

Hoof boots comparison & reviews

July 2025 - On Bare Hooves - Gwendolijn Schropp



If your horse needs some kind of protection during training, **hoof boots** are a great help! Nowadays there are many different brands, models and sizes so there is (almost) always something that is going to fit your horse's hooves. The great thing about boots is that you use them only when you need them, and the horse can go barefoot, and enjoy all the benefits that gives, the rest of his/her day.

I often get the question which boots I like, and why. I also often hear from horseowners who are new to having a barefoot horse, or new to needing boots, that is it quite confusing and difficult to decide what on earth you should buy. This is exactly why there is such a thing as a 'hoof boot fitter' ... :) Because it really depends! On hoof shape, comfort level of the horse, what kind of terrain and weather conditions and riding/training style the boots are for.

But I thought, I can write some things down from my own experience with my own horses as well as from my experience as a hoof boot fitter and trimmer. In this article I'll show you some common boots and give you my honest review about them, as a fitter and a rider myself.

First off: Equine Fusion.

Equine Fusion is a Norwegian brand that exists for quite a while and base all their boots on the same amazing thick rubber sole. All horses I have tried these on, LOVE the sole and are comfortable on every surface, nicely heel landing and soft in their faces and movements. The biggest downsides of all EF boots is that they are a bit clumpy and that they take longer to dry after you rinse them than many other boots.



Afbeelding 1: Equine Fusion Active Jogging



Afbeelding 2: Equine Fusion Trekking

I find the Active Jogging easiest to fit according to the size table and for reasonable 'normal' shaped hooves. All terrain ultra is better for hooves that are maybe a little lower/longer because the upper part is less 'stiff' (not that the AJ could be described as stiff, really, not like Cavallo for example). Trekking is the lightest in weight and fastest to dry, but I find there is a risk of getting sand/stones in through those holes as well as that they are slightly harder to fit on certain types of hooves (with big heel bulbs for example).

In my experience, EF boots are great to use when:

- transitioning to barefoot after being shod
- thin/sore soles, thin/flaky hoof wall, poor frog quality which prevents the barefoot horse from landing heel first
- rehab, where they need the boots 24/7, although there are downsides with having boots on 24/7 like the risk for wounds, it getting too stuffy inside, or too wet when in wet seasons
- when the hooves are not in their ideal shape yet, but good enough to start training and you need something temporary before fitting tighter 'sport' boots

Afbeelding 3: Equine Fusion (all terrain) Ultra



Next up: Flex boot

Flex is also Scandinavian, namely from Finland. They, too, have a rubber sole but it is much thinner than Equine Fusion's. These boots are light, easy to put on/take off, you can choose color of the gaiter and there are some options to adjust the back part to fit the hoof best and since a few years, also a different in models 'regular' and 'wide'. Regular fits hooves that are slightly longer than they are wide, and Wide fits round hooves with a slightly steeper hoof wall angle. Heel height is a little bit adjustable by changing the side straps or taking a larger strap and gaiter, and the 'ankle strap' can be made bigger or smaller as well to adjust thicker/thinner legs.



Afbeelding 4: Flex boot

In my experience, these boots are quite comfortable for horses that only need a little softness but could perhaps go barefoot on most grounds. It is possible to add an inlay sole for extra softness, which most horses like. They might wear faster than boots in other materials but this depends largely on the grounds you ride on, how often or long you ride, and how the horse moves. I've had Flex boots on Mango's 4 hooves and on Gimli's hind hooves (in the front he wanted thicker soles) for about 2 years before they got worn down too thin or I want to replace them for other reasons.



Afbeelding 6: Scoot boot



Afbeelding 5: Scoot Enduro/Adjust

Scoot boot & Scoot boot enduro/adjust

Scoot is somehow comparable to Flex when you look at sole thickness, but not in much else. The material is different (plastic instead of rubber), the fit is different, the straps are different on the horse's lower leg, and I experience the use of the Enduro as a little difficult to put on and take off especially when your hands are freezing...

