

QUARTER & DRAFT HORSE INFORMATION

DID YOU KNOW???

- ◆ **Foals**, or newborn horses, can stand up and take steps just minutes after they are born!
- ◆ A **pony** is a grown-up horse that is *less than* 58 inches tall.
- ◆ The first horses were brought to North America (to Mexico first) by Hernando Cortes in 1519.
- ◆ Horses have fairly small stomachs with just one compartment (unlike cattle and sheep, which have *four* stomach compartments). Because of this, horses only eat small amounts at a time, but they may graze all day long!
- ◆ “Rodeo” is Spanish for “round-up.”

ABOUT HORSES...

Horses serve many purposes. They can help keep track of cattle and other animals on the farm or ranch. They are important to sports and leisure activities, such as polo, racing, and horseback riding. In the past, horses were important to transportation—people could ride them, and horses could pull wagons and stagecoaches. Long ago, horses also pulled plows to help farmers break-up the soil for planting, and they powered all kinds of machinery before electricity.

When do you see horses today? In what ways do horses work for people today?

HORSE VOCABULARY

brood mare – a female horse that have given birth to at least one foal

colt – a young male horse, under age four

dam – female parent

equine – relating to horses

farrier – person who makes horseshoes and puts the shoes on horses

filly – a young female horse, under age four

gait – a horse’s order of foot movements

gelding – male horse that has been neutered (like your cat or dog) so it cannot have young

halter – a collar and leadrope for leading a horse not wearing a bridle

hand – unit used to measure horses; one hand = 4 inches

foal – a newborn horse up to age 12 months, or the act of a horse giving birth

mare – a female horse age 4 and older, or a mother horse

pasture – land where animals may graze and forage plants

sire – male parent

stables – buildings where horses sleep and eat

stall – a space or compartment for an animal in a barn or stable

stallion – a grown-up male horse, especially one that is kept for breeding

yearling – a horse that is one year old, measured beginning the January 1 following the horse’s birth

yeld mare – a grown-up female horse that has not *foaled*, or given birth to young

WHAT A HORSE EATS

Horses **graze** in the **pasture**, eating grasses, in the warmer months. They also eat rolled oats, barley, bran, and **hay**, which is dried and cured **forage** plants, such as **alfalfa**.

GAITS

A gait is the order of a horse's foot movements. Most horses have four gaits.

walk -- a flat-footed, 4-beat slow gait
trot -- a 2-beat diagonal gait
canter – a 3-beat gait *faster*
gallop – a 4-beat gait *fastest*

OTHER HORSE BREEDS

There are many different kinds of horses besides the Quarter Horses and Draft Horses that show during the NAILE. Here are a few other breeds:

Appaloosa – developed by the Nez Perce Indians in the American West, this popular riding horse is known for its spotted coat

Arabian – a popular breed descended from ancient horses, Arabians are spirited, good-natured, and quick

Friesian – a Dutch breed with a very fast trot, Friesians are always black

Hackney – this breed, with a mixture of Arabian and Thoroughbred blood, is a favorite driving horse

Tennessee Walking Horse – known for its gentle, smooth ride and unusual gaits: the flat walk, running walk, and the rocking chair canter

Thoroughbred – from the Arabic word meaning “pure bred,” this is the most popular racehorse (It is the horse of the Kentucky Derby.)

Saddlebred – the only horse breed founded in Kentucky, this favorite show horse has a fifth gait, the high-stepping gait called the rack

Standardbred – bred to be a good trotting horse for the sport of harness racing, these American horses can also pace, or move both legs on the same side together

QUARTER HORSE

The most popular breed of horse in America, Quarter Horses are the first native breed to this country. They were the original race horse, and they got their name because they were frequently raced in two-furlong (¼-mile) stretches. Quarter Horses are still the fastest horse in a two-furlong gallop; the best can do the quarter-mile in 21 seconds or less! Thoroughbreds have replaced Quarter Horses as the favorite racing breed because they can race longer distances, but Quarter Horses are the cowboy's favorite.

On farms or ranches, Quarter Horses and their riders separate cattle from the herd by *cutting* and they chase and *rope* calves that try to get away from the herd. Some of the contests at the Quarter Horse Show test these cowboy skills. It is important for Quarter Horses to have a quiet and smooth (not bouncy!) gait, to keep from scattering cattle.

Western Events

In the Quarter Horse Show, the horses and riders compete in roping events. Other breeds of horse can do this, too, including Arabians, Paint Horses, and Appaloosas.

Quarter Horses may be one of 13 different colors:

Bay – brown to red/yellow-brown with black mane and tail

Black – almost all black but may have some white markings

Blue roan – black or brown mixed with white hairs; looks blue

Brown – ranges from light oak to deep dark brown with black mane and tail

Buckskin -- light yellowish dun color with black mane and tail

Chestnut -- deep gold to golden red

Dun – grayish-yellow or sandy with black mane and tail

Gray – dark-skinned with a mixture of white and black hairs

Grullo – solid mouse gray with black mane and tail

Palomino – gold with white or silver mane and tail

Red dun – yellowish-red with almost a flesh-colored tone

Red roan – reddish brown mixed with white hairs

Sorrel – reddish brown; the most common Quarter Horse color

Quarter Horses can only have white markings on their face or on the lower parts of their legs. White markings on the face are called words like star, blaze, strip, and snip. This picture shows the different markings that are allowed and what they are called.

PARTS OF THE HORSE

Fetlocks can sometimes have a fringe of hair around them to help protect the horse's legs. To see this, look at the draft horse pictures.

The *withers* is the top of the horse's back. When you measure a horse in *hands*, you measure from the withers (not the top of the head) to the ground.

The *mane*, *forelock*, and *tail* move around quite a bit on horses, because they help to keep the flies away!

The *muzzle* is the jaw and nose.

The *hoof* is similar to our fingernails; it's hard, it protects the foot, and it needs to be trimmed often. *Horseshoes*, U-shaped bands made of steel or aluminum, are often fitted to hooves to further protect them.

DRESSING LIKE A COWBOY (OR CATTLE WOMAN)

In the Western events of Calf or Steer Roping, Barrel Racing, and Pole Bending, the riders wear Western clothing: a Western hat called a Stetson, a long-sleeved shirt with collar, Western boots, and chaps (leather leggings). They wear this in the rodeo, too.

TACK

a horse's gear or equipment

bit – piece of metal or plastic placed in the horse's mouth, so that when the rider moves the reins, the horse knows what to do

reins – strap fastened to the bit used by the rider to control the horse

saddle – seat for the rider; different kinds of saddles are used for different types of work

stirrup irons – rings that hang from the saddle to support the rider's foot

DRAFT HORSE

These are various breeds of large, strong work horses. Draft Horses are the world's biggest horses. They can be as tall as 19 hands (over six-foot-tall at the shoulders!) and weigh as much as 2,500 pounds! Percherons, Belgians, Clydesdales, and Shires are the breeds that show at the NAILE Draft Horse Show.

- *Belgians* have massive shoulders and quarters. They are often chestnut or roan in color.
- The *Percheron* is a French breed with a deep chest and compact body. The largest horse in the world was a Percheron, at 21 hands high! They are often gray or black.
- The *Clydesdale* is a British breed that worked in the coalfields of Scotland in the 1700s. Called the "gentle giant," its colors are bay, brown, and black.
- The *Shire* is also a British breed. It dates back to Elizabethan times, more than 400 years ago, when the strong Shires carried knights in armor. They are heavy and rather slow and can pull up to 10,000 pounds! Colors include bay, brown, gray, and black.