

Points of Evaluation



ARABIAN
HORSE ASSOCIATION

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Discover
Leg Up
Arabian Horse Association

Lesson Plan Outline

1. As with all horses, evaluation of Arabians is mostly based on principles of sound horsemanship common to all breeds. Arabian horses do, however, have distinctive breed traits.

- A. The modern Arabian horse comes from a long line of purebred horses with proud heritage.
- B. They were carefully bred over thousands of years to be functional and beautiful.
- C. Arabians should evidence type, sound conformation, balance, substance, quality, and suitability.

2. Type and Conformation

- A. Arabian horses have a distinctive look. This is called type and is seen throughout the Arabian horse. The overall picture should be of refinement and quality while still showing substance.
 - i. The head is often small and refined. Specific traits include large and wide-set eyes, bulging forehead, dished profile, large nostrils, small muzzle, rounded jaw, and close-set ears. The neck is typically somewhat arched and ties in high to the chest and withers.
 - ii. The shoulder is long and slopes to a short back, comparatively flat croup, and high-set tail.
 - iii. Height should be from 14.1 hands to 15.1 hands.
- B. Arabian horse conformation is based on function. The desert home and nomadic heritage of the breed demanded that only the fittest, most resilient horses were bred. Thus, the breed as a whole has exceptionally durable conformation.
 - i. Balance: the horse presents a pleasing look at the profile. Can you divide the horse into thirds: shoulder, barrel, and hip? If a horse is balanced this ratio should be fairly close.
 - ii. In addition, the length of head, neck, topline, underline, hip, and legs should all be considered. A well-sprung barrel, deep heart girth, and full hip are important. The overall look is one of usefulness, strength and harmony throughout.

3. Sex Characteristics

- A. Stallions and mares should always reflect their gender. Very young or gelded horses should not exhibit a great deal of sex characteristics, but must present an appealing look.
- B. Stallions evidence a great deal of masculinity and appear animated, supple, and balanced.
- C. Mares must be feminine with a delicate head, soft eye, and sound conformation.
- D. Geldings will not appear overly masculine or feminine, but are still attractive and correct.

4. Substance and Quality

- A. The Arabian horse evolved to be substantial and useful, although it is not a heavily built or muscled breed. It is also renowned for being the most beautiful of all horses, showing exceptional refinement especially through the head.
- B. Substance is the appearance of muscle and bone strength. The Arabian horse should appear defined, sculpted, and functional. It should appear neither coarse nor frail. To be substantial a horse also carries adequate muscling and weight.
- C. Quality is difficult to define but you will know it when you see it! An Arabian horse with quality appears beautiful and appealing with all parts blending smoothly into an attractive whole. A refined head and neck, clean and defined structure and an overall look of vitality all contribute to quality.

5. Colors

- A. Arabian horses have coat colors ranging from chestnut and bay to grey and black. The definition of some colors varies from breed to breed, but nearly all Arabians will fit into one of those four color categories.
- B. Arabian horse markings are most like any other horse's. One notable difference, though, is that Arabian horses have very dark skin everywhere except under white markings. This is a result of their adaptation to desert conditions over time.
 - i. Facial markings can include: star, snip, blaze, and upper or lower lip.
 - ii. Leg markings can include: coronet, pastern, fetlock, sock, stocking, and partial variations of the above.
 - iii. One marking which is special to the Arabian breed is the "bloody shoulder", a dark patch on the shoulder of a light-colored horse. Tradition says it is a blessing.



6. Soundness

- A. Arabians were bred for thousands of years to withstand long use in the harsh desert conditions. Long treks, frequent moves, and high speed invasions were all part of the Bedouin lifestyle and their horses had to be durable!
- B. Proper conformation throughout is the expected standard for Arabian horses. From the mouth to legs, joints, and feet a horse must be correct and free of defect.
 - i. A conformational fault is related to structure; it may or may not be visible; may or may not interfere with use.
 - ii. A blemish is unsightly but it does not interfere with use.
 - iii. An unsoundness interferes with use; it may or may not be visible
- C. Legs are straight, of good substance, with clean bone and free from puffiness and blemishes.
 - i. Lameness—the old saying “No hoof, no horse” is an apt one because an unsound leg makes the entire horse less useful. Lameness has a number of causes and can become evident in many ways.
 - ii. Feet—well-rounded with an open heel; greater than 60% angle is a club foot.
- D. The enclosed diagrams will help illustrate soundness and structure.

7. Suitability, Manners, Performance

- A. A performance horse must appear well-matched, or suited, to his events. The horse should combine conformation, way of going, and disposition to present a good example of that discipline.
- B. The horse should appear pleasant, interested, and easy to handle. His good attitude is reflected in a relaxed way of going, bright and alert expression, obedience, and unity with the rider.
- C. Performance is the quality of movement, accuracy, and correctness through all class requirements.



The Arabian horse is the stuff of legends

Tales of the beautiful Arabian horse can be found throughout written and oral history, especially in the Middle East. Stories like the following one will explain some of the Arabian horse's unusual and outstanding qualities.

