

BODY CONDITION SCORE



PONY CLUB
AUSTRALIA

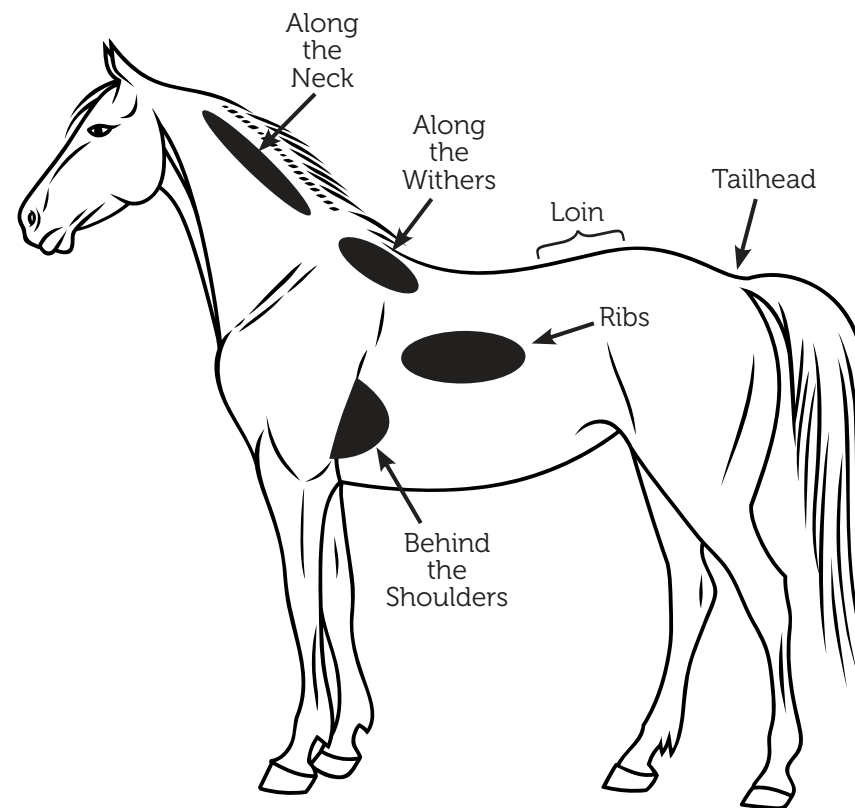
WHAT IS THE BEST SCORE FOR MY HORSE?

Condition scoring of horses involves an assessment of certain parts of a horse's body for 'fatness'. The most commonly used sites are along the neck, along the withers, the loin, tailhead, ribs and behind the shoulder as shown below.

Type of horse	Suggested score
Young, growing horse	3
Pregnant or lactating mare	4
Breeding stallion	3-4
Performance horse	3
Idle horse	3

**Poor body condition is not always due to lack of feed;
it could be related to:**

- parasite infestations
- poor dental health
- chronic injury or illness
- advanced age or
- lack of mobility affecting the horse's ability to forage.



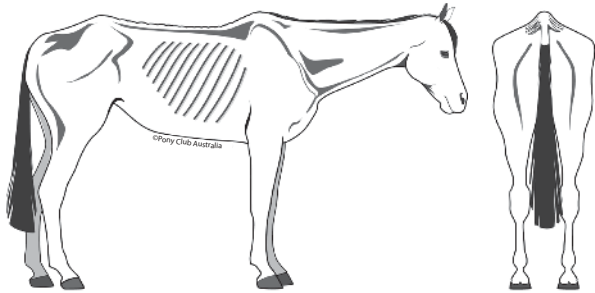
BODY CONDITION SCORE



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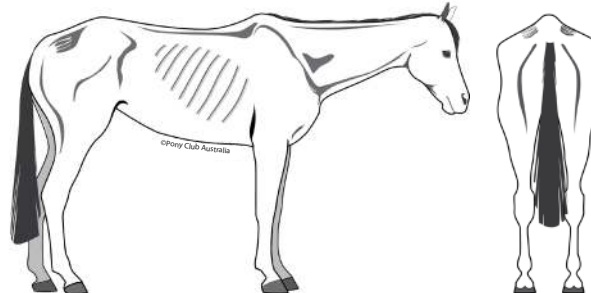
SIX POINT SCALE 0 TO 5

