

CONFORMATION STUDY GUIDE

Breed Character

Each breed has characteristics that make it stand out and be recognizable compared to other breeds. Each breed was raised and bred for a specific reason. For example, the Quarter Horse was raised to sprint a quarter mile. For this short run the horses need a lot of power but only for a short period of time. The Quarter Horse then developed to have a large quantity of short “bunchy” muscle allowing them great power for a short period of time, while the Thoroughbred was bred to run long distances and reflected by their long smooth muscle.

Sex Character

It is important to identify differences between the sexes of horses. Stallions will have a masculine look like a prominence in their jaw and heavier muscling. Mares should look more refined and feminine. Their necks should be cleaner with more refined muscling. Geldings will fit someplace in the middle. They should look like males but should have more refinement than a stallion would.

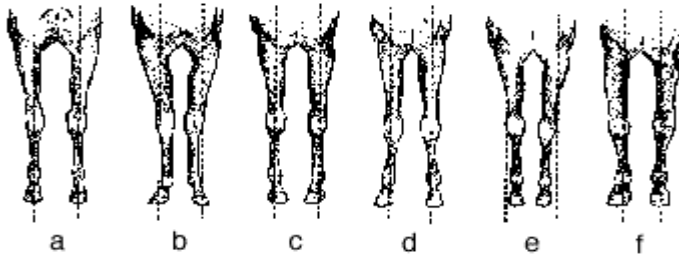
Muscling



**Well muscled
Quarter Horse**

Muscling is very important in all horses. The horse's job and the amount of muscle in proportion to the body are two key factors when evaluating muscle. A correct horse has uniform muscle throughout its body. Breed plays a strong role in the type and quantity of muscle that a horse should have. Horses such as the Quarter Horse, Appaloosa and Paint are known for their “short” and “bunchy” muscling while the Thoroughbred needs long lean muscle to run long distances. Arabian horses will not carry near the same amount of muscle as stock type horses.

Stance & Conformational Defects



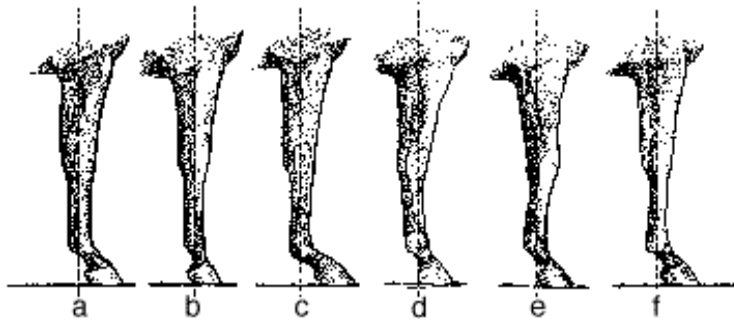
Courtesy of Appaloosa Horse Club

Front Leg Stance & Problem

- A. Straight legs, good front.
- B. Splay-footed.
- C. Pigeon-toed.
- D. Knock-kneed, narrow front, base wide.
- E. Base-narrow.
- F. Bow-kneed.

Front leg – side view

- A. Correct, good bone.
- B. Pastern too straight.
- C. Pastern too long and flat, angle different than foot, "coon-footed."
- D. Calf-kneed, short, straight pastern.
- E. Buck-kneed or over on the knee.
- F. "Tied in" or fine bone below the knee.

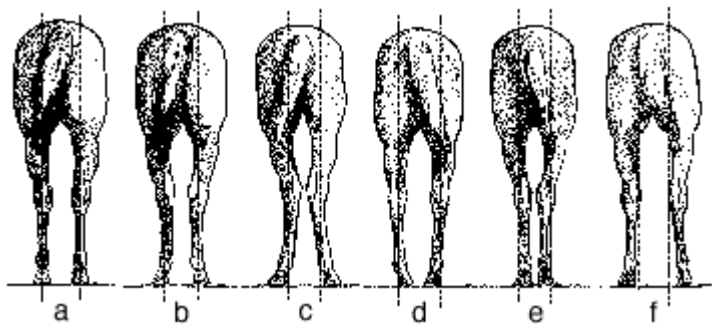


Courtesy of Appaloosa Horse Club

In horses a correct leg set implies "a leg under each corner of the body." A horse's front leg should be bisected by a straight line from the point of the shoulder, through the center of the knee, then the cannon bone to the ankle and hoof.