Legend of the Bloody Shouldered Arabian

Once upon a time many years ago in the desert of Arabia, there was a Bedouin warrior who owned a very special Arabian mare—a mare he rode into battle and to whom he entrusted his life.

There was a very special relationship, a bond of trust, love and mutual respect. Either would have given his life for the other. In fact, their bond of trust was so strong that the mare often “read her master's thoughts,” doing exactly what he needed at exactly the right time, allowing them to win many battles and to be the envy of all Bedouin tribes.

Years passed and one day in a fierce battle the master was severely wounded, falling across the neck and shoulder of his beloved war mare. Although her master was unconscious and she was many miles from home, the mare balanced him across her shoulder, carefully carrying him toward home. She traveled for days without food or water to return her master to his family.

When the courageous mare finally arrived at the encampment, she was exhausted and weak, and her master dead. As the family carefully removed the master's body, they saw the mare's shoulder was heavily stained with his blood, leaving a distinct red mark on her shoulder. Although they had lost their leader, the Bedouin family was eternally grateful to the mare for delivering his body from the battle. They knew that the long journey had been difficult for the mare, and they were very concerned for her because she was heavily in foal.

As the days passed, the cherished mare received only the best food and care, and she was visited and admired not only by members of the master's tribe, but all the other tribes in the area.

Finally, the time of her foaling arrived, and there was a greater concern for the cherished war mare. But when the long-awaited foal was born, he was vigorous and healthy and of exceptional quality. He also bore the identical “bloody shoulder” that his mother had from her master's blood.

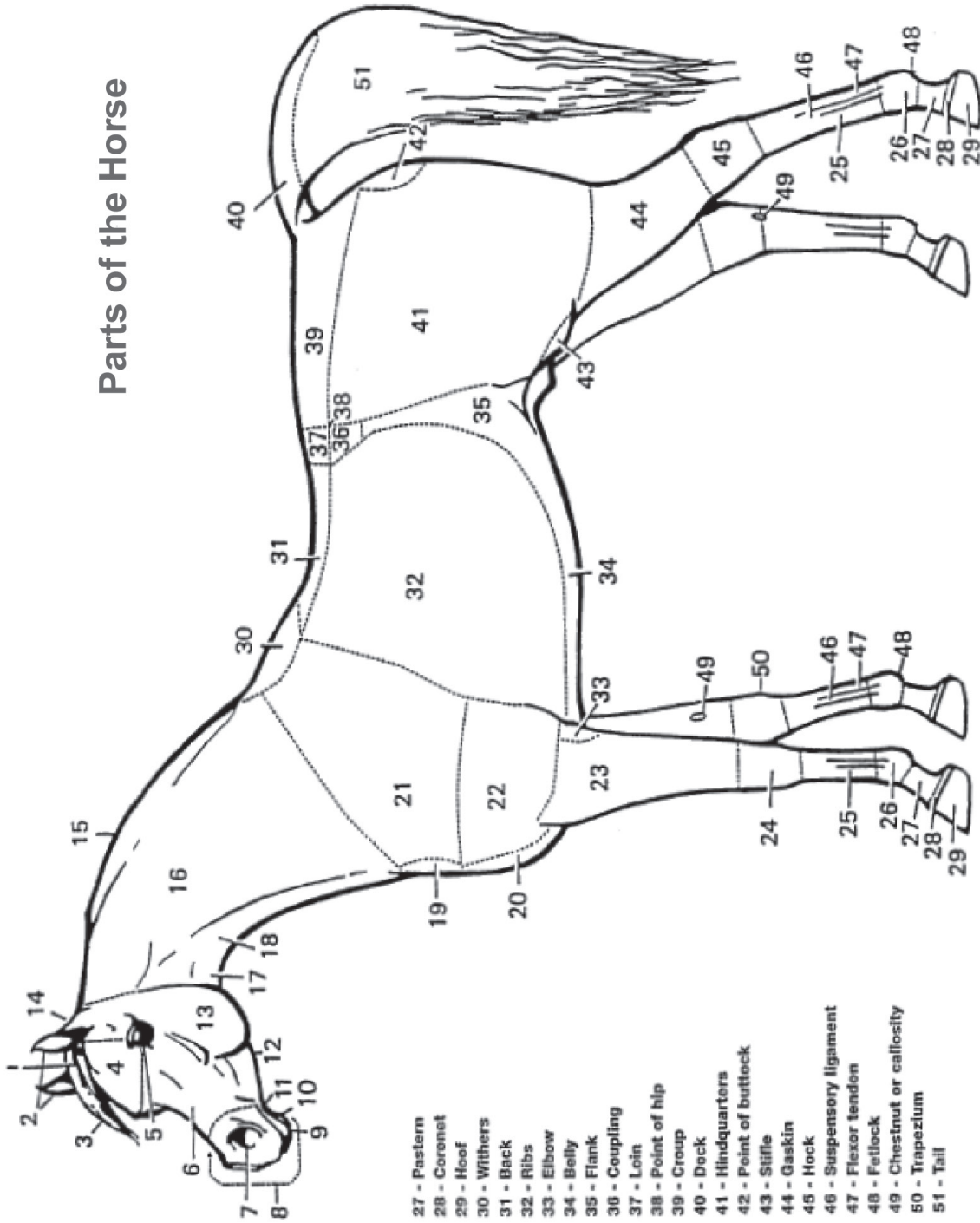
It was then that the Bedouin tribe realized that Allah had rewarded this mare and their tribe for their courage, loyalty, and faith and that the “bloody shoulder” was a reminder of his favor.

