

A woman with dark hair, wearing a light blue denim-style shirt and dark pants, stands in profile facing a white horse. She is holding the horse's lead rope. The horse is wearing a brown halter. The scene is set in a grassy field during sunset, with a warm, golden glow. In the top right corner, there is a dark blue banner with the 'TRIPLE CROWN' logo in gold, featuring a crown icon above the word 'TRIPLE'.

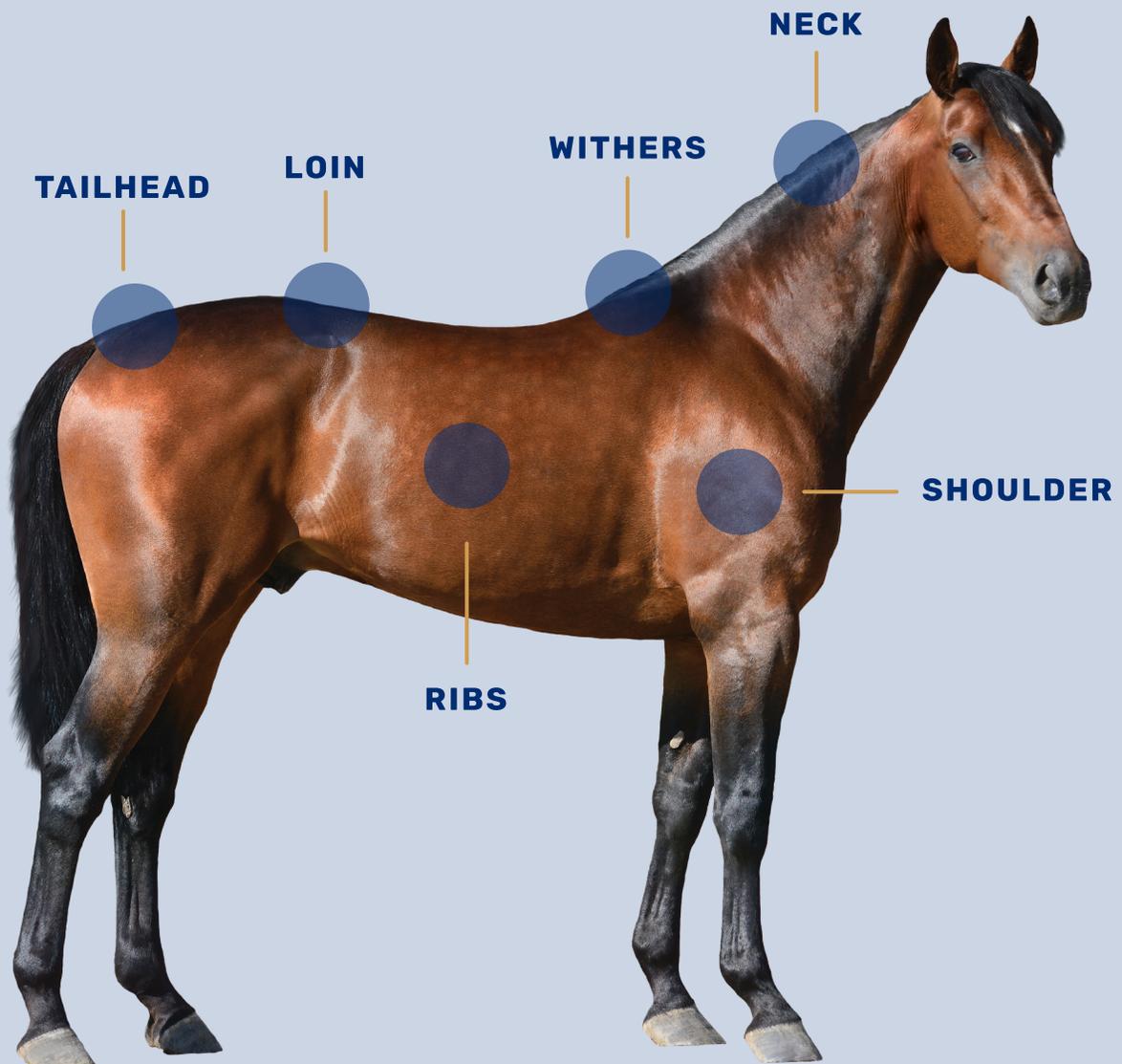
TRIPLE
CROWN

QUESTIONING YOUR HORSE'S
BODY CONDITION?

