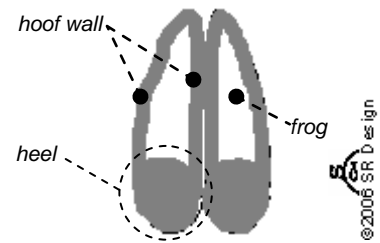
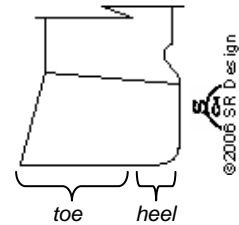




HOOF TRIMMING

Regular hoof trimming is an essential part of caring for your goat. Long, overgrown hooves lead to breakdown of the pasterns and lameness, which in turn causes the goat to become unable to access forage, feed, or even water. Here are some pointers that we have compiled for you to remember when caring for your goats' hooves:

- Trim hooves every 4-6 weeks.
- The proper shape for a hoof is closely identical to this drawing: Note that the shape of the hoof is almost square, with the toe being slightly longer than the heel.
- When you trim, you should remove mostly toe, only giving the softer heel a quick nip to keep it from overgrowing, flopping over towards the toe, and creating a pocket.
- Most of your trimming is going to be removing the hoof wall. Remove hoof wall first, until it is slightly below the frog (the fleshy inside part of the hoof), then trim away the frog until it is slightly below the hoof wall. Make sure that the frog is not taking the goat's weight, as this will cause very sore feet.



NOTE: Stop as soon as the frog begins to become pinkish, as you will cause bleeding if you continue trimming much farther down. Although you shouldn't become hysterical if you cause slight bleeding, it does open an avenue for infection to the plethora of organisms lurking in the soil.

- Once you think you have removed enough excess hoof, view the hoof from the side to make sure that the hoof is even, as unevenness will put undue pressure on one digit, causing lameness.
- Finally, set the hoof down on a flat surface, and check to make sure the hoof is square with the ground, not 'rockered', or curved (this is common, since it is natural to take more off the very end of the toe than the middle).

Small 'hoof rot' shears are preferred for hoof trimming goats. We prefer Burgon & Ball hoof rot shears, available at many feed stores, but have also had good success with the orange hoof shears available through Hoegger's or Caprine Supply.

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