Since that time, hundreds of years have passed, but once in a great while there is a mare of exceptional beauty, quality, and courage who foals a very special foal graced by God with the “bloody shoulder.” The Bedouins have continued to believe this is a sign of Allah's favor.



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Parts of the Horse

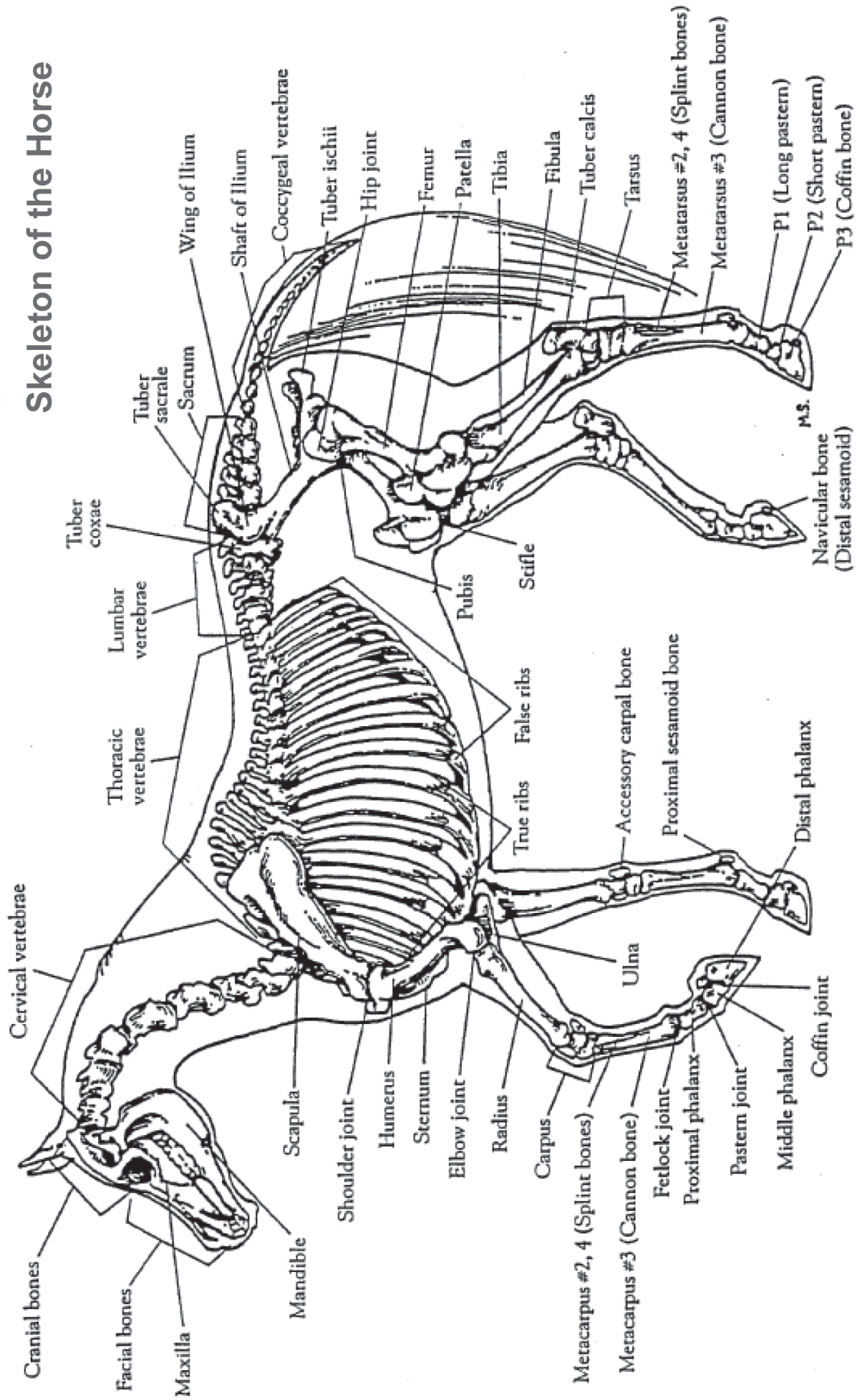


- 1 - Occipital crest
- 2 - Ear
- 3 - Forelock
- 4 - Forehead
- 5 - Eye
- 6 - Bridge of Nose
- 7 - Nostril
- 8 - Muzzle
- 9 - Lower lip
- 10 - Chin
- 11 - Chin groove
- 12 - Branches of jaw
- 13 - Jawl or cheek
- 14 - Poll
- 15 - Crest
- 16 - Neck
- 17 - Throatlatch
- 18 - Jugular groove
- 19 - Point of shoulder
- 20 - Chest
- 21 - Shoulder
- 22 - Upper arm
- 23 - Forearm
- 24 - Knee
- 25 - Cannon
- 26 - Fetlock joint
- 27 - Pastern
- 28 - Coronet
- 29 - Hoof
- 30 - Withers
- 31 - Back