The pasterns should slope at an angle of 45 degrees to the ground. The hind leg also creates the straight-line effect. This line bisects at the point of the buttock traveling the center of the thigh, gaskin, hock, cannon, fetlock, pastern and hoof. It is important to keep in mind that correct leg position can't be achieved with crooked bones. A horse that stands correctly will almost always move correctly.

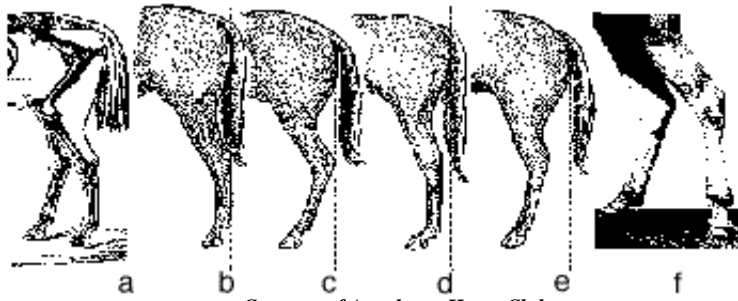
Splayed feet and pigeon toes are quite common. A minor twist will not affect the horses' motion significantly. The degree of the problem will affect the degree it will affect the horse. Knock knees, bowed knees and base-narrow defects are less common but may cause great problems. Calf knees are common in horses and mainly detract from appearance, whereas buck knees are most common in jumpers. Most horses, especially draft breeds display cow hocks to a degree. Some horse owners prefer that hocks point slightly toward each other with the feet pointing slightly outward. This is insurance against wide hocks or bandy legs. Sickie hocks are quite common and are serious because of the stress placed on the hocks in performance and can cause many different unsoundnesses.



Courtesy of Appaloosa Horse Club

Hind Leg Stance & Problem

- A. Straight legs.
- B. Slightly cow-hocked.
- C. Extremely cow-hocked, splay-footed.
- D. Bow-legged or bandy-legged or "too wide," pigeon toed.
- E. Base-narrow or stands close.
- F. Base-wide or stands wide.



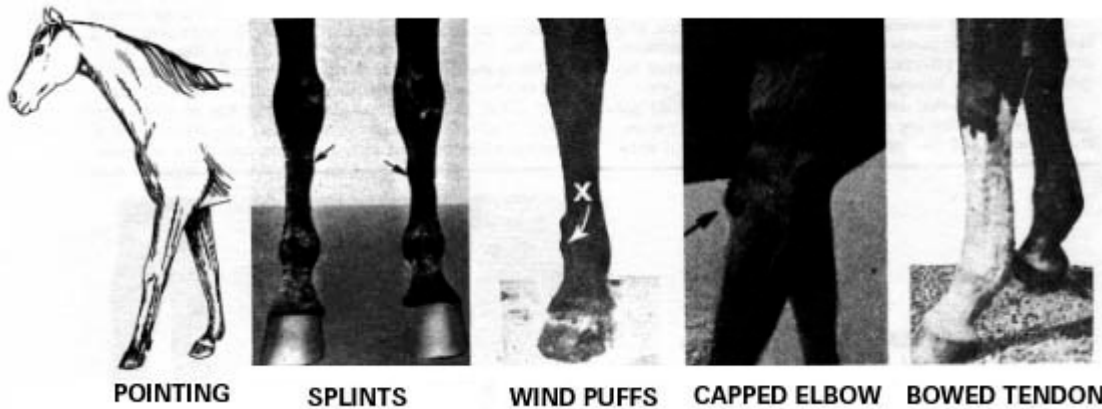
Courtesy of Appaloosa Horse Club

Hind Leg – Side View

- A. Correct skeletal structure.
- B. Correct leg set.
- C. Sickle-hocked or too much set.
- D. Post-legged or too straight, "coon-footed."
- E. Camped under or stands under.
- F. Defects of this magnitude should not be propagated.

