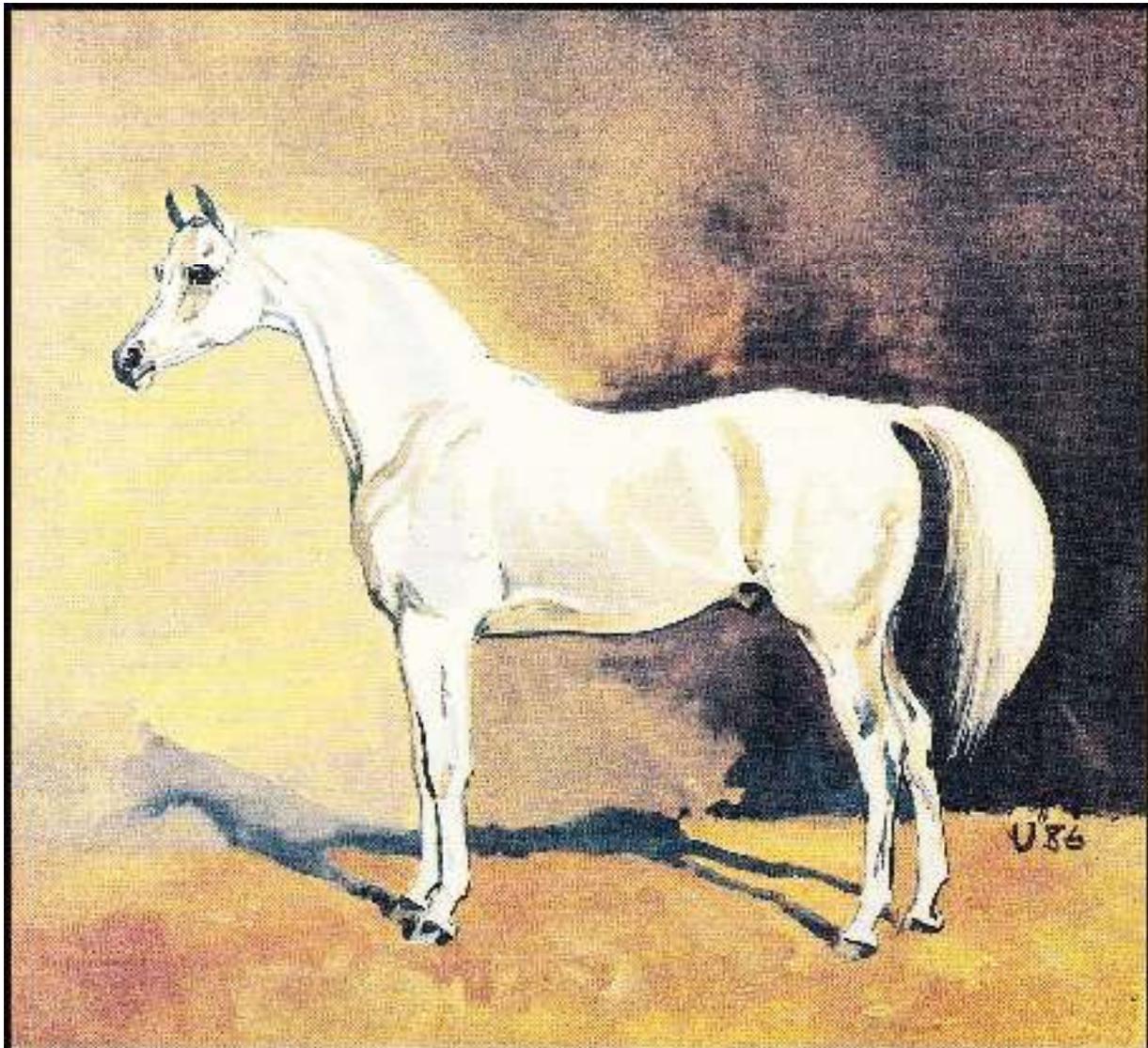
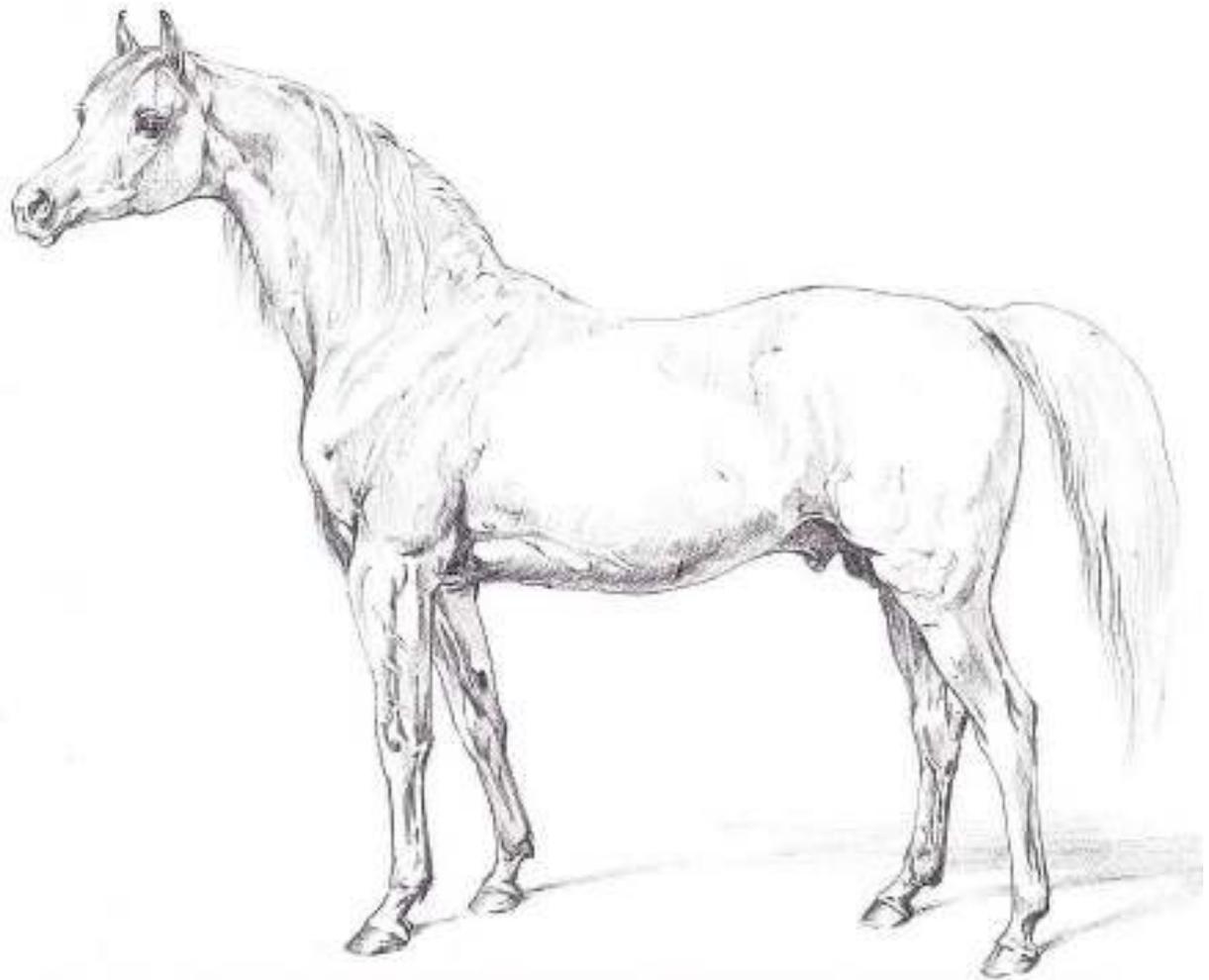