- 32 - Ribs
- 33 - Elbow
- 34 - Belly
- 35 - Flank
- 36 - Coupling
- 37 - Loin
- 38 - Point of hip
- 39 - Croup
- 40 - Dock
- 41 - Hindquarters
- 42 - Point of buttock
- 43 - Stifle
- 44 - Gaskin
- 45 - Hock
- 46 - Suspensory ligament
- 47 - Flexor tendon
- 48 - Fetlock
- 49 - Chestnut or callosity
- 50 - Trapezium
- 51 - Tail



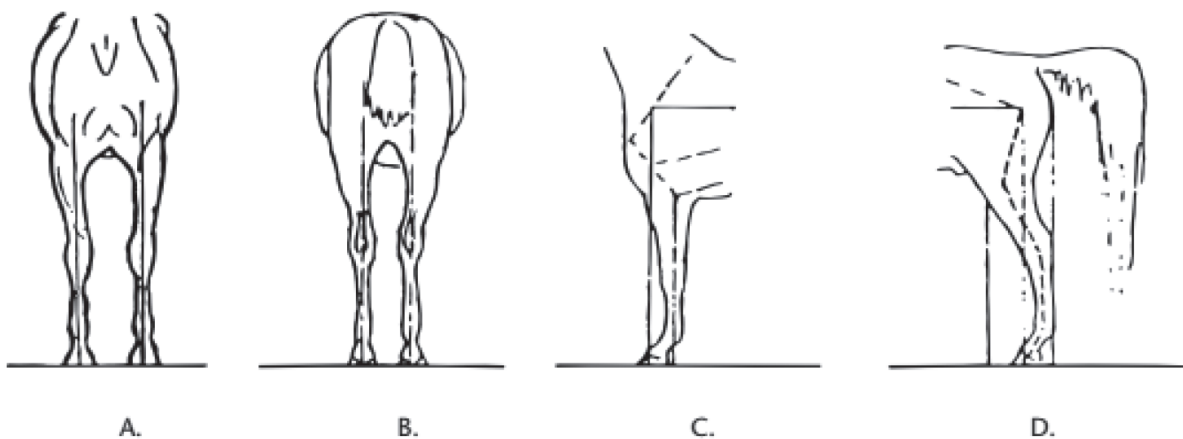
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Skeleton of the Horse



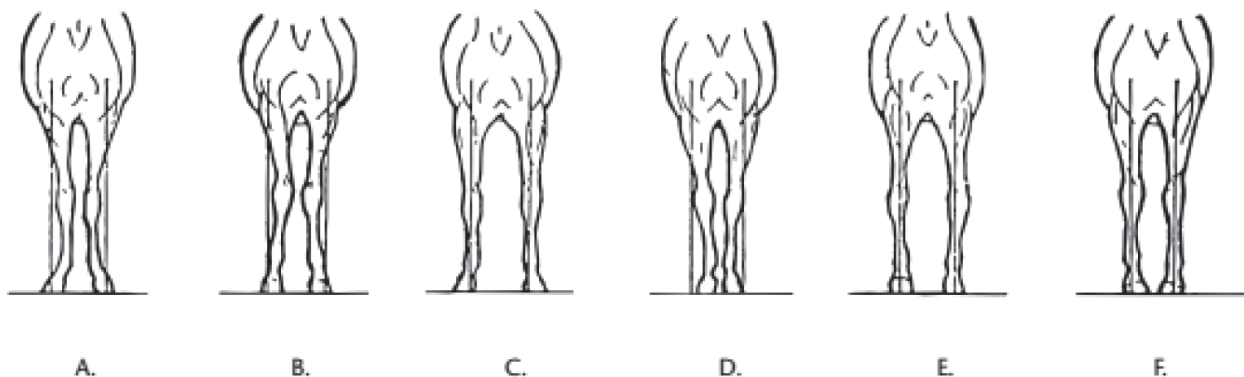
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Structural Conformation of the Legs



Ideal Legs

- A. Front legs
- B. Rear legs
- C. Side view of front legs
- D. Side view of rear legs



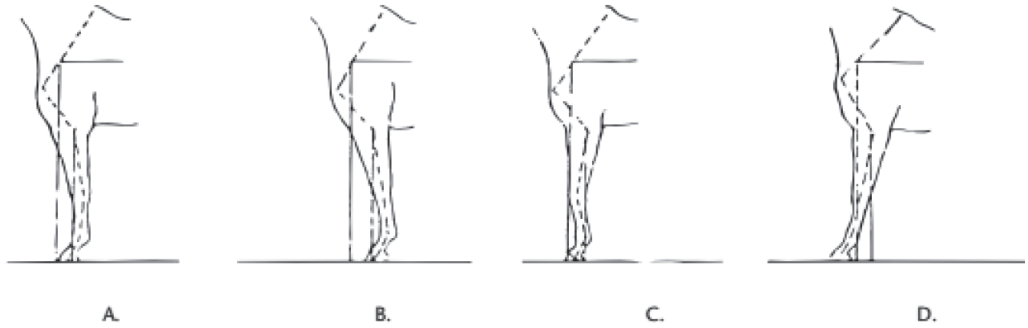
Front View of Front Legs

- A. Toes out and knock kneed
- B. Knock kneed
- C. Toes out (splay footed)
- D. Stands close
- E. Bow legged
- F. Pigeon toed



