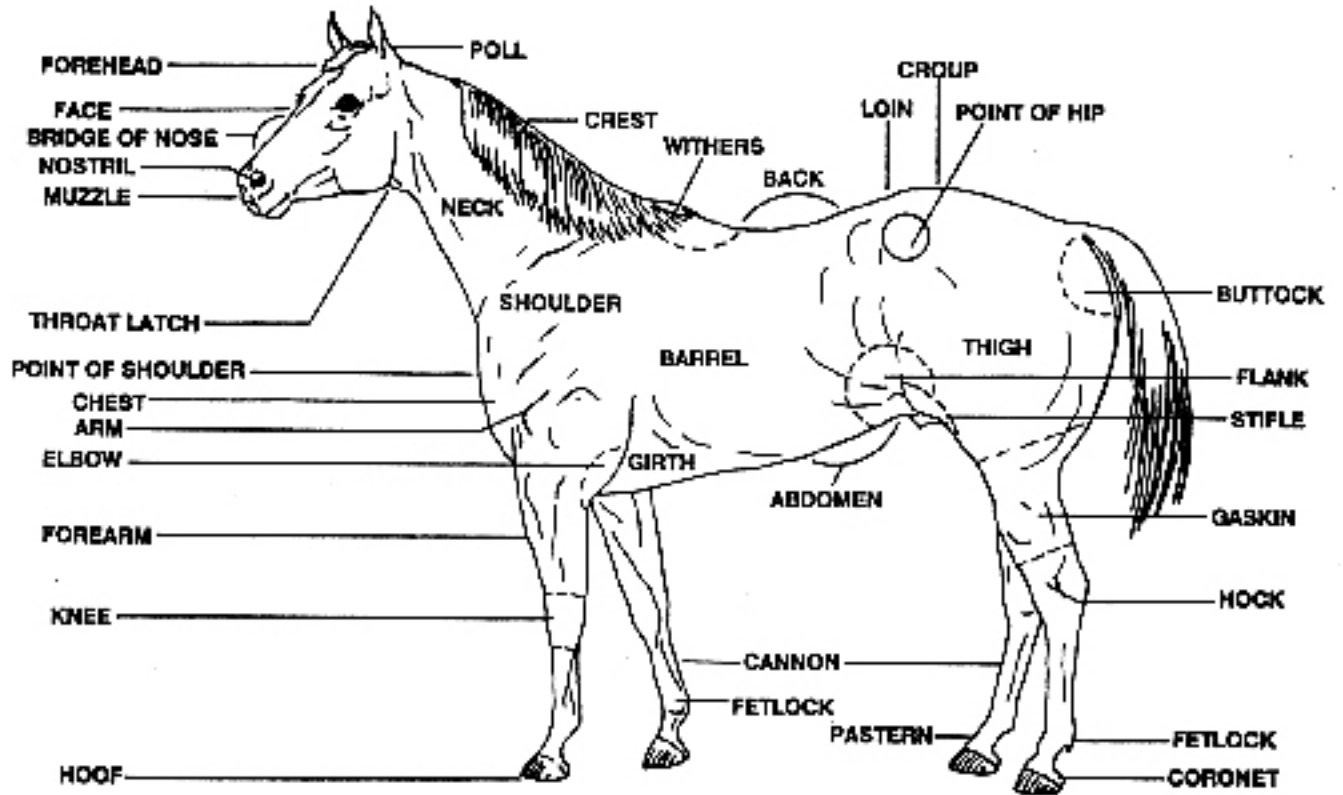


Judging Horses

Parts of the Horse



Colours

Horses come in many colours. Some of the colours of horses and their corresponding descriptions are as follows:

Colour	Description
Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body colour ranges from tan, through red, to reddish-brown. • All points are black, including muzzle. • Lower legs are usually black.
Black	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body colour is true black without any light areas. • Mane and tail are black.
Brown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body colour is brown or black with light areas at the muzzle, eyes, flank and inside the upper legs. • Mane and tail are black. • Usually black on lower legs.
Chestnut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body colour is dark red or reddish-brown. • Mane and tail are usually the same colour as the body, but may be flaxen.
Sorrel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body colour is reddish or copper-red. • Mane and tail are usually the same colour as the body, but may be flaxen. • Sorrel and Chestnut are often intermixed.
White	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A true white horse is born white and remains white throughout its life. • A white horse has snow white hair, pink skin and normally has brown eyes.
Dun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body colour is yellowish, brownish-red or gold. • Mane and tail may be black, brown, red, yellow, white, or mixed. • Has dorsal stripe down the spine, and/or zebra stripes on the legs, and/or transverse stripes over the withers.
Buckskin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A form of dun with body colour yellowish or gold. • Mane and tail are black or mixed. • Other markings can be the same as the dun but most have black on the lower legs and ear tips.
Palomino	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body colour is a golden yellow. • Mane and tail are white.
Grey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixture of white and black hairs. • Usually born solid coloured or almost solid coloured and becomes lighter with age.
Roan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any coat colour except black mixed with white hairs. • Present at birth and does not change as the horse ages.

Balance

Definitions

Balance

- All of the parts of the body are in correct proportion to each other, resulting in a pleasing appearance.

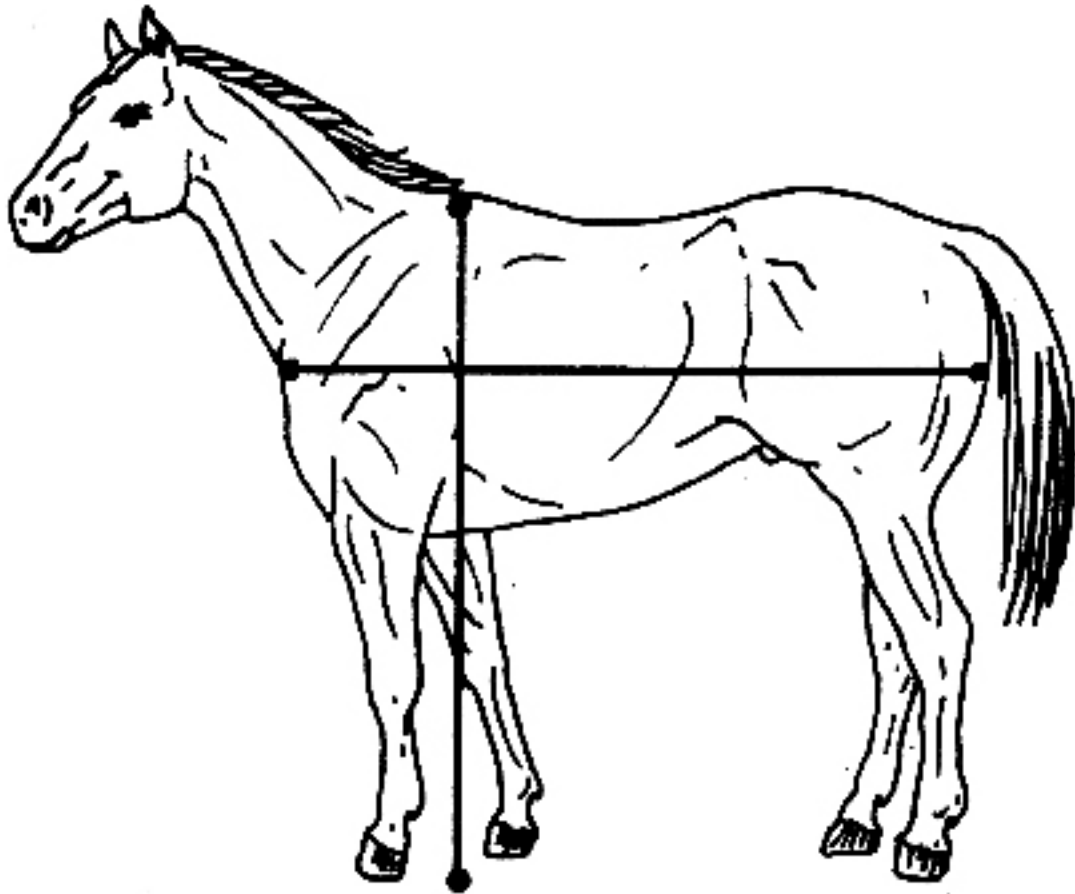
Symmetry

- When viewing the horse from the front and rear, divide the horse in half down the spinal column.
- Each half should be a "mirror image" of the other.