Unsoundness and Blemishes

An unsoundness is any defect in form or function that interferes with the usefulness of the horse. Unsoundnesses that result from a conformation problem are the most serious because they can be congenital. These conformational unsoundnesses can include conformational faults in the animal's legs, feet, eyes, health, and reproductive functions. It is important to also note that soundness can also be relative. "Working soundness" and "breeding soundness" are different. An animal that is sound for one purpose may be unsound for another. A blemish is an acquired physical defect that does not interfere with the horse's usefulness but may affect its value. For example, a capped elbow, a soft flabby swelling on the point of the elbow is not attractive but doesn't affect the horses' ability to perform.



POINTING

SPLINTS

WIND PUFFS

CAPPED ELBOW

BOWED TENDON

Unsoundnesses and blemishes of the front legs

Pointing - Refers to a state of rest with one foot positioned about 10 to 12 inches ahead of the other in an effort to reduce weight on the affected side.

Splints – These are bony deposits that appear on the upper inside border of the front cannon.

Wind Puffs - Small swellings or blemishes around the ankles and lower cannons are common to horses that are used heavily or trailer a lot, or to older animals.

Capped elbow – Also known as shoe boil, is a blemish at the point of the elbow. It is usually caused by injury from the shoe when the front leg is folded under the body while the horse is lying down.

Bowed tendons – Commonly affects the superficial flexor tendon, deep flexor tendon and suspensory ligament in one or both front legs. Predisposing causes are severe strain, wear and tear with age and relatively small tendons attached to light, round bone. Bowed tendons usually cause severe unsoundness in the horse.

Unsoundnesses and blemishes of the hind legs

Bone Spavin-A bony enlargement at the base and inside back border of the hock.

Bog Spavin- Bog spavins are soft swellings on the inside-front area of the hocks.

Curb- Shown as swellings on the back border of the base of the hock.

Capped Hock- A thickening of the skin or large callus at the point of the hock.

Stringhalt- This is a nervous system problem resulting in spasmodic flexion of one or both hocks.

Stifled- When the patella of the stifle joint is displaced; can be inward or outward.

Cocked-Ankle- An inflammation or shortening of the tendons and a subsequent forward position of the ankle joints.



BONE SPAVIN



BOG SPAVIN



CURB



CAPPED HOCK



STRINGHALT



STIFLED



COCKED-ANKLE



SIDEBONE



RINGBONE



FOUNDER



CONTRACTED FOOT

Unsoundnesses and blemishes of the feet

Sidebone- On each side of the heel extending above the hoof are elastic cartilages just under the skin that serve as part of the shock-absorbing mechanism. Sidebone is caused when this ossifies.

Ringbone- A bony deposit usually appears just above the coronary band.

Founder- An inflammation of the sensitive laminae, which attach the hoof to the fleshy portion of the foot.

Navicular Disease – This is an inflammation of navicular bone and bursa.

Contracted Foot – Heel region narrower than normal, small frog, concave dished sole

All photos Courtesy of Appaloosa Horse Club

Way of Going

Ideal

A horse's gait is judged on length, height, spring of step, promptness, power, balance, directness, and regularity.

Flawed

There are many common flaws in the way that a horse can move.



Cross-firing: A term used in horses that pace. This happens when the hind foot on one side strikes the opposite front foot.

Dwelling: A noticeable pause in the flight phase of foot.

Forging: Striking the front foot with the toe of the hind foot.