ECAHO JUDGES' TRAINING MANUAL

Studying material for ECAHO Judges courses





Compiled by Peter Upton & ECAHO Judges Instructors Group, 2016.

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Drawings and pictures: Peter Upton

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Introduction

The European Conference of Arab Horse Organizations (ECAHO) was founded in order to regulate and promote Arabian shows.

In order to achieve this, the organization first established Show Commission (EAHSC) made up of delegates from all the Member countries. Their work entailed the foundation of a set of rules and regulations for the administration of shows, a show pyramid from C to Title shows, a list of judges and disciplinary committee members. Their task is on-going, and the Blue Book, which is regularly updated, contains the relevant rules & lists.

ECAHO can be proud of its achievements. After more than thirty years which has seen not only significant growth in showing, but a greater professionalism and internationalisation, too it is appropriate now to review ECAHO's role.

ECAHO accepts two judging systems:

- 1) the comparative and
- 2) the points system.

No system is perfect but any system works well with good judges, whereas no system can afford to support bad judges.

Today, we see some contradictions in the European showing scene due to variety of reasons. Problems also exist in regards to judges, where many of A and B list judges never appear in the ring. The twenty points system is now reduced to a four or five system, and so on. With these issues in mind a Judges Instructors group was established to look in depth at the present situation and to contribute new ideas, particularly in regard to the training and examination of judges.

The Misuse of Judging system:

It is appropriate to review the present situation regarding ECAHO's judging system and to address if possible the concerns that exist.

- 1) There is shortage of good, experienced, honest, ethical and non-political judges.
- 2) The Comparative system
 - a) This system only sets out to place the horse in order. The final placings can take place throughout the duration of the class.
 - b) It is usual that there is one Judge at Show with the comparative system.
 - c) There is possibly less audience participation.
- 3) The Point System
 - a) This system sets out to achieve two results at the same time: to place the horses in order and to assign a standard – a mathematical score – to each horse.

- b) The points system favours individual presentation in order to enable Judges to assess each horse with five marks whilst it stands before them.
- c) Marks are getting higher. Are all our Arabs really so much better? Where do we go from here?
- d) Due to c) variation in total marks is getting narrow.
- e) Half marks appear to help the Judge but further add to the narrowing of the total scores.
- f) This narrowing of total marks is unfair on the really good horse who should be 10 or 12 points ahead in total compared with a poor horse.

Today the gap within a class is too narrow. Quality translated into numbers can vary considerably – depending on the show, depending on the overall quality, so that quite different totals can appear for the same horse; and audience find it perplexing that a horse who achieved total mark of 92 at one show, only gets 89 at another show.