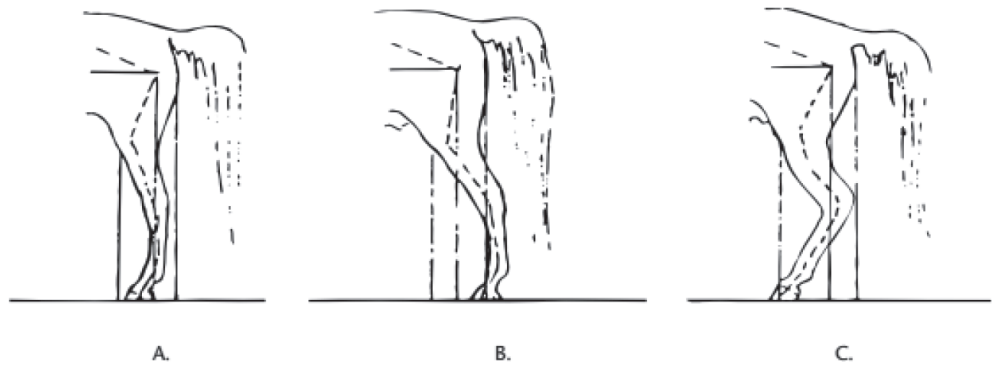
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Structural Conformation of the Legs



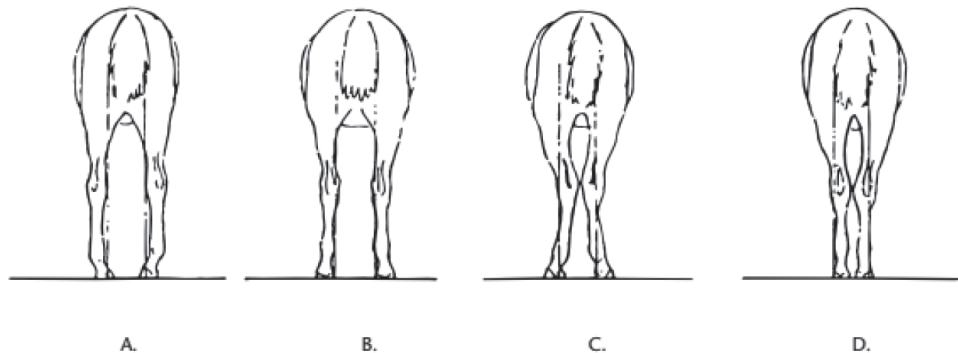
Side View of Front Legs

- A. Calf kneed
- B. Camped under
- C. Over at the knees
- D. Camped out



Side View of Rear Legs

- A. Too straight, post legged
- B. Camped out
- C. Stands under, sickle hocked



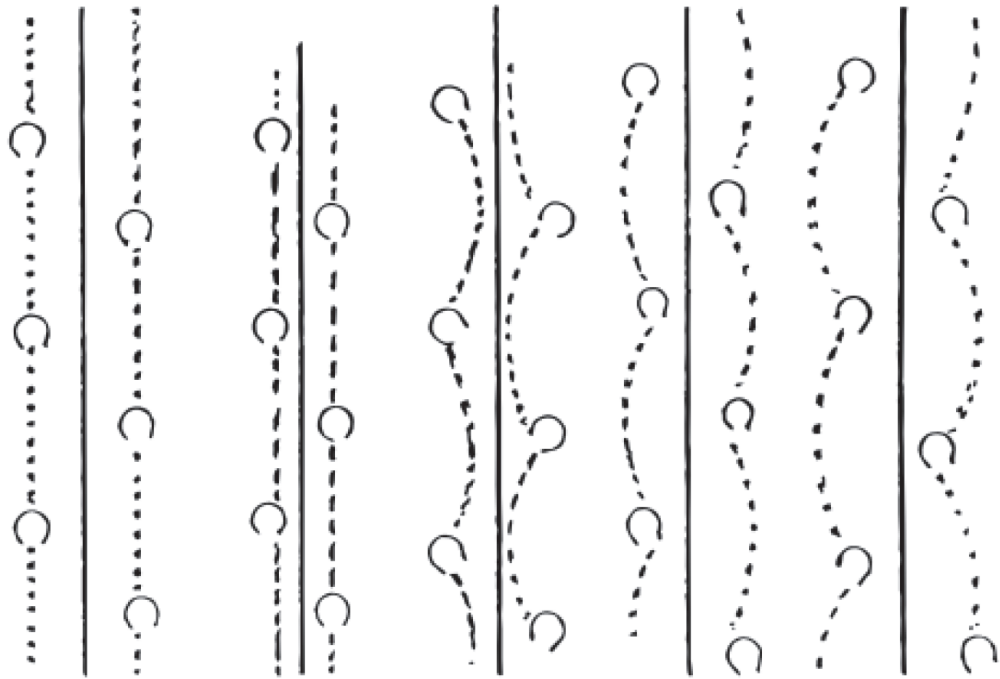
Rear View of Rear Legs

- A. Bow legged
- B. Stands wide
- C. Cow hocked
- D. Stands close



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Foot Fall Patterns



A.