Methods of Determining Balance

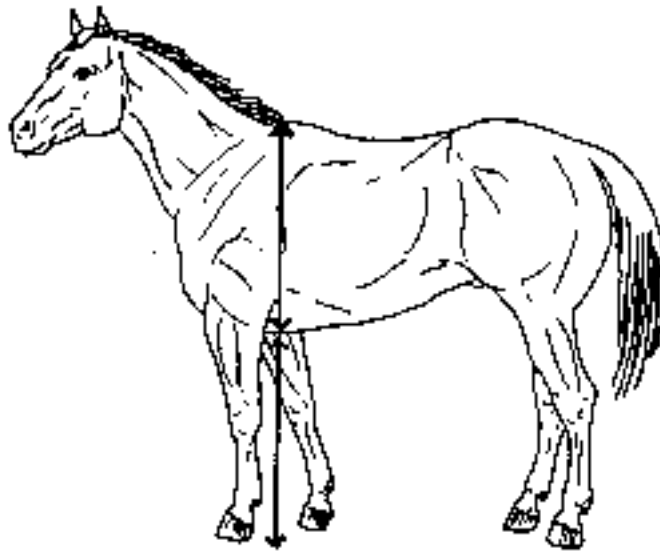
1. Length = Height

The length of the horse from the point of shoulder to the point of buttock should be equal to the height of the horse from the top of the withers to the ground.



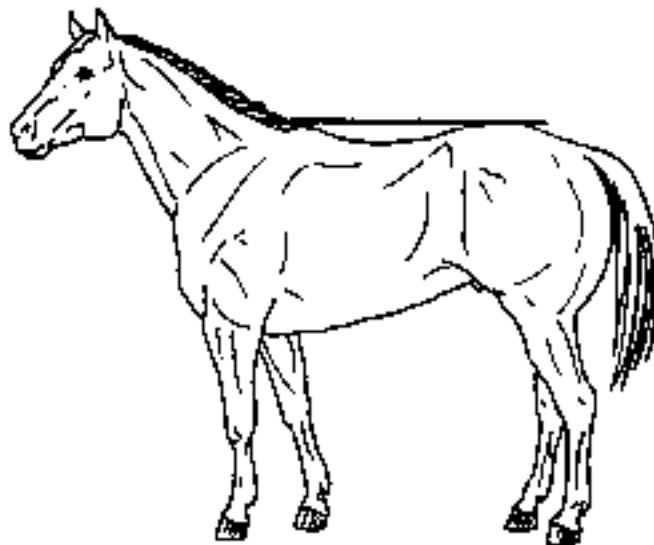
2. Length of Foreleg = Depth of Heartgirth

The length of the foreleg from the ground to the elbow should be equal to the depth of the heartgirth from the elbow to the top of the withers.



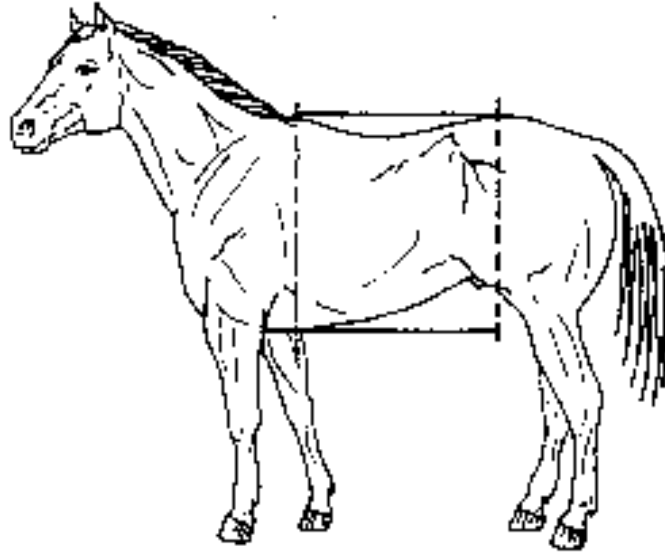
3. Levelness of Topline

The point of the croup should be at the same height as the top of the withers.



