# ABCs of Booting

**A**

## Appropriate boots and proper fit

Be sure to use the right boot for the job. Boots are used for therapy, performance riding, and pleasure riding. Most boots are sized differently depending on the style of boot and the boot company. If your hoof care provider is unable to properly fit your horse for boots, the boot manufacturing will have instructions on their website and is often available for free phone or email consultations. **Proper boot fit is imperative**.

**B**

## Back up boots

If booting 24/7 for therapeutic purposes, have 2-3 pairs of boots so that boots can be changed out and dried daily. Depending on the weather, the boots might need to be changed out twice in one day, first thing in the morning with a fresh, dry pair, and again in the evening. In good weather, and a dry environment, boot changes can usually happen once per day.

**C**

## Clean and dry

Boots should be clean and dry before use. Check the inside of the boot (especially the toe region where dirt tends to pile up) and use a hoof pick to scrape out dirt or grime. Use gold bond or baby powder on the heel bulb region of the boot gaiter to create a smooth area for the heel bulbs, and inside the boot to keep things dry during use. **Wet boots should not remain on the feet for extended periods**.

**D**

## Don't forget to check

Check the horse's heel bulbs for rubs. Rubs can happen due to improper fit or during 24/7 use of boots. If the heel bulbs have raised hair and pink or red skin on the heel bulbs, remove the boots and double check fit. If the fit is appropriate and boots are used 24/7, try using a soft sock over the foot by cutting out the toe of the sock and pulling it on. Use powder over the heel bulbs at every boot change.

**E**

## Examine pad inserts

Pads become compressed and lose efficacy over time and need to be replaced. When pads are compressed more than half the full thickness it's time for replacement. If using boots 24/7 be sure to label a left and right boot since the pads conform to the frog and each foot is a bit different.