B.

C.

D.

E.

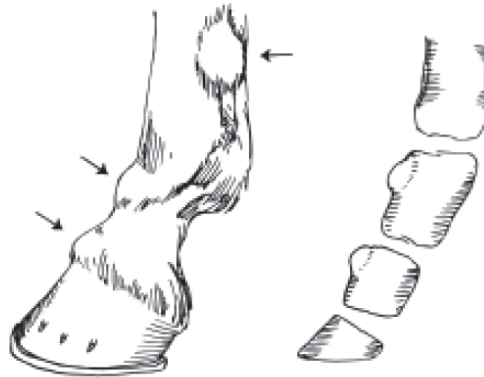


- A. Normal
- B. Narrow chest
- C. Splay footed
- D. Wide chest
- E. Pigeon toed

Definition and Location of Unsoundness, Conformation Faults, and Blemishes

Unsoundness

► Pastern

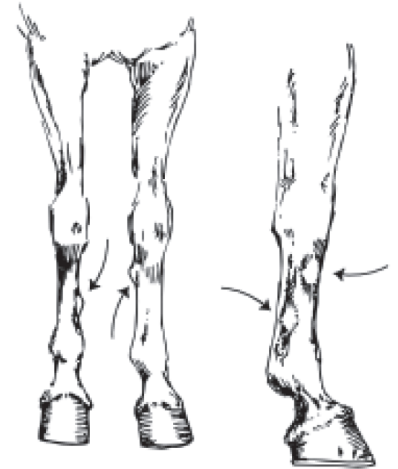


Ring bone—a bony enlargement surrounding the bones of the pastern.

Unsoundness and Blemish

► Cannon

Splint—a bony enlargement in the groove formed by the splint and cannon bone, it may be high or low, forward or back.



Unsoundness

► Hock

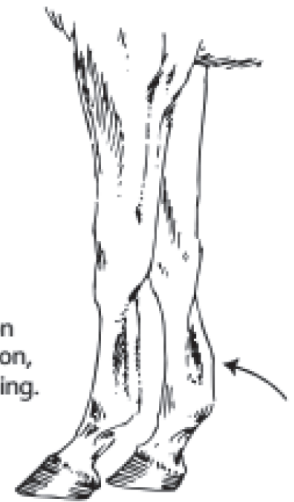
Bone spavin—a bony enlargement that appears on the inside and front of the hock at the point where the base of the hock tapers into the cannon bone.



Unsoundness

► Tendon

Bowed tendon—an extension backward of the flexor tendon, caused by tearing or stretching.



Unsoundness

► Pastern/Coronet

Side bone—ossification of the lateral cartilage resulting from injuries that cause calcium to accumulate and harden.



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Definition and Location of Unsoundness, Conformation Faults, and Blemishes

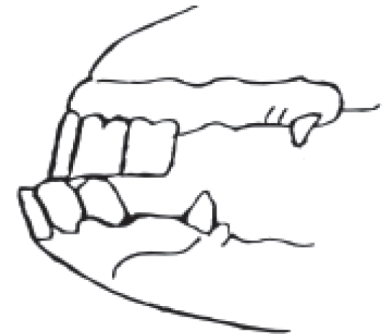
Unsoundness
► Mouth

Parrot mouth—(overshot jaw) the lower jaw is shorter than the upper jaw, the top and bottom teeth do not align.



Unsoundness
► Mouth

Monkey mouth—(undershot jaw) the upper jaw is shorter than the lower jaw, the top and bottom teeth do not align.



Unsoundness and Conformation Fault
► Pastern and Hoof

Club foot—a hoof with an angle of more than 60%, may be hereditary and is usually due to contracted tendons and ligaments.



Conformation Fault
► Knee

Over at the knee—a bending forward of the knee caused by injured tendons, foot trouble or hard work at an early age.



Conformation Fault
► Knee

Calf kneed—standing with knees too far back.



Definition and Location of Unsoundness, Conformation Faults, and Blemishes

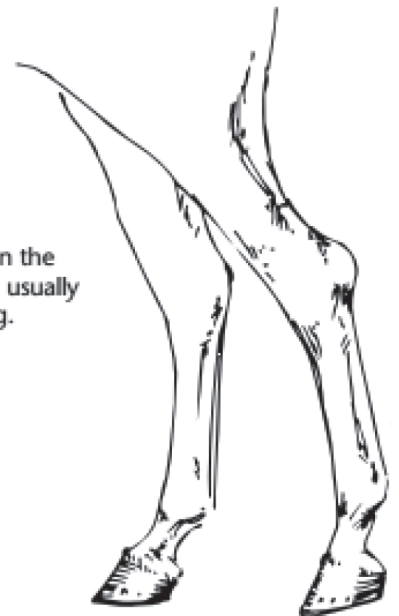
Blemish
▶ Elbow

Capped elbow—
an enlargement at the
point of the elbow.