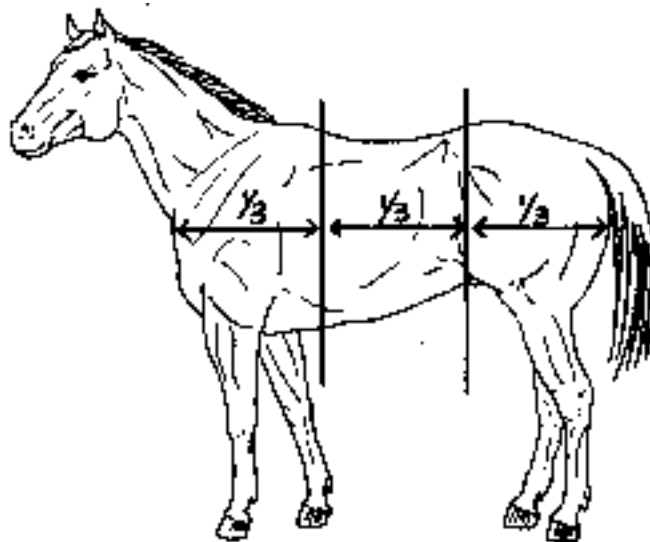
4. Top to Bottom Line Ratio

The well balanced horse has a shorter top line (from the point of the withers to the point of the hip) in comparison to a longer bottom line (from the point of the elbow to the stifle).



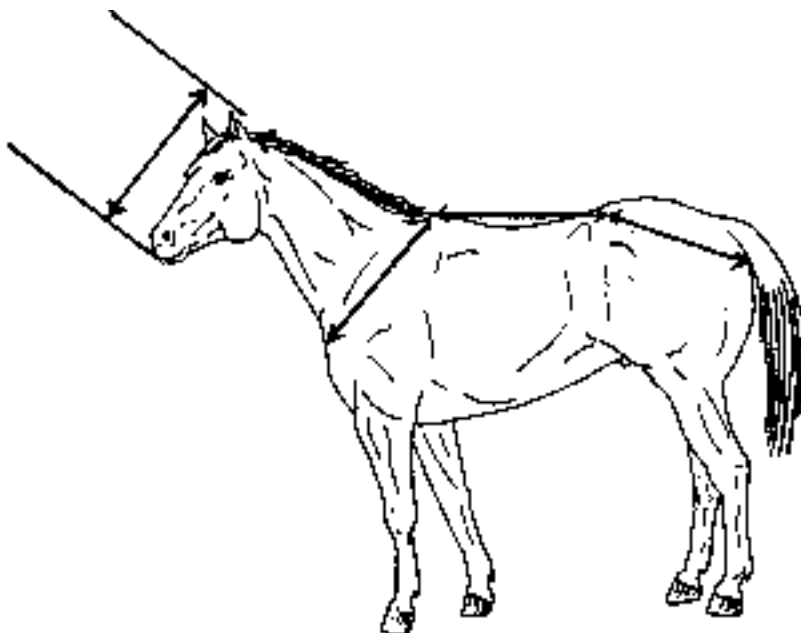
5. Divide the Horse in Thirds

Divide the horse into thirds by dropping lines down from the top of the withers and the point of the hip. The length of each of these three segments should be the same.



