

# BACK TO BASICS—

## USING A RASP

by Robert Peacock

**T**he rasp, a 14-inch piece of metal, is the most used cutting tool in the farrier's box. Here are some useful tips for using it with ease and accuracy.

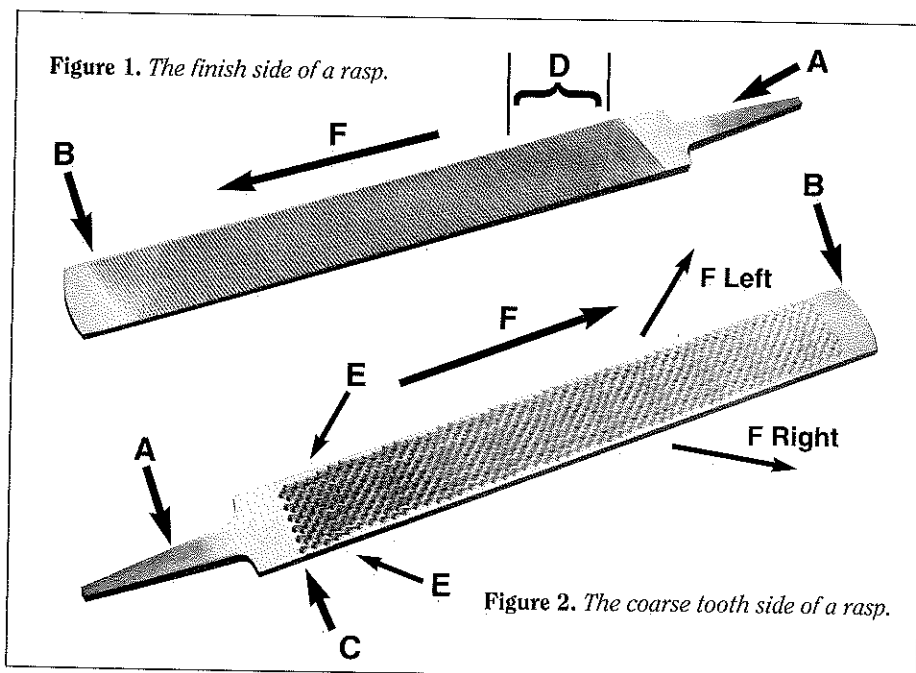
To understand how to use it, one must understand how the rasp is constructed for cutting. Most horse rasps have a coarse tooth (rasp) side (Figure 2) and a finish (file) side

(Figure 1). The tang, or pointed end (A), accommodates a handle, and the opposite, or butt, end (B) is rounded or flat. The handled tang is used to *push* the rasp; the butt end is used to *guide* or *pull* the rasp.

On the file (finish) side, cuts are made in opposite directions to get a cutting edge (D). High-tech precision machinery is used to get a particular pattern. Keeping this pattern in mind is helpful when pushing and pulling a rasp across a horse's hoof. The hoof is addressed by sections—the heel, the quarters, and the toe.

The coarse tooth (rasp) side is also cut in a unique pattern (C). One row of teeth is offset by the next row. There are generally six to eight teeth in a row. The teeth form rows straight across the rasp (C) and also diagonally across the rasp (E).

If the rasp is used keeping these patterns in mind, more accurate work can be done quickly and easily. A rasp pattern is like the old kitchen graters used for cutting slaw. An easy