The importance of **BODY CONDITION SCORING**

Being able to evaluate your horse's Body Condition Score (BCS) is a useful tool for horse owners to evaluate their horse's health. Both underweight and overweight horses have health issues – which can impact their ability to perform well and even limit their ability to reproduce.

Body condition is measured by looking at certain areas on the horse's body: neck, withers, shoulder, ribs, loin and tailhead.

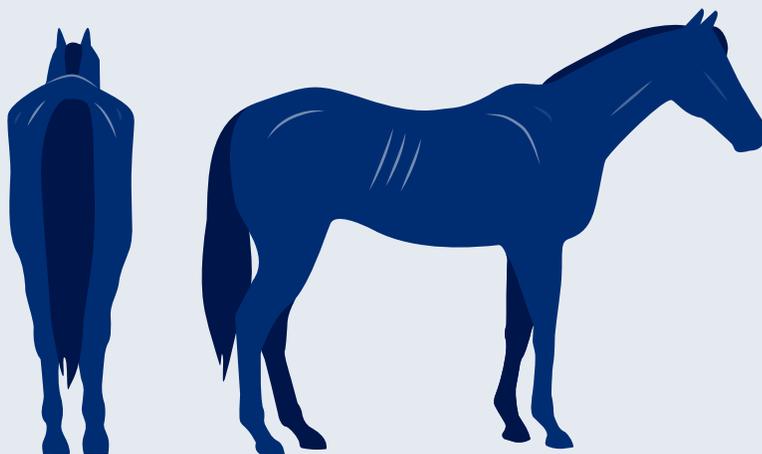


Easily evaluate your horse with the HENNEKE BODY CONDITION SCORING SYSTEM

UNDERWEIGHT

HENNEKE RATING 1-3 POOR - THIN

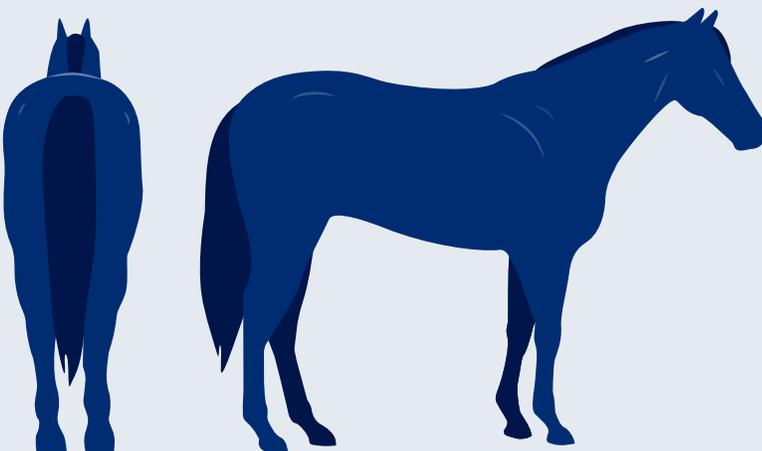
Underweight horses have little to no fat cover across their body. Their ribs are easily seen or felt. The bones along their spine may be visible, as well as around the shoulder and withers. They are in danger of serious health issues due to malnutrition.



IDEAL

HENNEKE RATING 4-6 MODERATELY THIN - MODERATELY FLESHY

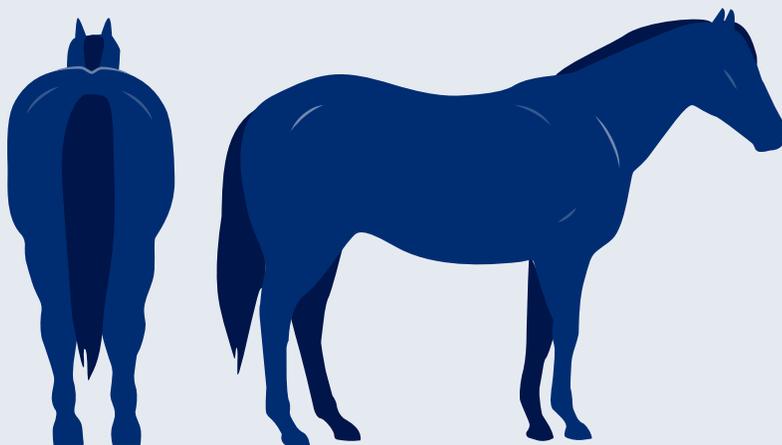
Moderate horses have decent muscle and appropriate fat cover over their body. You should still be able to feel their ribs but it should require some pressure to detect them. They are currently getting enough calories but still need to be careful to watch for any weight gain or loss.



