

For Your Information

Courtesy Of:

Cotati Large Animal Hospital

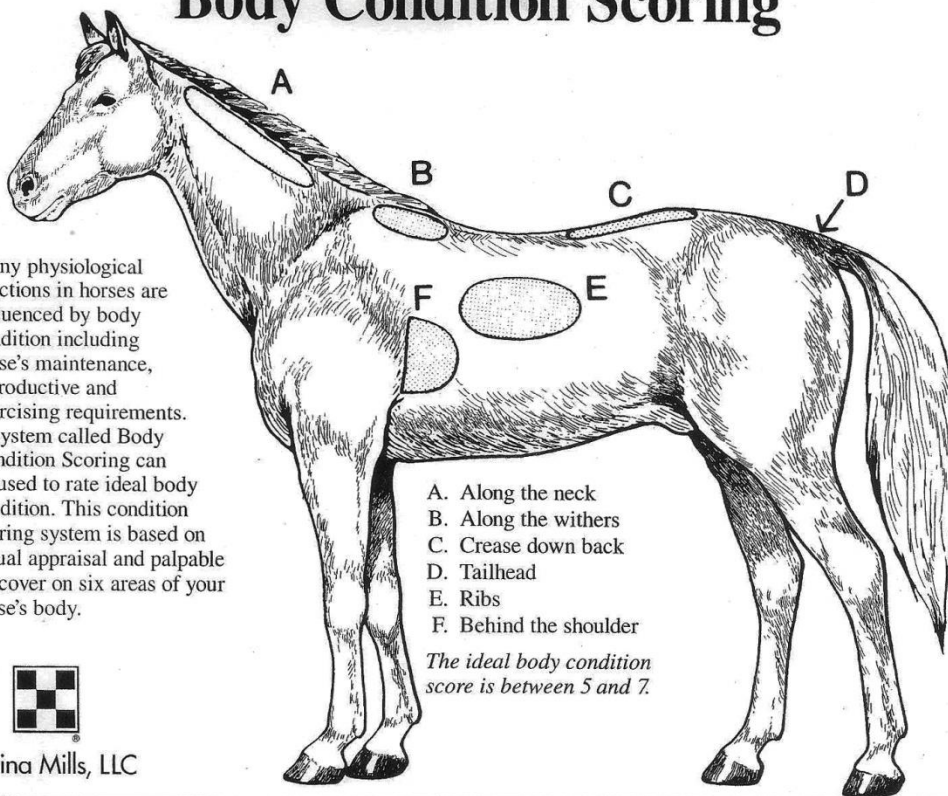
8079 Gravenstein Hwy, Cotati, CA 94931

(707) 795-4356 (707) 578-4760

Gene Harlan, DVM Calvin Dotti, DVM Andrew Wirz, DVM Sally Venable, DVM

www.cotatilargeanimal.com

Body Condition Scoring



Many physiological functions in horses are influenced by body condition including horse's maintenance, reproductive and exercising requirements. A system called Body Condition Scoring can be used to rate ideal body condition. This condition scoring system is based on visual appraisal and palpable fat cover on six areas of your horse's body.

- A. Along the neck
- B. Along the withers
- C. Crease down back
- D. Tailhead
- E. Ribs
- F. Behind the shoulder

The ideal body condition score is between 5 and 7.



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Description of Individual Condition Scores (Score 1-9)

1. Poor: Animal extremely emaciated; spinous processes, ribs, tailhead, tuber coxae (hip joints), and ischia (lower pelvic bones) projecting prominently; bone structure of withers, shoulders, and neck easily noticeable; no fatty tissue can be felt.

2. Very Thin: Animal emaciated; slight fat covering over base of spinous processes; transverse processes of lumbar vertebrae feel rounded; spinous processes, ribs, tailhead, tuber coxae (hip joints) and ischia (lower pelvic bones) prominent; withers, shoulders, and neck structure faintly discernible.

3. Thin: Fat buildup about halfway on spinous processes; transverse processes cannot be felt; slight fat cover over ribs; spinous processes and ribs easily discernible; tailhead prominent, but individual vertebrae cannot be identified visually; tuber coxae

(hip joints) appear rounded but easily discernible; tuber ischia (lower pelvic bones) not distinguishable; withers, shoulders and neck accentuated.

4. Moderately Thin: Slight ridge along back; faint outline of ribs discernible; tailhead prominence depends on conformation, fat can be felt around it; tuber coxae (hip joints) not discernible; withers, shoulders, and neck not obviously thin.

5. Moderate: Back is flat (no crease or ridge); ribs not visually distinguishable but easily felt; fat around tailhead beginning to feel spongy; withers appear rounded over spinous processes; shoulders and neck blend smoothly into body.

6. Moderately Fleishy: May have slight crease down back; fat over ribs spongy; fat

around tailhead soft; fat beginning to be deposited along the side of withers, behind shoulders, and along sides of neck.

7. Fleishy: May have crease down back; individual ribs can be felt, but noticeable filling between ribs with fat; fat around tailhead soft; fat deposited along withers, behind shoulders, and along neck.

8. Fat: Crease down back; difficult to feel ribs; fat around tailhead very soft; area along withers filled with fat; area behind shoulder filled with fat; noticeable thickening of neck; fat deposited along inner thighs.

9. Extremely Fat: Obvious crease down back; patchy fat appearing over ribs; bulging fat around tailhead, along withers, behind shoulders, and along neck; fat along inner thighs may rub together; flank filled with fat.