



Body Condition Score

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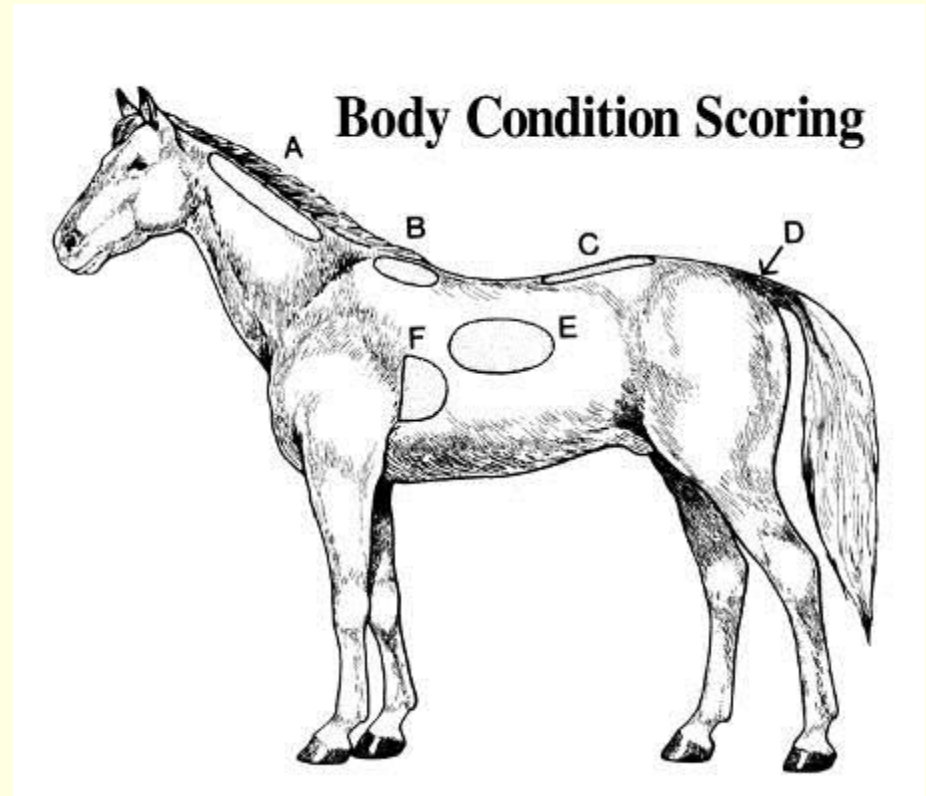
Henneke Body Condition Score

- Measures amount of body fat
- Determines balance between energy intake & expenditure
- Developed in 1983 by Dr. Don Henneke
- Simpler, repeatable, consistent method
- Comparison between animals



Henneke Body Condition Score

- Fat laid down in predictable patterns
 - Organs
 - Behind the shoulder
 - Ribs
 - Rump
 - Back
 - Withers
 - Head and Neck



Henneke Body Condition Score

- Scale 1 - 9
- Clue to overall health of animal
- May impact breeding
- Welfare cases