Interfering: When the hind foot touches the fetlock or cannon bone of the forelimb. This is common in horses that are base-narrow, toe-wide, or splay footed. The term brushing is used for light contact with the front leg. Striking is used when interference results in an open wound.

Lameness: A defect detected when an animal favors an affected foot. Often shown by a bobbing of the head as the foot hits the ground.

Paddling: The term for the throwing of the front feet outward in flight, common in horses that are toe-in or pigeon-toed. Also known as "winging out" in high-stepping harness horses and saddle horses.

Pointing: Noticeable extension of the stride with little flexion.

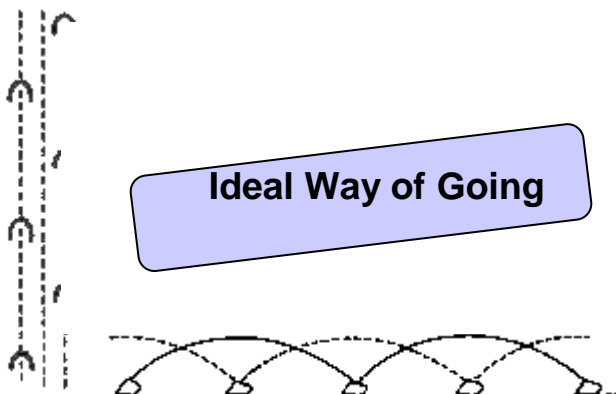
Pounding: Having contact with the ground that causes excessive concussion. Often described as "heavy-going."

Rolling: Extreme lateral shoulder motion.

Scalping: The hairline at the top of the hind foot hits the toe of the forefoot as it breaks over.

Stringhalt: Excessive flexing of a hind leg.

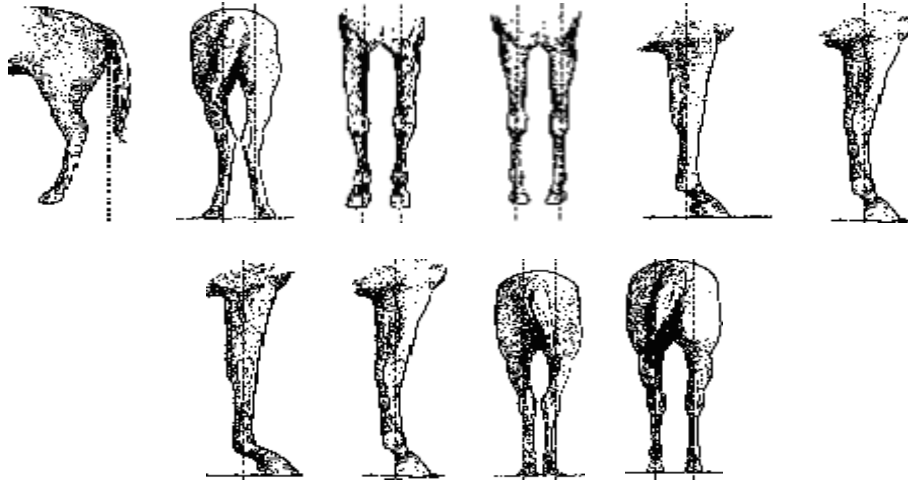
Trappy: Used to describe a short, quick, high, and often choppy stride. This happens in horses with straight pasterns and straight shoulders.



Courtesy of Appaloosa Horse Club

Leg Stance & Conformational Defects

Cross Word Hints-



If it is not correct it is called a _____.
 This chapter is studying _____.

