

Steps for Application Using Drywall Screws for Ground Control Horseshoes

Good for horses that are sensitive to nailing, or rear when being hammered. This is also a great method for a person who has difficulty hammering because of a disability, carpal tunnel, or a self-reliant horse-man or woman (like myself) who is looking for an easier method to apply the shoes other than nailing.

- **Trim the hoof** as you would to apply a horseshoe. File the toe area to match the shoe angle.
- **Use fine thread, dark (not shiny) dry wall screws**, the shiny ones are hardened and will break easier. Use between 1 1/4" to 1 5/8" long drywall screws. Wood screws are thick and do not have threads all the way to the head, so will NOT work.



- **Use a battery powered drill** with a Phillips head dry wall screw tip. Apply 4 screws per side - use a total of 8 screws per shoe. No predrilling is required. Line up the screw in the nail channel by the white line of the hoof and aim so that the screw exits the hoof wall about 1/4" or 1/2" from the bottom of the hoof. The screw **MUST** exit the hoof wall. Make sure you are using a long enough screw. Back out the screw if necessary. Throw away a screw that is hot.



Proper placement of the screw is crucial. *If you place the screw too far inside the hoof away from the whiteline, it will sore your horse. Too close to the edge and low will not be secure and will cause a crack in the hoof wall. I like to aim straight down at the white line. Sometimes I angle the screw to the outside of the hoof at the steeper parts toward the rear of the hoof. Use good judgement to get the placement correct. Take a deep breath and take your time.*

- **Nip off the end of the screw with a high leverage end cutter (I like the Knipex brand)** after the screws exit the hoof wall, close to the hoof. It is easier to apply a screw to each side first, then place the hoof on the ground to nip off the ends of the screws two at a time. Be careful, screw ends are sharp! You don't have to file or clinch.



Trim the shoe. Once the shoes are applied, use the hoof nippers to trim the back of the shoe and use a file around the edge of the shoe. Leave enough of the shoe sticking out around the edges and at the back for support. Trimming too much off the sides will weaken the shoe.

To remove shoes, use a horseshoe nail to clean the dirt out of the screw heads to get a good connection with the Phillips head bit. If the Phillips head spins and doesn't twist the screw out, then do some better cleaning with the horseshoe nail to dig out the dirt - you don't want to strip the head of the screw. It is better to spend more time cleaning, than to strip a screw head.

Reset shoes at about 5 or 6 weeks before any screws loosen or break. If a screw breaks, use pliers or vice grips to grab the screw part and twist it around to back it out of the hoof. Sometimes the end of a screw that remains in the hoof can be trimmed away if this happens.

I have been using this method myself for several years. It has made me self-reliant, saves money since I can do it myself, and my horse is happier too. It is still hard work and not for the lazy or weak. By the end of shoeing my horse, I am sweaty, and my back, legs and hands are sore. Farriers deserve getting the prices that they charge. It is hard work! But if you feel you are up to the challenge, apply the Ground Control Horseshoes with drywall screws. — Kristy Watson