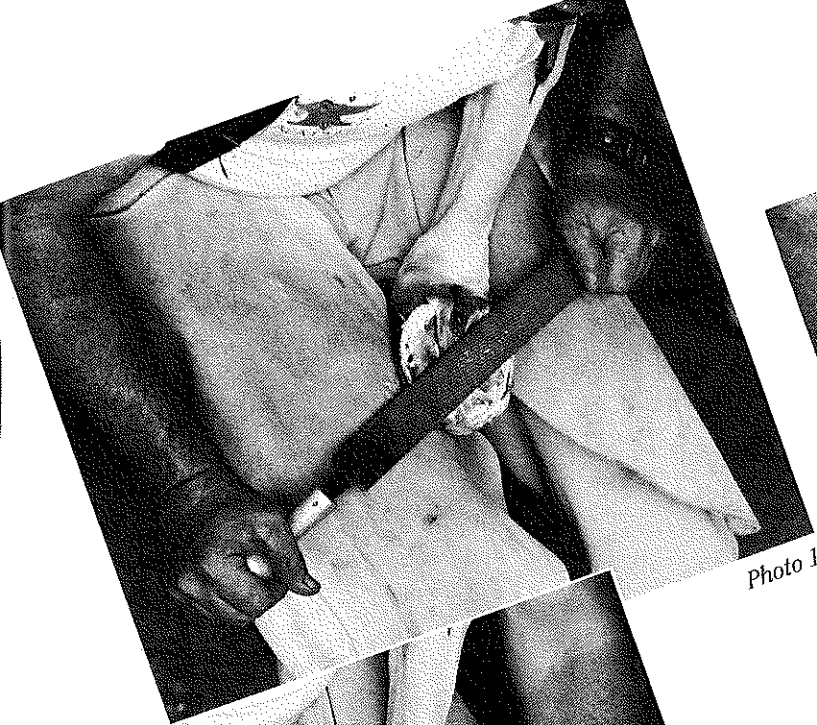


Photo 1.

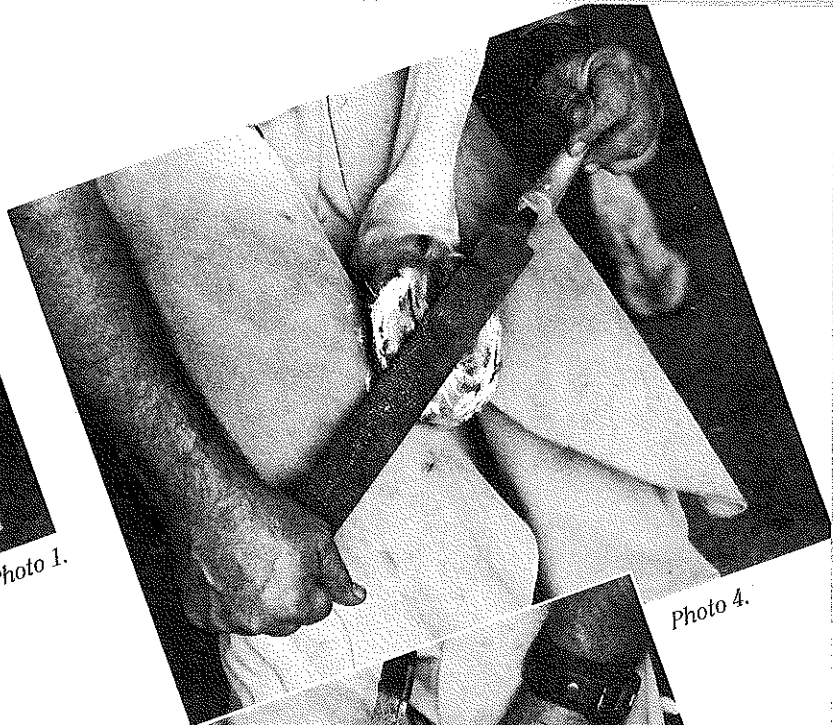


Photo 4.