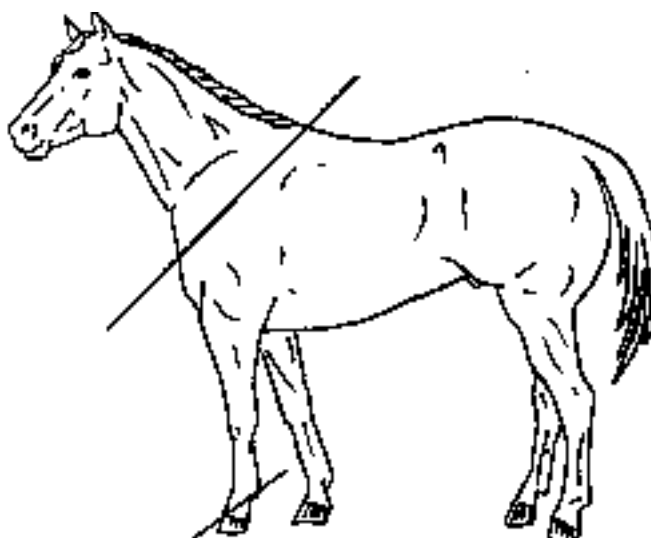
6. Equal Lengths

In the well balanced horse, the head, neck, shoulder, topline and hip lengths should be approximately equal.



7. Parallel

In the well-balanced horse, the slope of the pastern and the slope from the point of shoulder to withers should be parallel. They should both have a slope of approximately 45°.



Muscling

What is muscling?

Muscle is the tissue which contracts and relaxes to cause your horse to move. Muscling refers to how well you can see the length, definition and volume of muscling in your horse.

Length

- Long, smooth muscles are more desirable than short, bunched muscles. Long muscles give the horse a longer stride and more endurance. Bunched muscles tire more quickly and give your horse less endurance.

Definition

- You can easily see the outline or definition of each muscle beneath the skin of your horse.

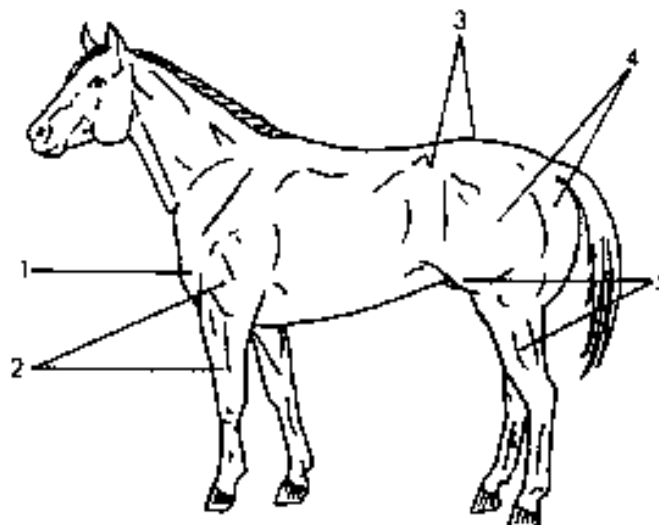
Volume

- This is the amount of muscle. The greater the volume or amount of muscle, the greater the strength of the horse.

Where do you look for muscling?

Evaluate the amount of muscling and determine if it is desirable. To find the amount of muscling on your horse, look in these areas:

1. Chest
2. Shoulder, arm and forearm
3. Loin and croup
4. Buttock and thigh
5. Stifle and gaskin



How does muscling differ from one horse to the next?

All horses fit into one of the five following body types. Each of these types has specific characteristics which separate it from the next body type.

Draft Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clydesdale, Shire, Belgian, Percheron, etc. • Heavily muscled, large framed, large boned. • Used primarily for plowing, pulling, driving and other hard work.
Stock Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter horse, Paint, Appaloosa, etc. • Well-muscled, deep bodied. • Center of gravity is close to the ground. • Used primarily for short distance racing, roping, reining, cutting, pleasure and gymkhana events.
Saddle (Gaited) Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arabian, Morgan, Saddlebred, etc. • Longer muscled, longer neck and body. • More refinement, higher set arching neck, higher tail carriage, often more animated movement. • Used primarily for pleasure, park and driving.
Hunter Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoroughbred, Warmbloods, etc. • Larger, longer bodies, deeper hearted, longer muscled. • Used primarily for long distance racing, jumping, cross-country, 3-day eventing, dressage and pleasure.
Pony Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh, Shetland Pony, etc. • Usually 14.2 hands or less, usually resemble stock type or saddle type breeds, generally shorter neck and body. • Used primarily for children's mounts and driving.

