
Breed Standard

BREED OBJECTIVE: To produce the smallest possible perfect horse.

GENERAL IMPRESSION: The American Miniature Horse is a beautiful, small, well balanced horse that if all reference to size were eliminated, would have the same conformational proportions of other full sized light breeds. The mares demonstrate refinement and feminine qualities. The mature stallions show boldness and masculinity. The general impression is to be a balanced individual regardless of size with symmetry, strength, agility and alertness. Movement is strong, natural and athletic. In motion the horse will exude athleticism as demonstrated by suppleness of the shoulders and engaged hocks. *In judging when characteristics are almost equal, preference must be given to the smaller horse.*

TEMPERAMENT: Temperament is reflected in its personality. The American Miniature Horse is intelligent, curious, gentle, sensible, willing to cooperate and easy to train.

SIZE: Measuring at base of the last hair of the mane, the mature animal must not exceed 34 inches. Horses two years old or younger conform to the height for age requirements as stated in the show rules.

COLOUR: Any coat colour, pattern, white markings and eye colour are equally acceptable.

HEAD: The head is beautiful, triangular in shape and comparatively small in proportion to the length of neck and body. The forehead is broad with large, prominent eyes. The eyes are set well apart and are placed approximately one third the distance from the poll to muzzle. The distance between the muzzle and eyes is comparatively short. A profile may be straight or slightly dished below the eyes, blending into large nostrils on a small, refined muzzle.

BITE: When viewed from the side, the meeting point of the centre incisor teeth should be equal and even. A slight deviation no more than half the width of the tooth's surface is permissible without fault. The accuracy of the bite may vary according to age. As the premolars and molars move into location, the alignment of the jaw could vary during this process.

EARS: The ears are set on top of the head and carried alertly. They are medium in size, well shaped with pointed tips curving slightly inward.

NECK: The neck is set on the top of a well-angulated shoulder, departing well above the point of the shoulder and blending into the withers, giving the impression of the neck sitting on top of the withers rather than in front of them. The slender neck is slightly arched forming a gentle curve from the poll to the back. Its length is in proportion to body with the top line being considerably longer than the bottom line. The throatlatch is clean and well defined, allowing flexion at the poll and normal respiration.

SHOULDERS: The shoulders are muscular, long, sloping, well angulated (45-50 degrees), allowing for a free swinging stride and alert head/neck carriage.

BODY: The body is compact with a short back, close coupling, broad loins, deep flank and well sprung ribs. The back has a long, level, well muscled croup and is smoothly rounding at the hip. The tail is well set. The underline of the body should be long but not tucked up at the flank. At maturity, the top of the hip must not be higher than the withers. The chest is medium width with defined muscular development.

LEGS: The legs appear longer than the body is deep. They possess flat bone, and an appearance of over-all substance with refinement. Legs are structurally straight and parallel when viewed from the front and back with hooves pointing directly ahead. The pasterns have sufficient length and angulations to provide a light, springy step. The front legs possess a well muscled forearm, relatively long in proportion to a short cannon. Front pasterns slope 45 to 48 degrees and blend smoothly with no change of angle from the hooves to the ground. The rear leg structure must demonstrate good angulations and proper flexion of the hocks for athletic movement; have the stifle placed well forward and low in the flank area with thighs and gaskins well muscled. The gaskin is relatively long in relation to the cannon. The rear cannons are perpendicular to the ground when points of hocks and buttocks are in the same vertical lines. Back pasterns slope 40 to 50 degrees and blend smoothly with no change of angle from the hooves to the ground. The hooves are trimmed to a practical length and have sufficient toe length and angle with spread of the heels for the size and proportions of the animal.

MOVEMENT: The walk is a natural free flowing, four beat gait with length of stride proportional to the height and length of leg. The trot is a natural forward, free flowing two beat diagonal gait where the knee and hock are synchronized in their elevated, flexed and extension movement. When viewed at a walk and trot from the front, the horse will replicate the structural correctness of its stance. The American Miniature Horses' conformation allows them to trot willingly and freely at liberty or pulling a pleasure cart.

JUVENILE CONSIDERATIONS: The body of the junior horse demonstrates stretch and frame to be filled in with muscling appropriate for its age. A mature adult look is not desirable.