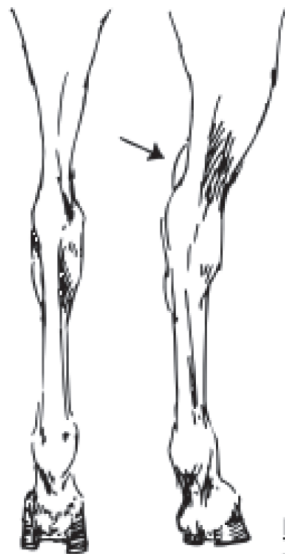
Blemish
▶ Hock

Capped hock—
an enlargement on the
point of the hock, usually
caused by bruising.



Blemish
▶ Hock

Thoroughpin—
a puffy condition in the
hollows of the hock.



Blemish
▶ Hock

Bog spavin—
any inflammation or
swelling of the soft tissues
of the hock.



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 EHEOTHUAFYJNOTRAZDUFTVZSE
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Find the words listed below in the word search above. After you have found them all, you will see the hidden mystery phrase which you can enter in the boxes at the bottom.



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Ancient
 Correct
 Snip
 Balance
 Manners

Sock
 Blemish
 Performance
 Soundness
 Characteristic

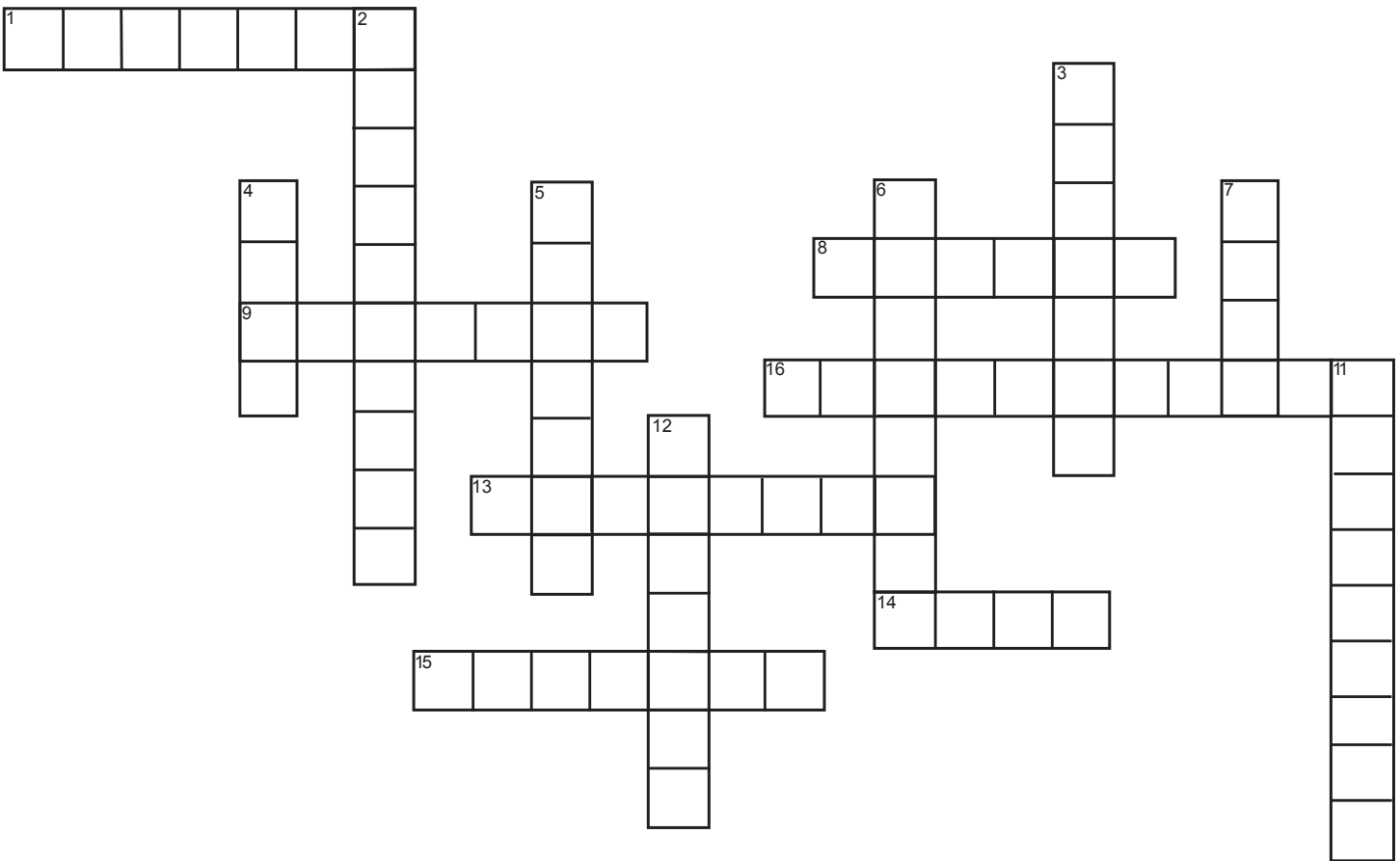
Purebred
 Substance
 Conformation
 Quality
 Suitability