Quality and Refinement

Refinement is a general lack of coarseness.

The factors closely associated with quality and refinement are:

- a. a refinement of body parts - the horse should be smooth and clean-cut, not coarse
- b. tendons and joints should be well-defined, not fleshy
- c. short, shiny hair coat
- d. tight, thin skin
- e. hard, smooth, durable hooves
- f. obvious sex character

Sex Character

Stallions

- should look masculine.
- when compared to geldings and mares, stallions should show:
 - heavier, more powerful muscling
 - a larger and broader head
 - a larger muzzle and jaw
 - a thicker more muscular neck
 - more substance for larger bone.

Mares

- should look feminine.
- compared to stallions and geldings, mares should show more refinement about the head and neck.
- compared to stallions, mares are not as heavily muscled and have less substance of bone.

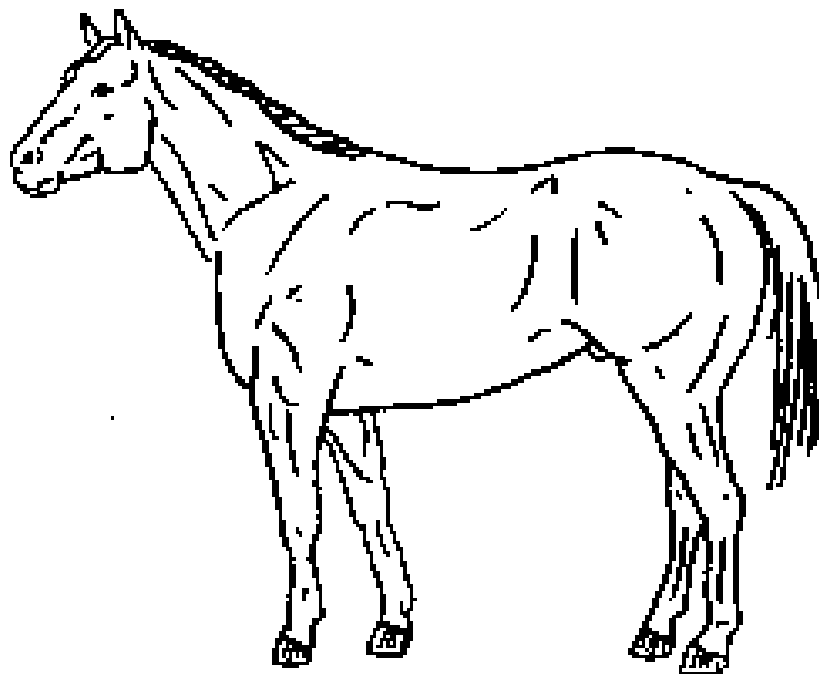
Geldings

- should look more masculine than mares, but much less masculine than the stallion.
- the volume of muscling and substance of bone in a gelding will be about the same as in the mare.

Note: a lack of masculinity in the stallion or a lack of femininity in the mare may indicate a reduced ability to reproduce.

The Ideal Horse

The ideal horse has specific characteristics. You will find the following characteristics in the conformation of the ideal horse. Work through these characteristics to learn more about what the ideal horse looks like.



ideal

The Forelimbs

The Forelimbs	
Side View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A line dropped perpendicular to the ground, or a plumb line, should pass through the center of the knee, cannon and fetlock, and touch the back of the heel.
Front View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plumb line dropped from the point of the shoulder should pass through the center of the forearm, knee, cannon, fetlock, pastern and hoof. • The knees and toes should point straight forward. • The feet should be as far apart on the ground as the limbs are at the point of the shoulder.