

# Hoof blocking: what you need to know

 [diamondhoofcare.com/hoof-blocking/](https://diamondhoofcare.com/hoof-blocking/)

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Apart from being a scourge for cows, lameness can cause a great economic loss for you, the farmer. Hoof blocking generally is an effective method of hoof care. You should keep in mind, however, that it isn't perfect.

Whenever lameness rears its ugly head, the herdsman or trimmer will choose to place a block under the healthy claw to take the weight off of the sore one. In this way, the latter gets a period of rest, and you eliminate the reason for it being lame. But you should remove the block when the sore claw heals and resumes working properly.

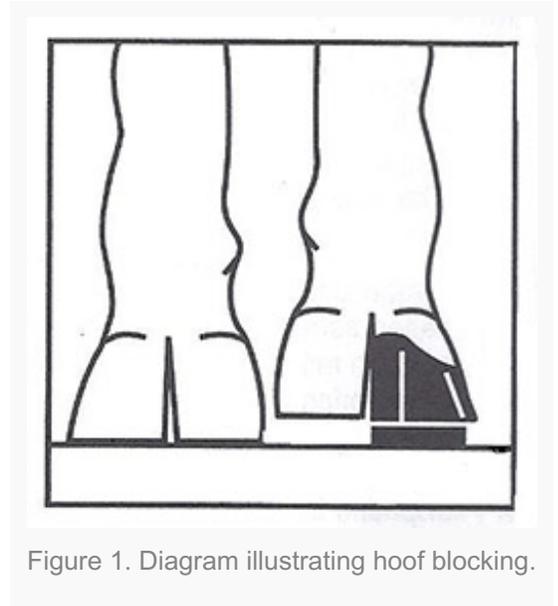


Figure 1. Diagram illustrating hoof blocking.

Hoof blocking is usually a seamless process that results in healthy hooves and happy cows. Still, there are times when things don't exactly go as planned. If you've blocked a hoof or even multiple ones and it doesn't seem to be taking care of the problem, one of two things could have gone wrong with your hoof care efforts.

## 1. Escalated inflammation in the hoof

It could be that the problem in the sore claw escalated and the hoof became further inflamed in the joints above both claws, meaning more into the foot. This condition defeats the purpose of using a block. In fact, the block would make it worse if you apply it at this stage. In this case, it is advisable to remove the block and find other methods of hoof care. Besides re-evaluating to determine the reason for lameness, you should also use a hoof bag or perhaps antibiotics to control the lameness at this point. You may also need the help and advice of a veterinarian in this situation.

## 2. Unforeseen problems in the blocked claw

The other possibility is that the initial sore claw is healing, which is great, but the blocked claw is not as healthy as you originally thought. If so, it is having difficulty carrying all the weight. These things happen and are hard to predict. In this case, you have no other choice but to remove the block. You need to treat the problem developing under it, hoping

that the freshly healed claw can again handle the extra weight. It certainly makes hoof care more complicated and challenging, but the additional efforts will pay off.

## **Other remarks about hoof blocking**

I suggest you leave the block on for no more than 6 to 8 weeks. Check it regularly to evaluate performance. A block is a great hoof care tool, but you should only use it for a limited period. Take it off when it has done its job to eliminate the risk of over-burdening the healthy claw.

Hoof care is an ongoing process and never really stops demanding your attention. And as hard as you may try, you can't always prevent lameness. Sometimes it just sneaks up on you. Although blocking is effective in most cases, it won't solve the problem on occasion. You will always need to narrow down the root cause to find the best hoof care method. So, remember to take it one day at a time and keep an eye on your cows' hooves. This will ensure everything goes as smoothly as possible. Besides, it will save you both time and money.

On another note, I suggest you also take a look at the [Demotec Easy Bloc](#). This kit is an innovative system that is designed to minimize lameness. It also provides a fast, easy-to-use and safe "cure" at a very reasonable cost.