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Points of Evaluation



ACROSS

1. Based on ratios
8. Shoulder, barrel, hip
9. Most beautiful hip
10. Defective which interferes with use
13. Must be masculine
14. A distinctive look
15. View from the side

DOWN

2. Based on sound horsemanship
3. Neither masculine or feminine
4. Other breeds call this color grulla
5. You'll know it when you see it
6. All-Breed names for this color include: sorrel, brown, palomino
7. Must be feminine
11. Appearance of strength
12. Unsightly defect



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

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Ancient
Correct
Snip
Balance
Manners

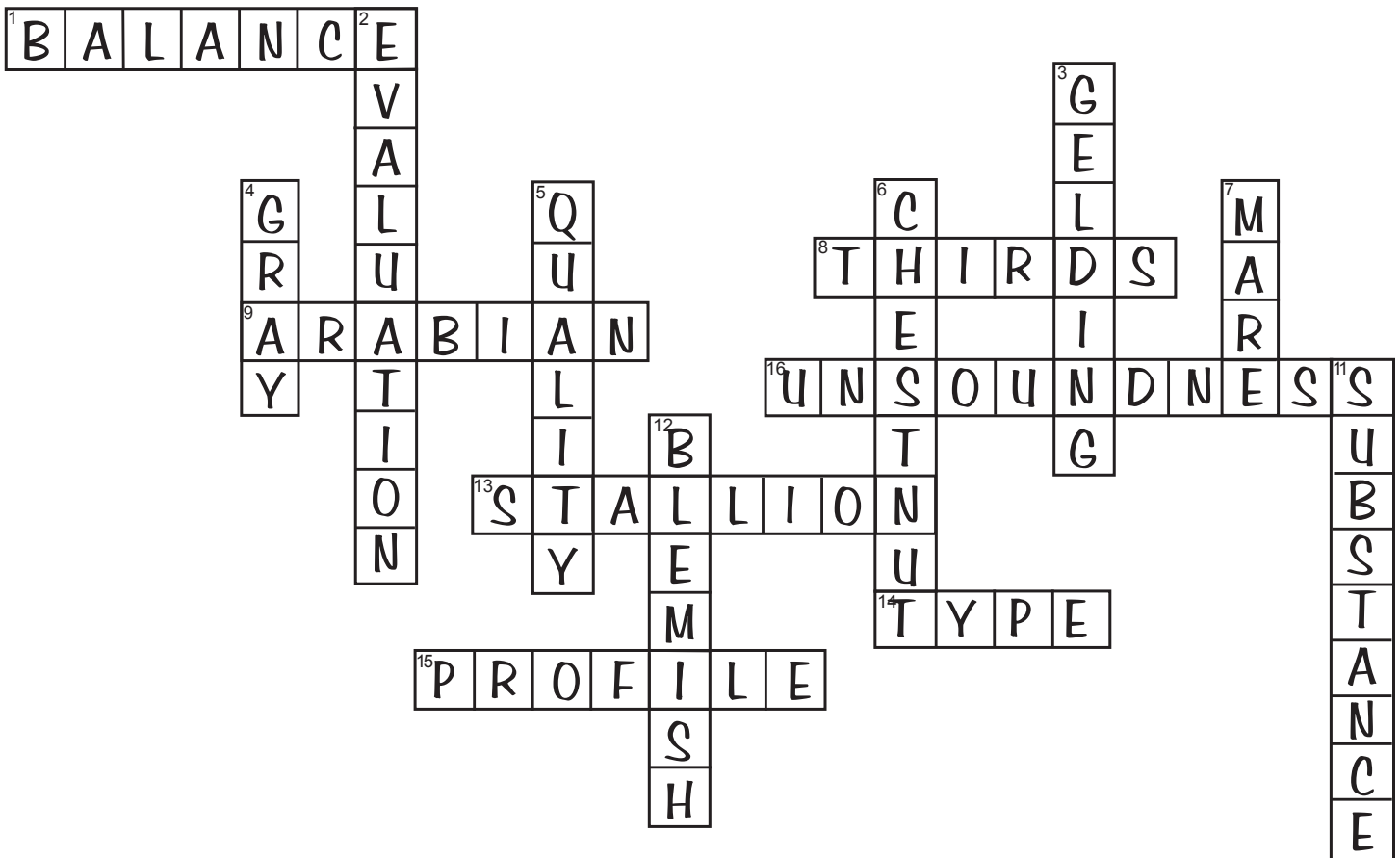
Sock
Blemish
Performance
Soundness
Characteristic

Purebred
Substance
Conformation
Quality
Suitability

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