0. VERY POOR



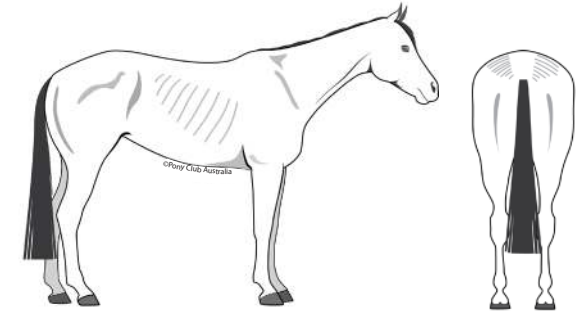
- Very sunken rump • Deep cavity under tail
- Skin tight over bones • Marked U shaped neck
- Very prominent backbone and pelvis

1. POOR



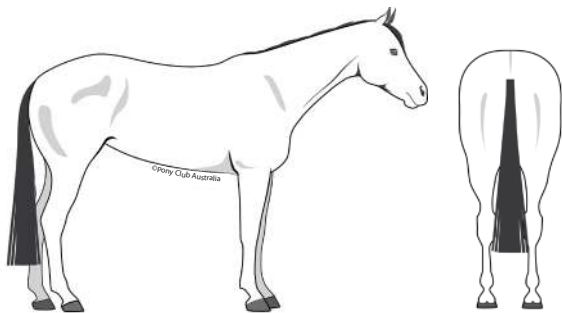
- Sunken rump • Cavity under tail
- Ribs easily visible • Prominent backbone and croup
- U shaped neck – narrow and slack

2. MODERATE



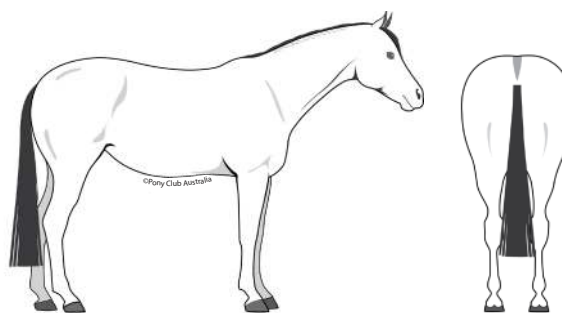
- Flat rump either side of backbone
- Ribs just visible • Narrow but firm neck
- Backbone well covered

3. GOOD



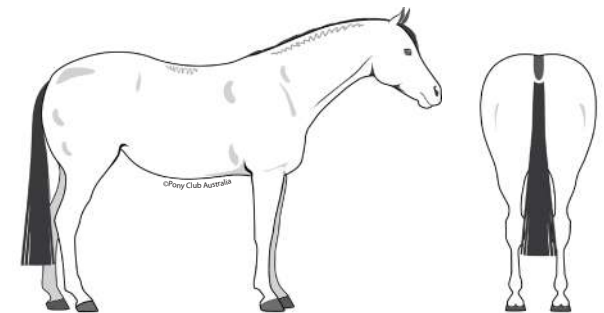
- Rounded rump
- Ribs just covered but easily felt
- No crest, firm neck

4. FAT



- Rump well rounded • Gutter along back
- Ribs and pelvis hard to feel • Slight crest

5. VERY FAT



- Very bulging rump • Deep gutter along back
- Ribs buried • Marked crest • Folds and lumps of fat

Body condition scoring provides a useful and objective method of monitoring body condition. Body condition, expressed as fatness, is the most reliable indicator of the suitability of a horse's diet and health.

METHOD OF ESTIMATION

1. Assess visually and by feel, the horse's pelvis and rump, back and ribs and neck. During winter, a long heavy hair coat complicates visual appraisal. You need to run your hands over the horse to get an accurate score.
2. Give those areas individual scores using a scale of 0 (very poor) to 5 (very fat).
3. Intermediate assessments can be given half scores.