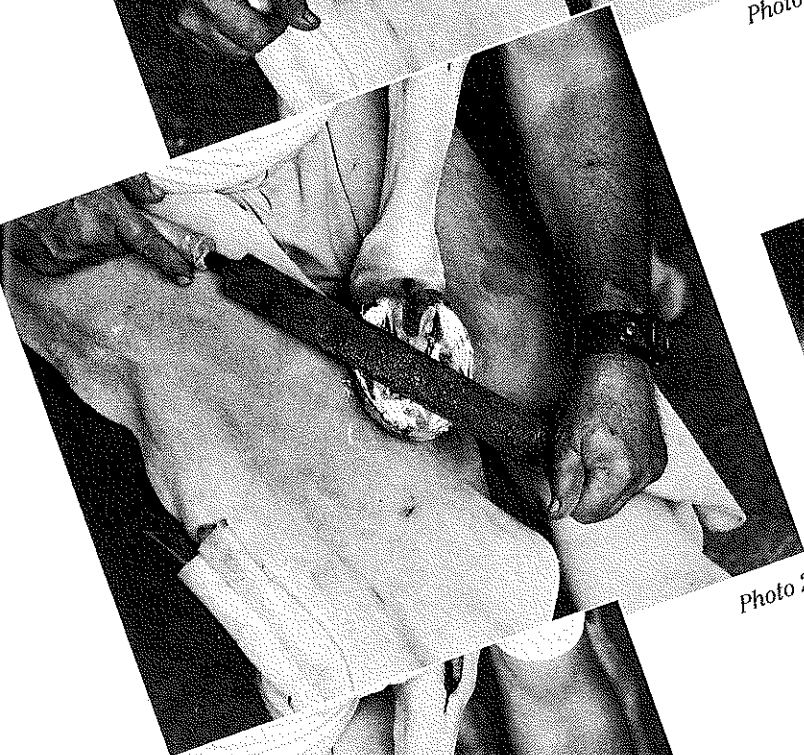


Photo 2.

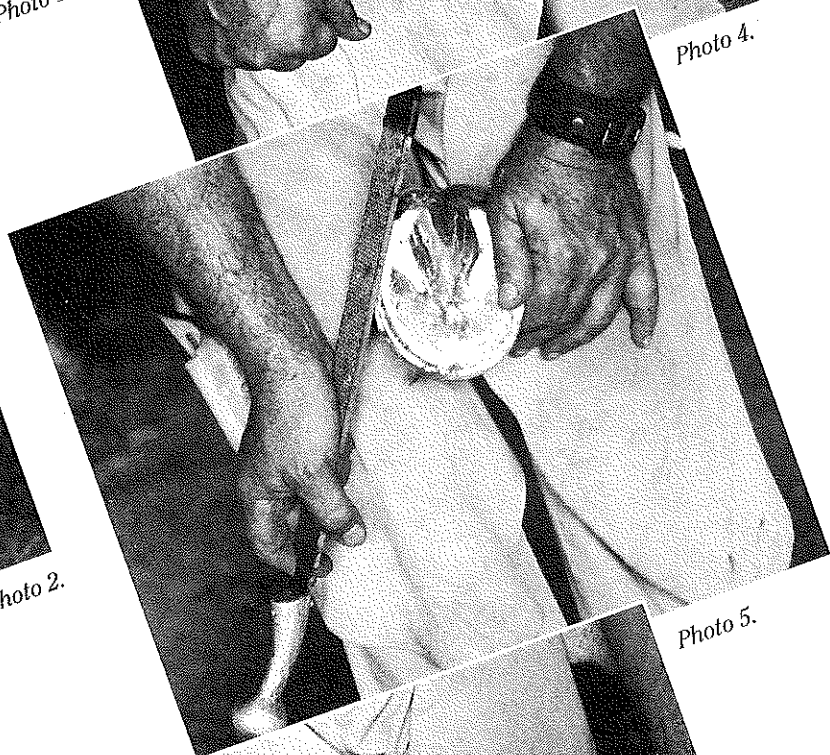


Photo 5.



Photo 3.

