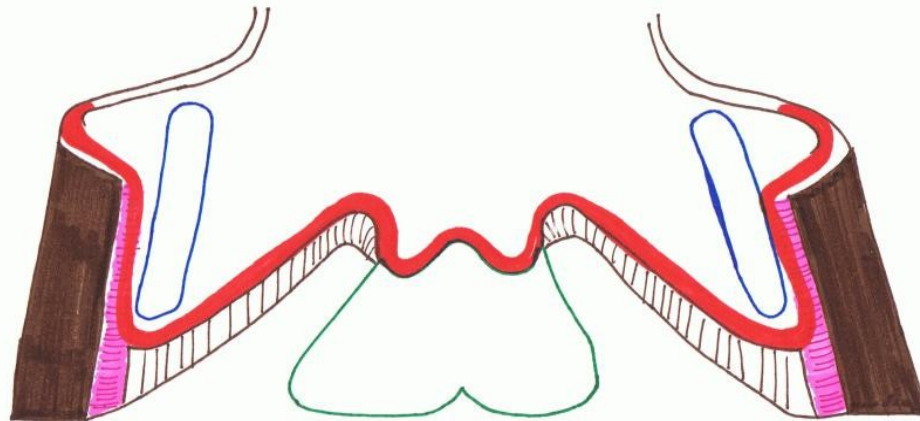
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Here (right) you have a picture with partially trimmed sole. The cracks show you that there is more sole to come off.