- 4) What can be done about freewheelers? Those Judges are staying in the middle and play safe by giving all the horses similar marks. They are not judging the horses themselves but letting the rest of the panel to do the job for them. The “freewheelers” are not criticised by the audience and don’t stick their neck out by being honest and giving really low marks where such is deserved.
- 5) This is also perplexing especially if the two horses with the similar marks are brought back into the arena so that a Judge or Judges can now decide that, after all, the horses are not equal but one is now inexplicably better than the other.
- 6) Few judges using Points system, if honest, give marks on the principle of perfection.

Tribute to the Arab Horse by Lt. Col. C.E.G. Hope

“Few breeds of horses have been the subject of so much violent argument – over his origin, his height, his use, his present value – as the Arab. But what does he care! He still remains unique, a mystery and a person, whose beauty is a compound of personality and born not to be analysed part by part but to be seen – and enjoyed – as a whole. Taut as a bowstring, alert as a sentinel, proudly he stands and challenges the world.”

The Arabian – Development of Type

The Arabian is the oldest purebred (Asil) horse breed in the world and its blood flows strongly in most modern breeds of horse and pony including the British Thoroughbred.

Characteristics

It is a horse of great beauty, full of quality, vigour, elegance, dignity and refined power – an equine work of art. Hallmarks of the breed are its exquisite head and high tail carriage. Without these distinctive characteristics, without type, identity is lost. Type and good confirmation are essential, neither alone is enough, and charisma is a bonus. This presence of charisma is a notable feature of all high caste Arabians.

The Arabian is of a gentle, kind and affectionate, though spirited disposition and displays much intelligence. This is possible due in part to its long history as a close companion of man in war and peace. Stallions should be full of vigour and fire yet tractable and gentlemanly.

The breed is also famed for its courage, sound constitution and great powers of endurance.

Development and Selection

The development of type, temperament and other characteristics is the result of selection. Natural selection played an important role in the harsh world of desert where only the strong and healthy survived, but this is no longer a relevant factor. We must however never lose sight of this attribute.

Selection through “inbreeding” and line-breeding helps to achieve desirable characteristics by reducing variations in type. But too close relationships can affect fertility of produce other undesirable features, therefore outcrossing is also essential. Purity of breeding among the Bedouin tribes was perpetuated by their isolation in the desert. Ghazus’ “raid” provided an opportunity to acquire celebrated mares and obtain fresh blood, though tribes with very good mares were prepared to travel them vast distances to visit top stallion of another tribe.

Undoubtedly, certain lines “nick” well – this may be due to a naturally harmonious relationship between their characteristics. Perhaps mutual attraction, “love” could also be a contributory factor. Often a mare will stand to one stallion but take no interest in another.

Breeders and the Strains

However, the major contribution to the development of the breed was and is the selection based on the ideals of the breeder. This led in the past to the family strains, continuing through the mare line according to Bedouin custom. All strains appear to originate in the Keheilet Ajuz. For example the Saglawieh got its name from an old Keheilet broodmare (‘awdah) who was a kicker (sagla). A descendant of hers, one Dalmaz belonged to Ign Jedran and so she became a Saglawieh Jedranieh. Two chestnut (shakrâ) daughters of hers were purchased by Mansour Ibn Sudan and so we get the Seglawieh Jedranieh of Ibn Sudan or the Seglawieh Sudanieh.

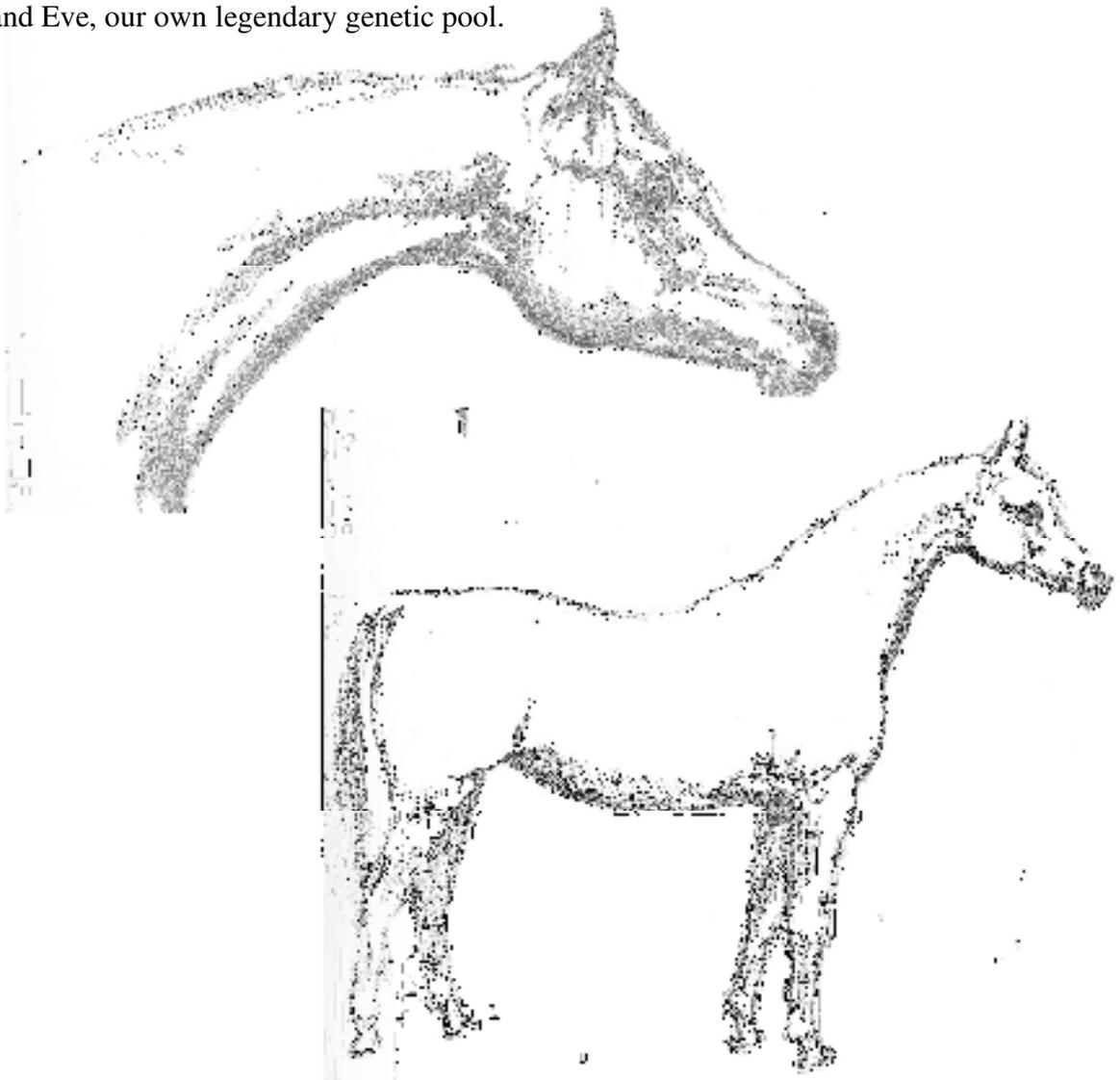
Breeding within the strain (inbreeding) seems to have been practised rarely. No doubt in the past certain mares or “lines” bred consistently true and this can be termed prepotency. The same is also true of certain stallions. Indeed “family” likenesses can still be noted, but it would seem that today specific type or colour cannot be associated with particular strains, for selection continues and new “strains” are developed.