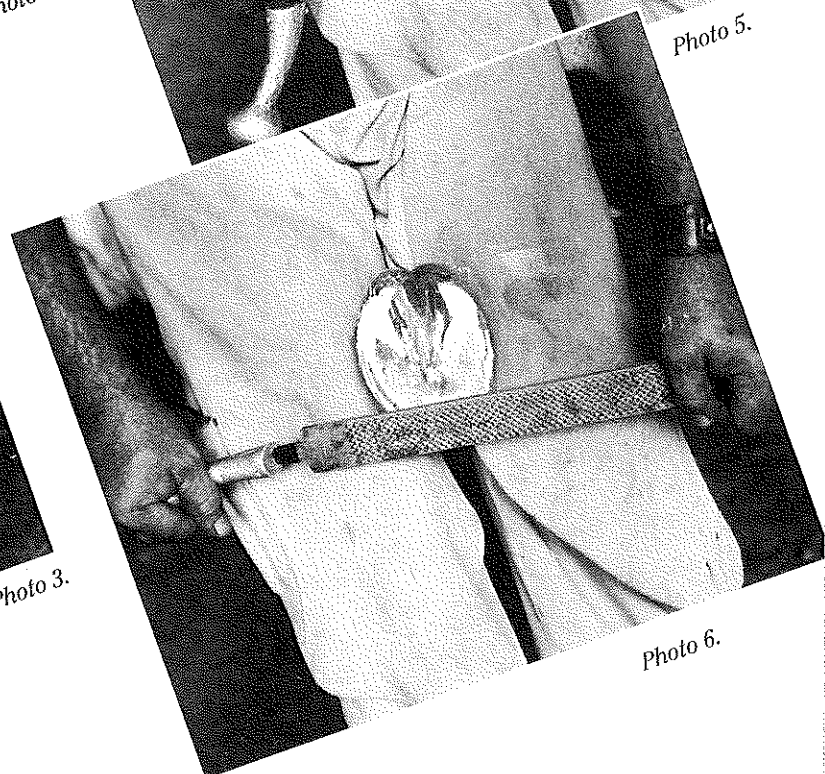


Photo 6.

## Using a Rasp

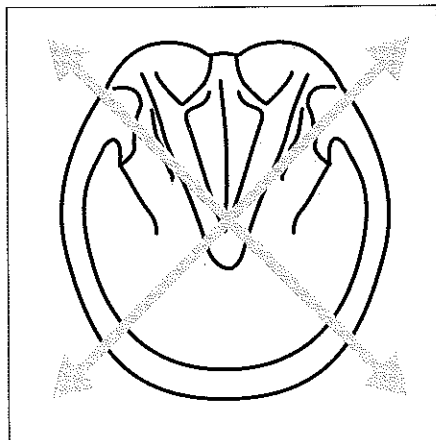


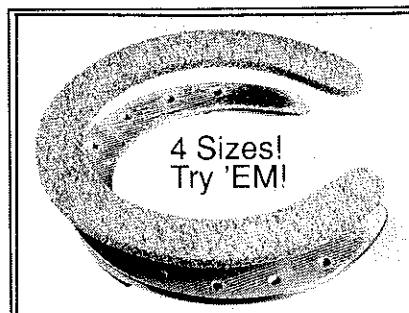
Figure 3. The four-way pattern.

way to use a rasp is left to right straight across the hoof (Photo 1), but it is also an easy way to get into trouble (as in cutting down the quarters, etc.). Some farriers one-hand rasp (Photo 2) to clean up hoof edges.

The system I have found most efficient involves a four-way pattern (Figure 3). Always push with the handle end and pull and guide with the butt end, as shown in Photos 3-6. Notice this pattern stays away from the quarters. By moving the butt end of the rasp in the semicircu-

lar motion, pivoting off the handle, you will find it easier to cut with any rasp. As with a saw blade, the rasp only cuts in one direction (F). With one extra cut left (F left) and right (F right) on the coarse tooth side, you can use this side as a grater. Move the rasp left to right, pushing and pulling in a semicircle with a lifting, floating action.

These tips should give anyone better results in a short period of time. The rasp is a most important part of shoeing a horse—learn how to use it correctly. ■



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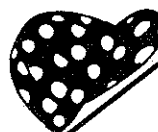
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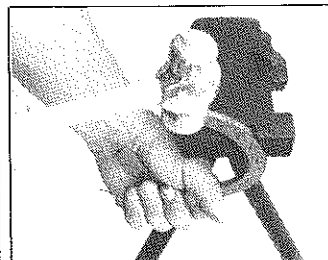
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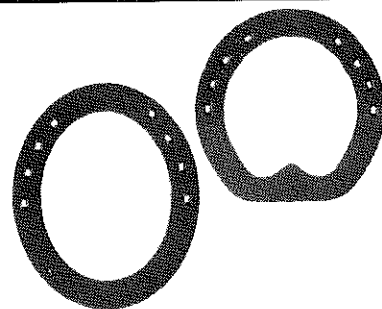
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