BODY CONDITION SCORING (BCS) METHOD

Use this chart to aid in scoring BCS. Add up all scores and divide by 4 to get the total BCS.

Horse name: _____ Age: _____

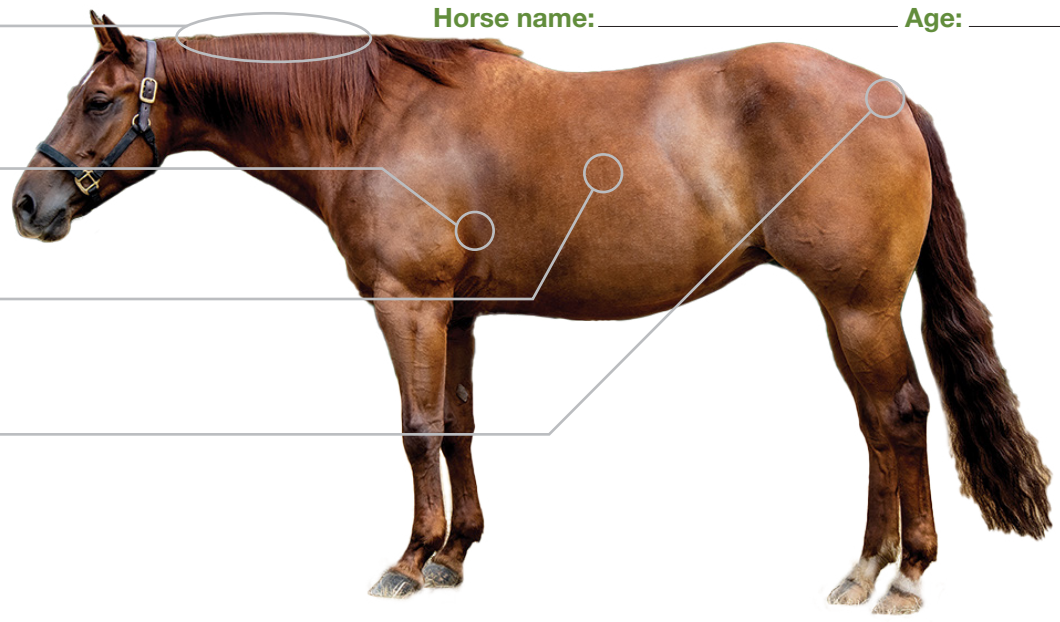
_____ SCORE — **Crest of neck**

_____ SCORE — **Behind the shoulder (Heart girth area)**

_____ SCORE — **Over the ribs**

_____ SCORE — **Around the tailhead**

_____ TOTAL BODY PARTS SCORES **÷ 4 =** _____ BODY CONDITION SCORE



Score	Crest of neck	Behind the shoulder (Heart girth area)	Over the ribs	Around the tailhead
1	No fat cover can be felt. Bone structure easily noticeable.	No fat cover can be felt. Bone structure readily visible. Concave heart girth area.	No fat cover, skin on bone. Entire rib cage projecting prominently.	No fat cover. Individual vertebrae can be seen.
2	Very little to no fat cover; bone structure faintly discernible.	Very little fat cover at heart girth; less concave. Bone structure discernible.	Very little fat cover between ribs. Individual ribs prominent.	Tailhead bone prominent.
3	Slight fat cover. Neck accentuated and thin, but not bony.	Slight fat cover, fat starting to cover heart girth; no concavity.	Slight fat cover between ribs. Ribs still visually discernible.	Tailhead prominent but individual vertebrae cannot be seen.
4	Neck not obviously thin; does not blend into body smoothly.	Fat starting to be felt.	Fat starting to be deposited. Faint outline of ribs still visible.	Slight fat cover detected. Tailhead outline discernible.
5	Neck blends smoothly into body. No noticeable fat accumulation.	Behind shoulder blends smoothly into body.	Ribs not visible at standstill, but can be easily felt.	Fat can be felt/detected around tailhead. Tailhead blends smoothly.
6	Fat beginning to be deposited along the crest.	Spongy fat easily felt behind shoulder.	Fat starting to accumulate over ribs. Ribs not visible, but can be felt with pressure.	Fat on sides of tailhead beginning to feel spongy.
7	Spongy fat deposited along crest of neck.	Spongy fat pad visible with movement behind shoulder.	Noticeable fat filling between and over ribs. Ribs may still be felt with very firm pressure.	Fat on sides of tailhead slightly visible and spongy.
8	Noticeable thickening of sides of crest and entire neck.	Spongy fat pad visible with movement behind shoulder.	Ribs not detectable through fat cover.	Fat pads on sides of tailhead moderately bulging.
9	Bulging fat along entire neck; crest may start to break over.	Bulging, obvious fat pad behind shoulder.	Spongy fat visible along and over ribs.	Obvious bulging fat pads surrounding tailhead.

TOPLINE EVALUATION SCORING (TES) METHOD

☐ Withers and Back ☐ Loin ☐ Croup



Place a check mark in each box that has adequate muscling to support the spine.

Areas to evaluate:

- Withers and back
  - Is the wither/back full and well rounded?
- Loin
  - Is the loin full, well rounded, and well developed?
- Croup
  - Are the croup and hip full and the stife muscle well defined?

How many check marks do you have?
3 = A 2 = B 1 = C 0 = D

A
IDEAL

This horse has ideal muscle development:

- The topline muscles are well developed in all three areas, the spinal processes cannot be seen, and the muscles blend smoothly into the ribs
- The wither/back and loin of the horse are full and well rounded
- The croup and hip are full and the stifle muscle is well defined

B

The sides of the wither are concave, as is the back between the vertebrae and the top of the ribs:

- The loin muscles are well developed and are the same height as the spinal process
- The croup and the hip muscling is adequate; pelvis to point of hip is rounded

C

The wither/back and loin areas, between the vertebrae and the ribs, are concave:

- The “spinal process” in the loin area is higher than the muscles beside it and can easily be seen and palpitated
- Muscles over the croup and hindquarters are well developed and rounded

D

The entire topline, including the wither/back, loin, and croup areas, is concave:

- The croup appears pointed at the top since the vertebrae and hip bones are higher than the concave muscles in between them
- In a severely affected horse, the width of its stifle is narrower than the width of the point of hip

1 Henneke, D.R., G.D. Potter, J.L. Kreider and B.F. Yeates. 1983. Relationship between body condition score, physical measurements and body fat percentage in mares. Equine Vet. J. 15(4): 371-372

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