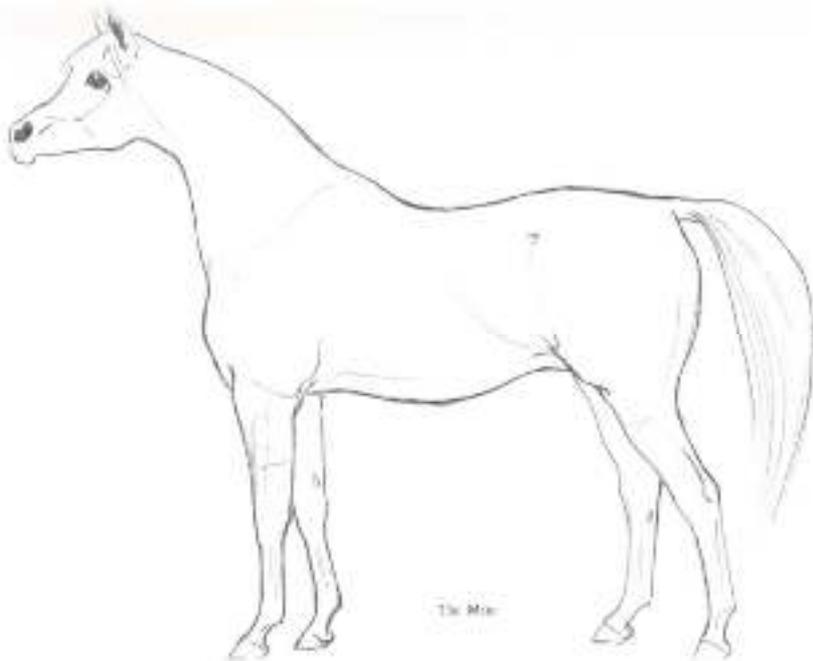
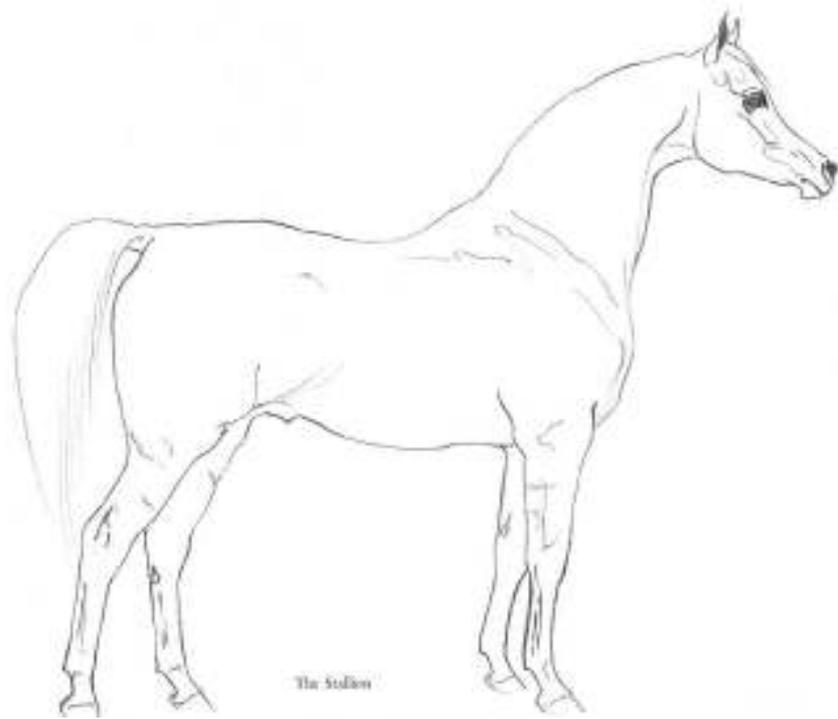
Variation in type

Although type is essential and the definition of type should be standard, it can be “all things to all men”, so variation in type is inevitable. But those variations must fall within the same broad concept of what constitutes the ideal.