D	H	F	C	N	W	A	S	U	T	J	O	F	R	S	E	N	K	A	M
H	N	R	E	T	S	A	P	T	H	G	I	A	R	T	S	R	H	T	O
S	L	C	R	E	Z	D	B	O	W	K	N	E	E	D	V	Z	U	L	P
N	Q	C	O	W	H	O	C	K	E	D	G	P	C	H	K	F	N	J	I
C	G	D	R	N	K	T	O	P	I	Y	X	K	S	D	P	M	S	E	
H	G	R	E	S	F	E	U	H	O	A	E	O	U	F	L	I	T	M	O
R	L	J	M	K	D	O	L	P	U	N	P	T	O	G	R	G	C	R	S
P	B	A	S	E	N	A	R	R	O	W	F	V	H	Y	E	E	O	E	X
G	T	N	R	P	U	R	S	M	M	H	K	O	R	D	L	O	M	D	F
W	N	D	H	J	K	T	B	D	A	G	P	I	O	N	H	N	E	N	O
S	C	E	T	A	C	Q	Z	K	L	T	G	F	L	T	O	T	P	U	T
B	U	G	N	E	O	U	C	R	H	I	I	R	X	C	E	O	N	D	A
F	H	G	F	L	I	H	D	O	W	E	Y	O	D	T	F	E	U	E	N
L	M	E	C	O	R	R	E	C	T	D	U	E	N	B	M	D	B	P	R
A	D	L	V	M	O	P	A	H	L	I	G	L	H	K	E	C	G	M	E
D	G	W	O	S	I	G	S	R	Y	N	J	P	G	Q	E	J	H	A	S
T	E	O	N	D	A	X	M	E	L	P	H	T	U	A	D	K	V	C	T
I	U	B	L	C	R	V	C	A	L	F	K	N	E	E	D	C	E	A	O
N	D	A	C	N	H	O	B	I	P	Q	N	N	D	R	U	M	R	T	O
O	Z	B	L	Q	U	G	F	R	K	F	P	M	D	M	B	D	N	E	S

Way of Going

Cross Word Hints-

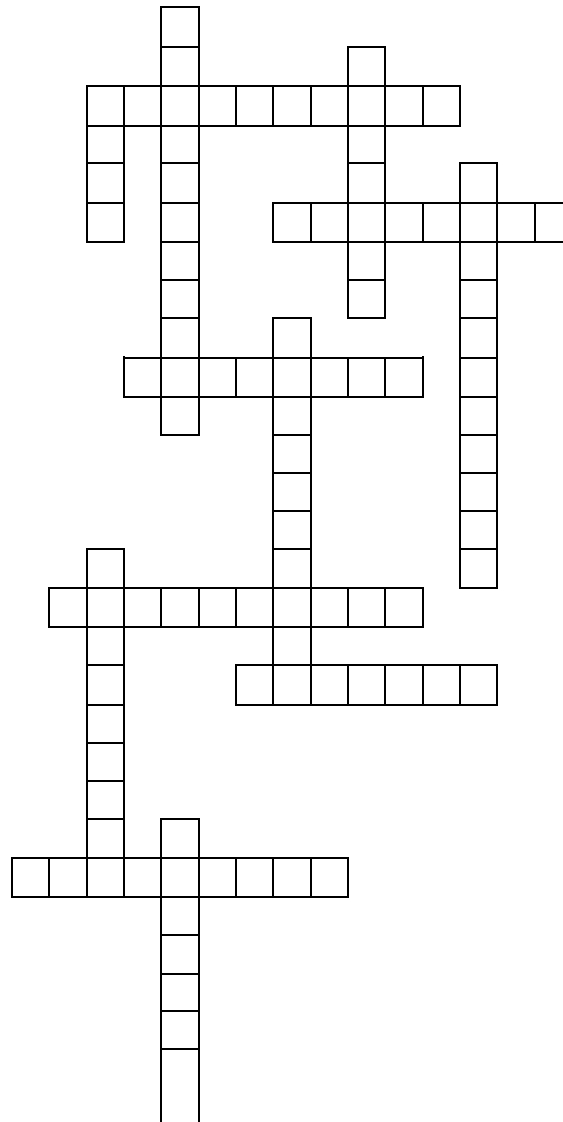
- *** Excessive flexing of a hind leg.
- *** A term used in horses that pace. This happens when the hind foot on one side strikes the opposite front foot.
- *** Having contact with the ground that causes excessive concussion. Often described as “heavy-going.”
- *** A noticeable pause in the flight phase of foot.
- *** When the hind foot touches the fetlock or cannon bone of the forelimb. This is common in horses that are base-narrow, toe-wide, or splay footed. The term brushing is used for light contact with the front leg. Striking is used when interference results in an open wound.
- *** A defect detected when an animal favors an affected foot. Often shown by a bobbing of the head as the foot hits the ground.
- *** Used to describe a short, quick, high, and often choppy stride. This happens in horses with straight pasterns and straight shoulders.
- *** Noticeable extension of the stride with little flexion.
- *** Striking the front foot with the toe of the hind foot.
- *** The hairline at top of the hind foot hits the toe of the forefoot as it breaks over.
- *** The term for the throwing of the front feet outward in flight, common in horses that are toe-in or pigeon-toed. Also known as “winging out” in high-stepping harness horses and saddle horses.

