

## 9

## SIGNS OF A HEALTHY HORSE

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Keeping your horse in optimal body condition is a seasonal balancing act. Horses can lose or gain weight quickly and need their diet adjusted accordingly. You should be able to feel a horse's ribs but not see them.

A healthy horse is interested in his surroundings and has an alert demeanour. A listless horse usually has a problem.

Eyes should be clear and bright, and there should be no visible discharge. Cloudy or discoloured eyes as well as excessive discharge from the eyes or nostrils can be a sign of ill health.

Body temperatures outside the normal range should be monitored. Temperatures over 39°C (102.2°F) require immediate veterinary attention. Know what is normal for your horse before illness strikes.

Horses' teeth continually grow and need to be checked and rasped (floated) at least once a year. If a horse is dropping food it may mean his teeth are causing pain. A long tooth can cause a wound in the mouth that makes eating painful.

A healthy horse has free movement. When a horse is lame he may excessively nod his head when walking or avoid putting weight on one foot and appear to step short.

The legs should be free of lumps, bumps and cuts. Check the legs when you groom for heat and swelling.

A healthy horse has a healthy appetite. Disinterest in food can mean there is a problem. A good diet will also keep his coat healthy.

Healthy hooves are critical to a horse. Trimming every 6-8 weeks is necessary. Long, weak or brittle hooves means you need to call the farrier and make sure that your horse's diet is helping him build strong hooves.



# KNOW YOUR HORSE'S VITAL SIGNS



NORMAL TEMPERATURE 37.5 - 38 °C  
99.5 - 100.5 °F



NORMAL HEART RATE 40-44 BEATS  
PER MINUTE



NORMAL RESPIRATION 8-16 BREATHS  
PER MINUTE