The contributions to the development of the breed through selection possibly explain why today’s horses go back to such a small genetic pool. We don’t really know to what extent the original horses were related but probably it was very close as each strain came from the same family mare.

According to legend, all Arabian descended through the Benar-el-Away (Daughters of the Crooked) to the Mare of Baz. He, Baz, was the great-great-grandson of Noah, a descendant of Adam and Eve, our own legendary genetic pool.



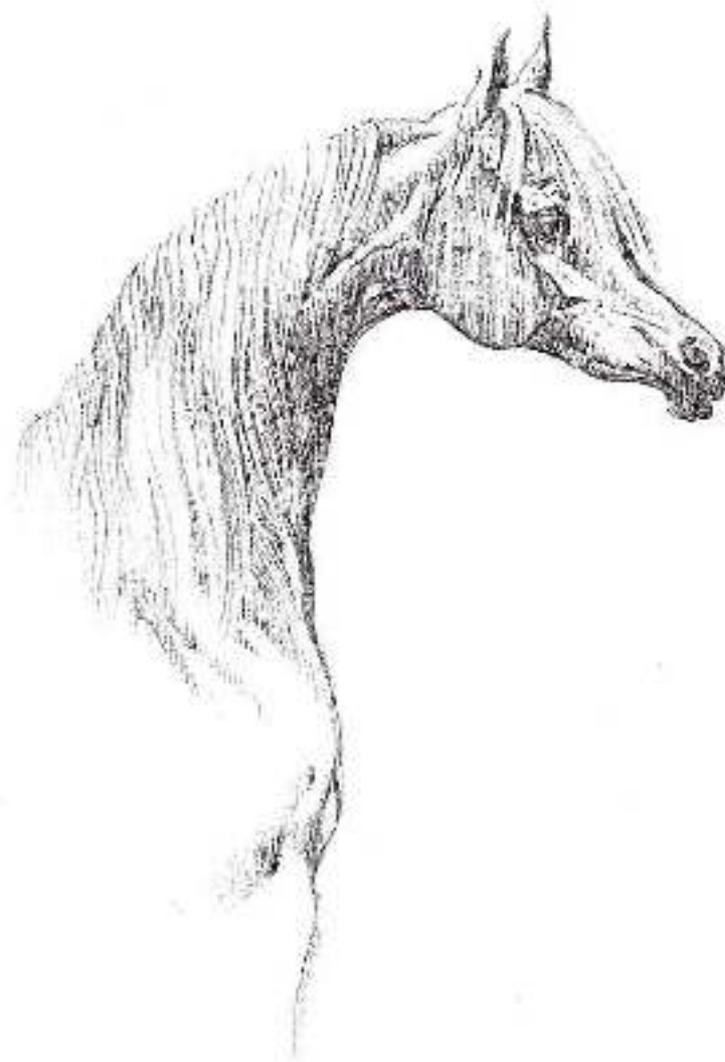


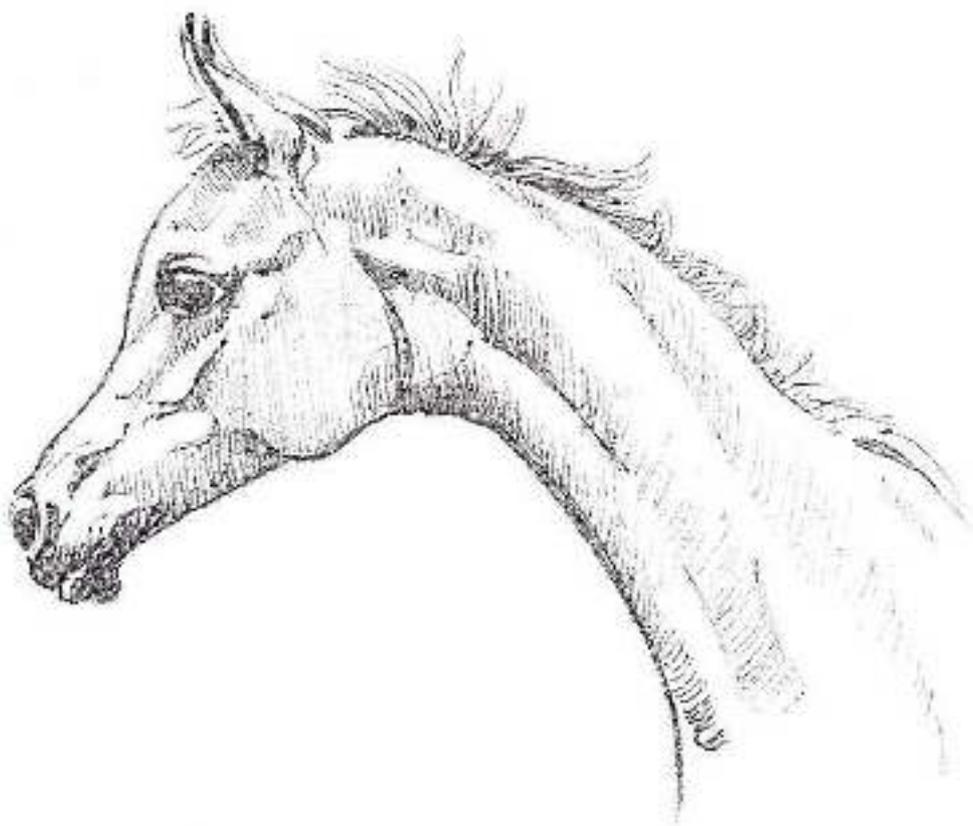
NOTE

In assessing type and conformation, allowance should be made for sex, age and condition. Conformation must not be confused with condition. A