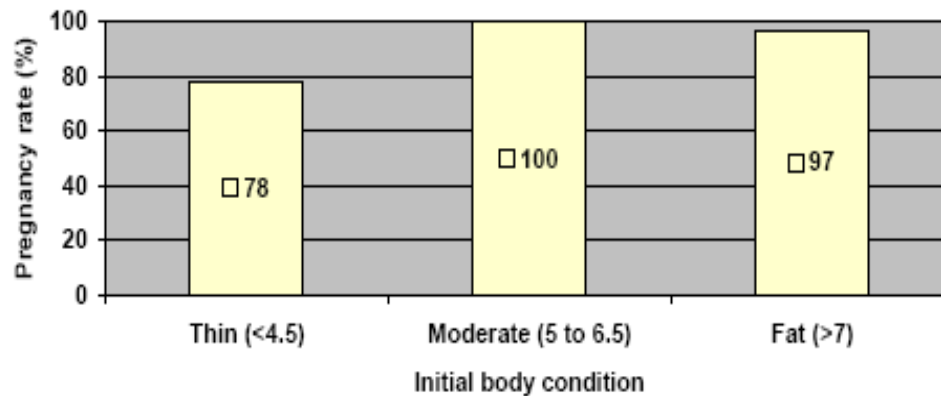
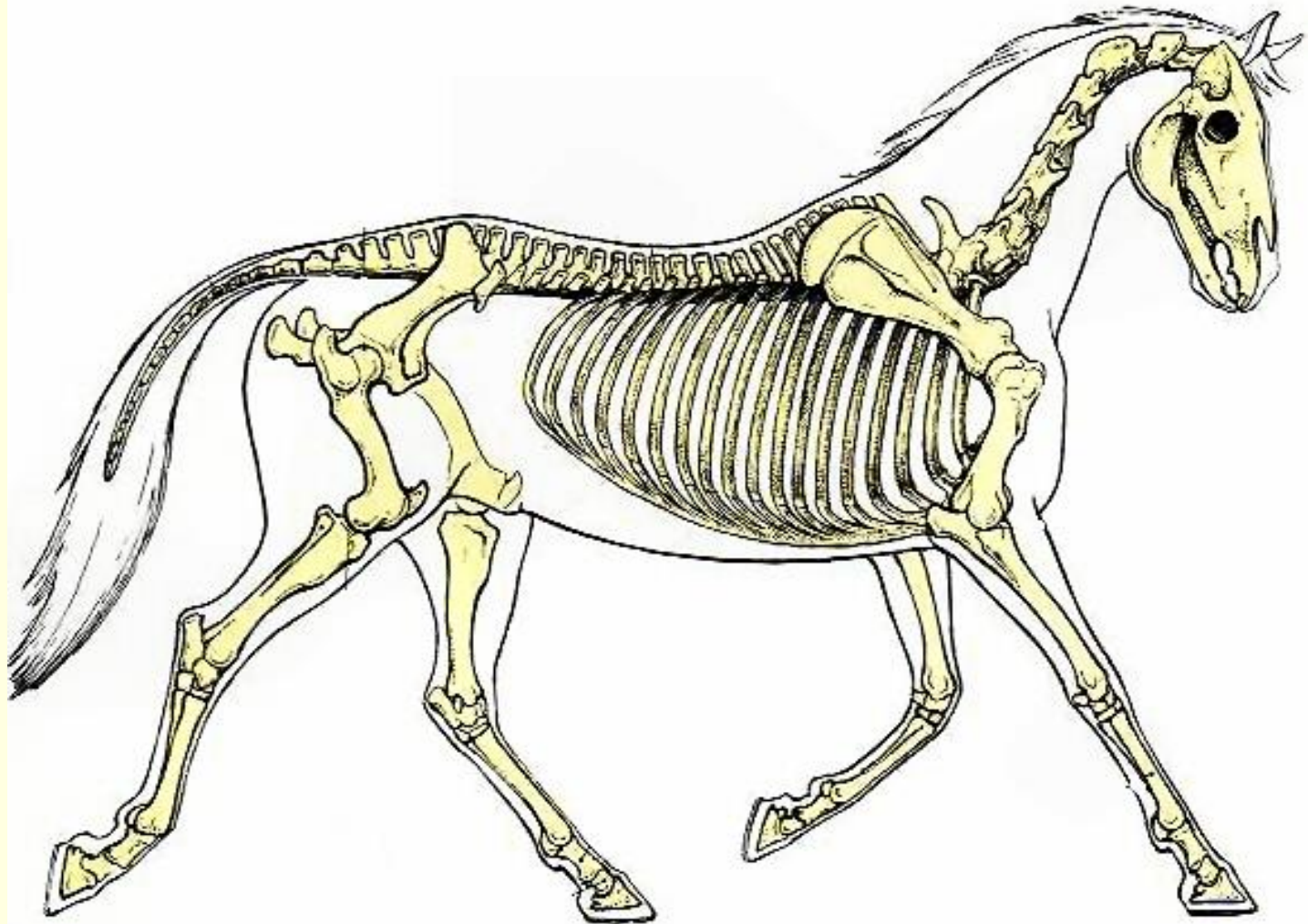


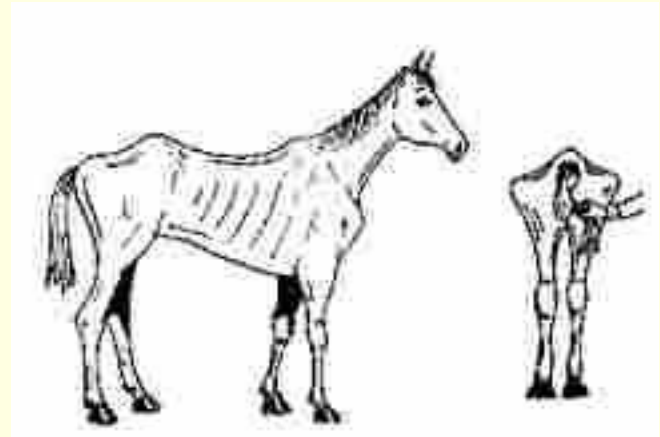
Figure 1. Pregnancy rate for mares entering the breeding season or foaling in thin, moderate, or fat condition.

