



## Why Prepare the Horse for the Farrier?

**Expecting a horse to stand on three legs while a stranger handles him/her is a big ask for that horse. Some horses find it particularly stressful and/or difficult, especially if they have had previous bad experiences. It is not the farrier's responsibility to train your horse. Preparation:**

- ❖ helps to keep the experience more positive for the horse and alleviates anxiety about hoof handling
- ❖ keeps the farrier safe
- ❖ reduces likelihood that farrier will become frustrated with horse
- ❖ increases likelihood that farrier can do a good job
- ❖ saves time in the long term



## More About EBTA

EBTA aims to:

- ❖ Improve public knowledge and understanding of the physical and psychological well-being of equines
- ❖ Promote awareness of human behaviour and its impact on equine behaviour
- ❖ Bridge the gap between academic research and practical application
- ❖ Protect equine welfare whilst maintaining safety and achieving equestrian goals

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Equine Behaviour and  
Training Association  
<http://www.ebta.co.uk>

## In Advance...

Talk to the farrier and warn him/her your horse needs extra time and patience. Make sure your horse can be relaxed with, and tolerate:

- ❖ being caught
- ❖ being stroked along the back and shoulder
- ❖ being stroked down each leg
- ❖ light pressure applied to the back of the pastern
- ❖ the weight shifting so that the foot is nearly lifted
- ❖ the weight shifting and the foot lifted
- ❖ the foot lifted for a little longer
- ❖ the foot lifted long enough to pick the foot out
- ❖ the foot being picked out
- ❖ the foot being held up for longer
- ❖ the foot held alongside and touched with a rasp (or simulated with a ruler)
- ❖ the foot lifted towards the front
- ❖ general manipulation of the foot and leg without resistance or force
- ❖ being present on the yard while the farrier works with other horses



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\*<http://www.hartshorsemanship.com>

## On the Day...

- ❖ Ask the farrier to greet the horse quietly, rather than instantly getting on with the job
- ❖ Have another horse close by for company
- ❖ Have food available
- ❖ Make sure the horse has already had turn-out and is not overdue feed
- ❖ Ideally have the horse in a location with which he/she is most comfortable (field, stable or yard?) But discuss possibilities with farrier in advance
- ❖ Make sure the farrier is aware of any physical issues that cause the horse to struggle, e.g. size, injury, stiffness



## If things go wrong....

- ❖ Give horse lots of calming scratches
- ❖ Use food rewards as distraction (if safe to do so)
- ❖ Find palatable hay/haylage or lick
- ❖ Consider doing two feet today and saving the other two for another day
- ❖ Consider going barefoot so that hoofcare can take a more “little and often” approach
- ❖ Purchase hoof handling shaping plan from Ben Hart\*
- ❖ More detailed article by C. Bell: <https://summer2017.iaabcjournal.org/foot-hoof-care-behavior-modification/>