stallion should appear masculine and the mare feminine. Foals and young stock change considerably as they grow to maturity and old horses may be forgiven for the changes due to the natural results of old age.

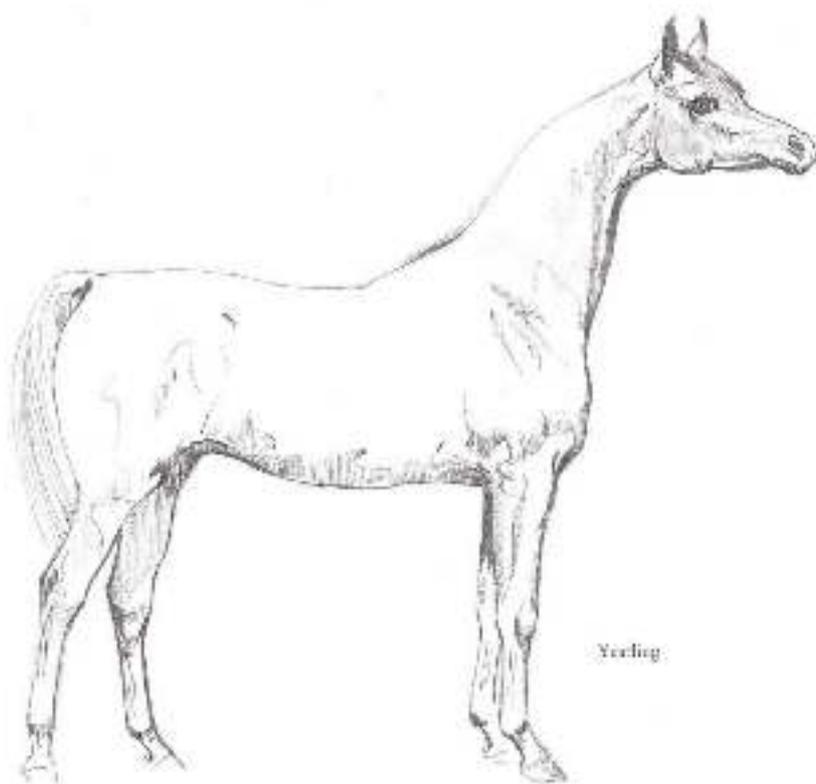
Arabians develop more slowly than the precocious thoroughbred, but are well-known for their longevity and often they will continue breeding well into their twenties – a mare with foal at foot or about to foal may change in appearance due to her condition and the same can be said of a horse in work or racing fit.

Obviously a horse in healthy condition looks better than one in poor health, but too much “conditions” (fatness) may well serve to disguise faults and perhaps to amplify others.