Skeleton



Score 1 – Poor

- Extreme emaciation
- No fatty tissue can be felt
- Ribs projecting prominently
- Bone structure easily noticeable



Score 1 - Poor



Score 2 – Very Thin

- Emaciated
- Ribs prominent
- Vertebrae prominent
- Faintly notice bone structure



Score 2 – Very Thin



Score 3 - Thin

- Thin layer of fat over ribs
- Ribs still easily discernible
- Tailhead prominent



Score 3 - Thin



Score 4 – Moderately Thin

- Faint outline of ribs discernable
- Ridge along back (negative crease)
- Fat can be felt around tailhead
- Withers, shoulders, neck not obviously thin



Score 4 – Moderately Thin

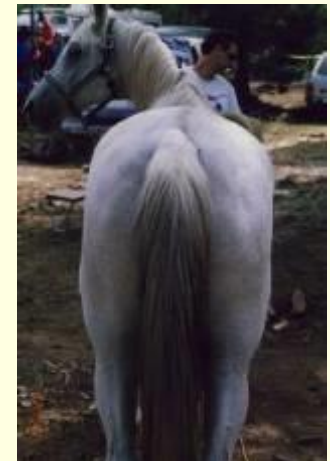
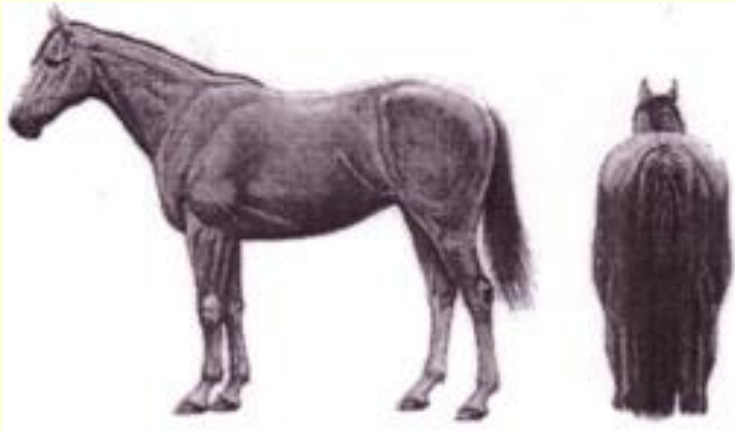


Score 5 - Moderate

- Back is level
- Ribs cannot be visually distinguished, but can be easily felt
- Fat around tailhead beginning to feel spongy
- Withers appear rounded
- Shoulders & neck blend smoothly into body



Score 5 - Moderate



Score 6 – Moderate to Fleshy

- May have slight crease down back
- Fat over ribs feels soft and spongy
- Fat around tailhead feels soft
- Fat beginning to be deposited along sides of withers, behind shoulders & along sides of neck



Score 6 – Moderate to Fleshy

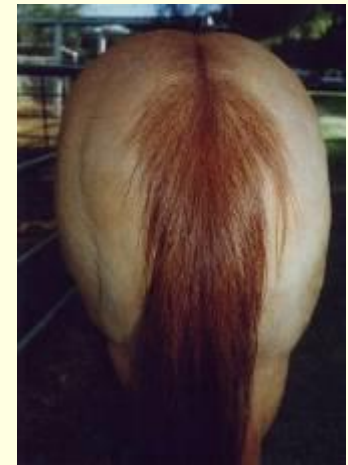


Score 7 - Fleahy

- Crease down back
- Ribs can be felt with noticeable filling of fat between ribs
- Fat around tailhead is soft
- Fat deposited along withers, behind shoulders and along neck



Score 7 - Fleishy



Score 8 - Fat

- Crease down back
- Difficult to feel ribs
- Fat around tailhead is soft
- Fat around withers and behind shoulder
- Noticeable thickening of neck
- Fat deposited along inner buttocks

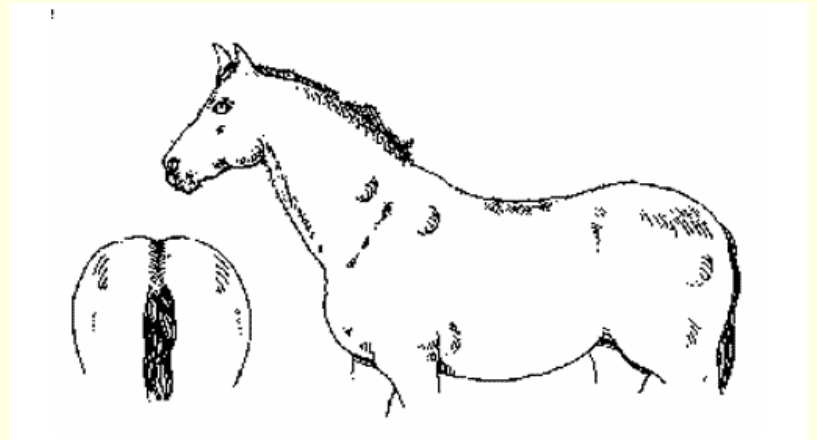


Score 8 - Fat



Score 9 – Extremely Fat

- Obvious crease down back
- Patchy fat appearing over ribs
- Bulging fat around tailhead, around withers, behind shoulders, and along neck
- Fat along inner buttocks
- Flank filled and flush



Score 9 – Extremely Fat



Evaluation

- Visual assessment and actual touch
 - Palpate fat areas
 - Avoid mistaking longer hair covering for fat areas
 - Avoid being fooled by conformation differences



Optimum Body Condition Score

- “Each horse has his own ideal condition for his breed and occupation” – Don Henneke, PhD
- Broodmare 5-7
- Breeding stallion 5-6
- Performance horse 4-6



References

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