D	L	I	L	F	K	N	E	T	O	T	P	G	R	E	S	F	E	S	G
W	O	R	P	Q	N	N	D	C	E	O	N	S	G	D	P	M	B	T	I
E	M	O	P	A	D	D	L	I	N	G	O	N	A	L	I	T	O	R	Y
L	F	P	M	D	M	B	D	A	O	C	I	R	E	R	G	C	S	I	M
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G	N	I	R	I	F	S	S	O	R	C	T	M	A	L	X	M	F	I	R
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M	S	Y	D	O	T	H	M	M	K	D	O	T	O	L	E	R	S	M	F

Unsoundness and Blemishes

- * A bony enlargement at the base and inside back border of the hock.
- *On each side of the heel extending above the hoof are elastic cartilages just under the skin that serve as part of the shock-absorbing mechanism.
- *A state of rest with one foot positioned about 10 to 12 inches ahead of the other in an effort to reduce weight on the affected side.
- *Also known as shoe boil is a blemish at the point of the elbow. It is usually caused by injury from the shoe when the front leg is folded under the body while the horse is lying down.
- *This is a nervous system problem resulting in spasmodic flexion of one or both hocks.
- *When the patella of the stifle joint is displaced; can be inward or outward.
- *Shown as swellings on the back border of the base of the hock.
- * These are bony deposits that appear on the upper inside border of the front cannon.
- *Soft swellings on the inside-front area of the hocks.
- *A thickening of the skin or large callus at the point of the hock.
- *Small swellings or blemishes around the ankles and lower cannons; are common to horses that are used heavily or trailer a lot, or to older animals.
- *An inflammation or shortening of the tendons and a subsequent forward position of the ankle joints.
- *An inflammation of the sensitive laminae, which attach the hoof to the fleshy portion of the foot.

POINTING
 SPLINTS
 WIND PUFFS
 CAPPED ELBOW
 FOUNDER
 BONE SPAVIN
 BOG SPAVIN
 CURB
 CAPPED HOCK
 STRINGHALT
 STIFLED
 COCKED ANKLE
 SIDEBONE



Answers

Leg Stance & Conformational Defects

N R E T S A P T H G I A R T S	C O N F O R M A T I O N
C	B A S E N A R R O W
C O W H O C K E D	P I G E O N T O E D
N O	B O W K N E E D
F O	C O R R E C T
O N	T I E D I N
B A S E N A R R O W F	C A L F K N E E D
M O	C O W H O C K E D
D T A O N N	C O O N F O O T E D
E C T T T U	S T R A I G H T P A S T E R N
G E I I E O D	D E F E C T
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E C O R R E C T D N D	
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If it is not correct it is called a defect.
This chapter is studying conformation.

Ways of Going

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- CROSS FIRING
- DWELLING
- FORGING
- INTERFERING
- LAMENESS
- PADDLING
- POINTING
- POUNDING
- SCALPING
- STRINGHALT
- TRAPPY

Unsoundness and Blemishes