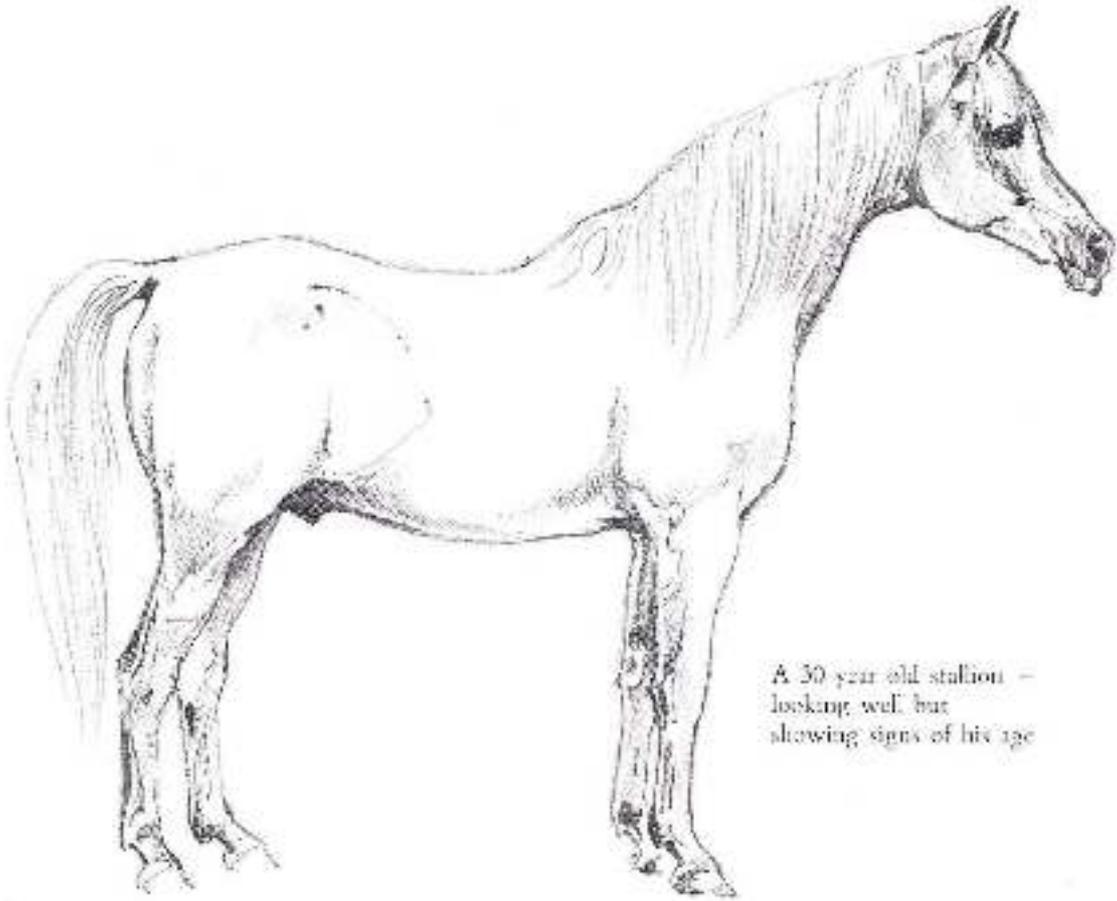




A six month old filly



Yearling



A 30 year old stallion -
looking well, but
showing signs of his age

CONFORMATION

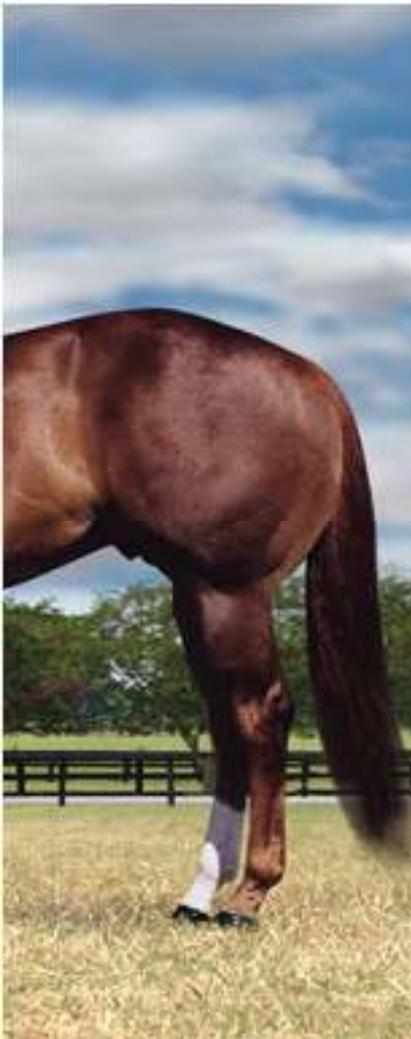
Equine conformation evaluates the degree of correctness of a horse's bone structure, musculature, and its body proportions in relation to each other. Undesirable conformation can limit the ability to perform a specific task. Although there are several universal "faults", a horse's conformation is usually judged by what its intended use may be. Thus "form to function" is one of the first set of traits considered in judging conformation. Any conformation fault has also direct effect on the movement.

