

The Condition Score System*

Score	Description
1	Poor. The horse is emaciated. The spinous processes (backbone), ribs, tailhead and hooks and pins all project prominently. The bone structures of the withers, shoulders and neck are easily noticeable, and no fat can be felt anywhere.
2	Very Thin. The spinous processes are prominent. The ribs, tailhead and pelvic bones stand out, and bone structures of the withers, neck and shoulders are faintly discernible.
3	Thin. The spinous processes stand out, but fat covers them to midpoint. Very slight fat cover can be felt over the ribs, but the spinous processes and ribs are easily discernible. The tailhead is prominent, but individual vertebrae cannot be seen. Hook bones are visible but appear rounded. Pin bones cannot be seen. The withers, shoulders and neck are accentuated.
4	Moderately Thin. The horse has a negative crease along its back and the outline of the ribs can just be seen. Fat can be felt around the tailhead. The hook bones cannot be seen and the withers, neck and shoulders do not look obviously thin.
5	Moderate-The Threshold Level of Body Condition. The back is level. Ribs cannot be seen but can be easily felt. Fat around the tailhead feels slightly spongy. The withers look rounded and the shoulder and neck blend smoothly into the body.
6	Moderate to Fleshy. There may be a slight crease down the back. Fat around the tailhead feels soft and fat over the ribs feels spongy. There are small deposits along the sides of the withers, behind the shoulders and along the sides of the neck.
7	Fleshy. There may be a crease down the back. Individual ribs can be felt, but there is noticeable fat between the ribs. Fat around the tailhead is soft. Fat is noticeable in the withers, the neck and behind the shoulders.
8	Fat. The horse has a crease down the back. Spaces between ribs are so filled with fat that the ribs are difficult to feel. The area along the withers is filled with fat, and fat around the tailhead feels very soft. The space behind the shoulders is filled in flush and some fat is deposited along the inner buttocks.
9	Extremely Fat. The crease down the back is very obvious. Fat appears in patches over the ribs and there is bulging fat around the tailhead, withers, shoulders and neck. Fat along the inner buttocks may cause buttocks to rub together, and the flank is filled in flush.

*Adapted from Henneke et al. (1983).