However, the fit of the Enduro on Mango's hind hooves was much better than his old Flex boots. Enduro is great if your horse has slightly higher OR slightly lower heels than average, because the back part allows for a large range of heights. Mango's hinds are a little low and his heel bulbs are a little further back/bigger than would fit in average boots.

Another good thing with Scoot, both models, is that they allow for some flare of the hoof wall to the sides – not that you want flare on your hooves, but it means that the boot fits equally good in the beginning of the trim interval as near the end. For many other tight fitting boots, the owner needs to keep up and rasp the hoof wall in between or the boots might not sit perfectly and then a risk exists of you losing a boot, having more difficulty getting them on or off, or the horse getting rubbing sores.

Evo boot

Evo is a Spanish boot that is quite amazing for trimmers and fitters because it is possible to shape them and adjust them with many different techniques and for many different hoof shapes. They are supposed to sit extremely tight on the hooves, like a second skin, which means it could be tricky to put them on and take them off if either your hoof shape has changed or you have trouble with strength in your hands. There are tricks like leveraging the boot with a hoof pick to get the second heel in, or tapping the hoof on the ground to put the toe further into the boot, but if you want 'easy' I don't think these boots are for you.

When you've got a good fit, the boots are very durable and very comfortable for the horse. The design is on point with a flexible back part and a stiffer front part of the shell, just as the hoof itself has, so it allows for both hoof mechanism and stability. The back part of the boot can be mounted so it sits further back, or you could go up a size of the back part separately, in case of bigger heel bulbs or higher heels. You could even 'heat fit' or cut and melt any part of the boot to make it super specific for your horse's hooves (although, best leave that to a professional fitter).

And if your horse should need 'temporary permanent' protection, it is also possible to use the shell of the boot as a glueing shoe.



Afbeelding 8: Evo boot



Afbeelding 7: Evo with big winter studs

Ah, before I forget: **Winter situations.**

Evo is the first in this list of boots that has a sole that is steady and thick enough to be able to put 'broddar' in: big spikes for ice and packed snow. The others so far only could have 'dubbar', the little studs, which work in most cases but just not all of them, especially if you need speed or tight turns no matter what.

Floating boot

I'm new to Floating boot and have just bought my first pair to try on Gimli's front hooves. Floating comes from the same minds as Evo and has a similar setup with a back part you can have in several sizes, and no straps around the pastern. The shell looks similar in material and thickness as well and I know that you can heat-fit them just like you can Evo shells. They are a little cheaper than Evo (don't know why?). So let's test them and see how they perform!

Cavallo

Cavallo is a brand that makes bigger, clunkier boots with hard thick soles if you compare them to anything else, really. This makes them

well-suited for rough

terrains and sensitive

horses, and very durable as well. I'm a little bit familiar

with the model Trek, which I have seen working for

years and years on quiet a few horses. However, since

the top part is of a harder type of leather material, I've

also seen some horses getting rubbing sores on the heel

bulbs, especially in case of rehab where they are wearing

the boots out in the field. Since it is rehab, it might also

have been less-optimal hooves with a less-optimal fitting

in the boots which might well be the cause of the

rubbing.

Cavallo Trek is easy to measure for and fit since they sit

more loosely around the hoof. It is also a great

transition/rehab boot because it allows for insoles of

various thickness.



Afbeelding 9: Floating boot



Afbeelding 10: Cavallo Trek

And because the soles are so thick and firm, they can be 'broddad' with the big ice studs for extreme winter situations.

Conclusion

There are many more brands and models of boots but here you have a start on the ones that I am most familiar with.

I hope you found this overview useful and perhaps it helps you in making a choice in case you are looking for boots for your horse. I can recommend taking out a hoof boot fitter to help you find the right fit because it isn't always easy to just use a sizing table and not all hoof shapes will fit in all boot models. The right fit is really important for the comfort of your horse and the performance of both horse and boot.

Cheers, Gwen