OVERWEIGHT

HENNEKE RATING 7 - 9 FLESHY - EXTREMELY FAT

Overweight horses have excess fat deposits over their withers, neck and tail head. Their body will feel spongy to the touch in these areas. There may be a crease running down the middle of their back, where you could run a marble from withers to tail in the groove. They are at risk for several health issues.



Understanding the HENNEKE SCALE

	SCORE	NECK	WITHERS	SHOULDER	RIBS	LOIN	TAILHEAD
UNDERWEIGHT	1 POOR	Bone structure easily apparent; no fatty tissue can be felt	Bone structure easily noticeable	Bone structure easily noticeable	Easily visible and protruding rib bones	Individual vertebrae projecting prominently	Bones around tailhead projecting prominently
	2 VERY THIN	Bone structure faintly discernible	Bone structure faintly discernible	Bone structure faintly discernible	Easily discernible; slight fat cover over ribs	Individual vertebrae are prominent with slight fat cover	Tailhead prominent
	3 THIN	Neck accentuated	Withers accentuated	Shoulders accentuated	Slight fat cover over ribs but ribs still easily discernible	Fat buildup halfway on individual vertebrae	Prominent but individual bones are not as distinguishable
IDEAL	4 MODERATELY THIN	Not obviously thin	Not obviously thin	Not obviously thin	Faint outline of ribs discernible	Peaked appearance along back	Prominence depends on conformation; fat can be felt
	5 IDEAL	Blends smoothly into body	Rounded over spine	Blends smoothly into body	Can be easily felt but not visibly distinguished	Back is level	Fat around tailhead beginning to feel soft
	6 MODERATELY FLESHY	Fat beginning to be deposited	Fat beginning to be deposited	Fat beginning to be deposited	Fat over ribs, feels spongy	May have a slight positive crease (a groove) down back	Fat around tailhead feels soft
OVERWEIGHT	7 FLESHY	Fat deposited along neck	Fat deposited along withers	Fat deposited behind shoulder	Can feel the ribs with pressure; noticeable fat filling between ribs	May have a positive crease down the back	Fat around tailhead is soft
	8 FAT	Noticeable thickening of neck	Area along withers filled with fat	Area behind shoulder filled in flush with body	Difficult to feel ribs	Positive crease down the back	Fat around tailhead very soft
	9 EXTREMELY FAT	Bulging fat	Bulging fat	Bulging fat	Patchy fat appearance over ribs	Obvious positive crease down back	Bulging fat around tailhead

NOTE: Thick winter coats may give your horse a heavier appearance. Be sure to use your hands and feel for an accurate assessment of body condition. Ideal body condition ranges between 4-6 depending on personal preference and discipline.

What to do with your horse's score

TIPS & NEXT STEPS

IF YOUR HORSE IS BETWEEN A 1 - 3

- Your horse's health is at risk!
- Weight gain is a slow process, be sure to use a weight tape and take photos to monitor progress.
- Increase calorie and fiber intake. Beet pulp is a great source of fiber with more calories per pound than hay.
- Recommended feeds for underweight horse are: Triple Crown Senior, Senior Gold, Complete and Perform Gold.

IF YOUR HORSE IS BETWEEN A 4-6

- Nice work, your horse is doing well.
- Maintain your horse's body condition and be sure to meet their mineral and vitamin requirements.

IF YOUR HORSE IS BETWEEN A 7-9

- Your horse's health is at risk!
- Losing weight in a healthy way is a slow process.
- Horses always need access to forage throughout the day, but consider a grazing muzzle or a slow hay feeder to lower consumption amount.
- Evaluate all calorie sources and try increasing exercise.
- Recommended feeds for overweight horse are: Triple Crown Balancer, Balancer Gold and Lite.



TRACK YOUR HORSE'S BODY CONDITION

Take routine photos of your horse to track gradual changes in body condition.

TIPS FOR THE BEST PHOTOS

Take photos in the early morning or late afternoon for the best lighting.

Avoid shadows on your horse that can misrepresent their appearance.

Choose a location with a clear, uncluttered background.

Have your horse stand squarely on all four feet so that you can see their body evenly.

Crouch down to get the best angle of your horse and to fully capture the body and topline.

Take pictures from the front, side and behind your horse.

WONDERING WHICH FEED IS BEST FOR YOUR HORSE?

Our new Feed Selector tool empowers you with the information you need to choose with confidence.

[GET STARTED](#)