Different use – different conformation



Tee Coolest, a Quarter Horse stallion





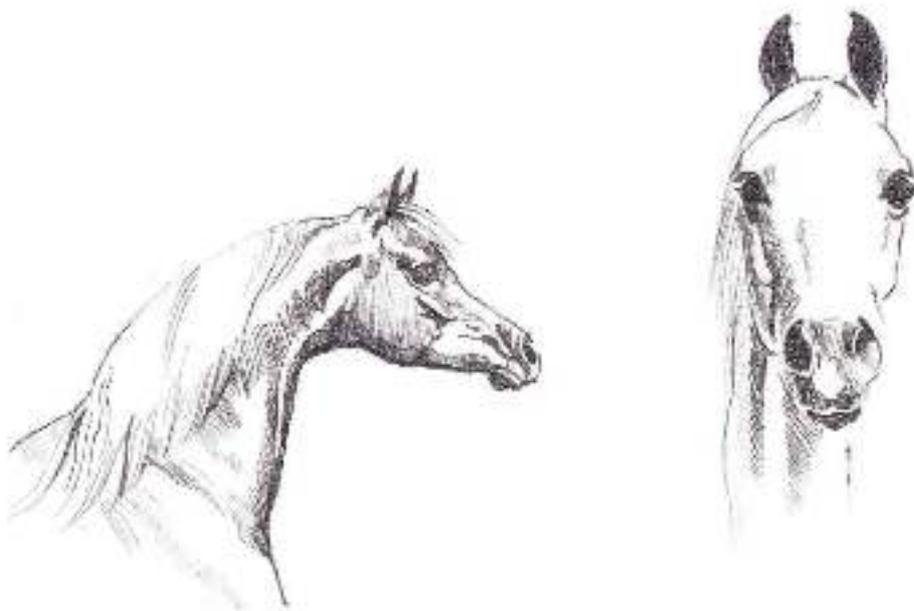
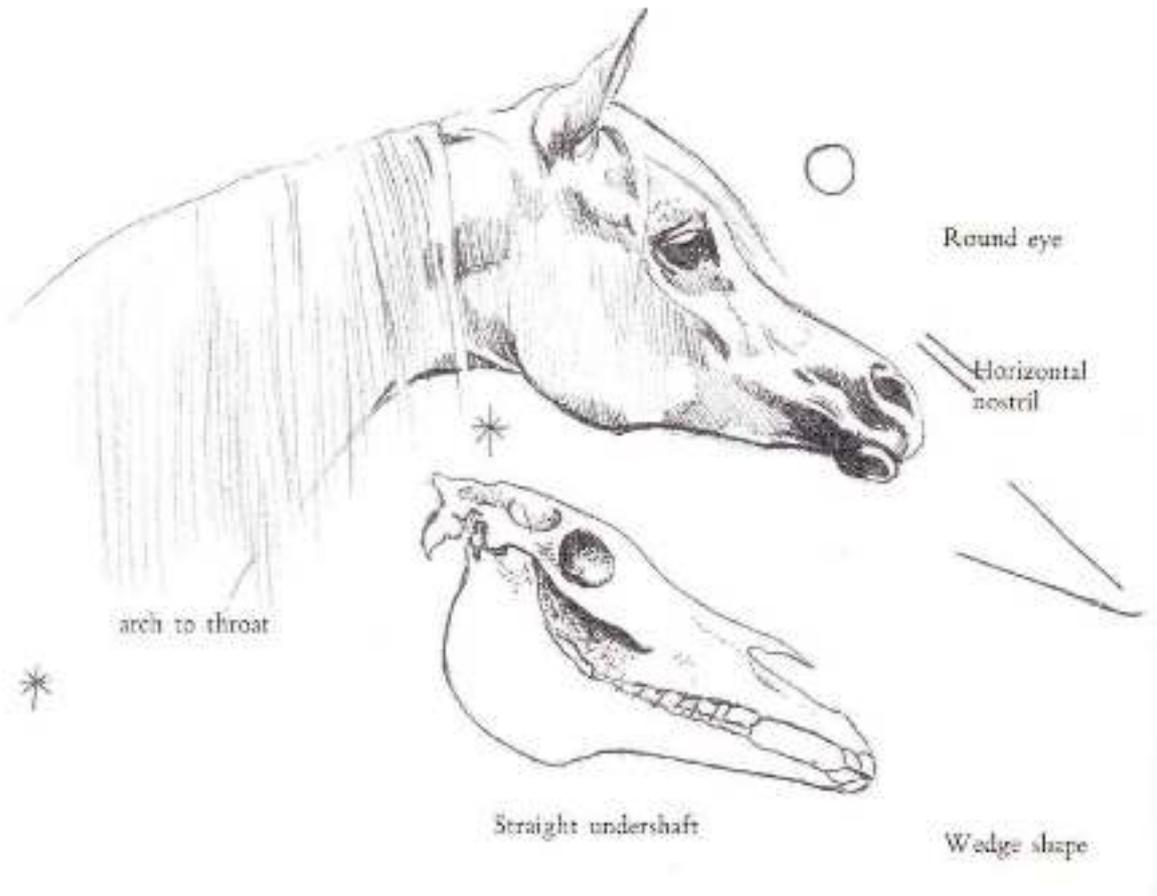
1. The Head



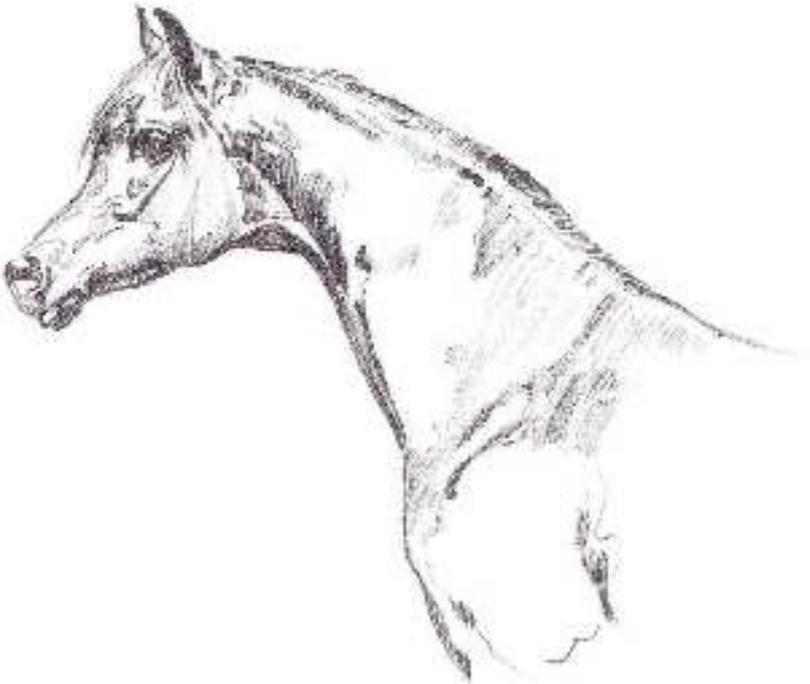
“A most intelligent and yet singularly gentle look, full eye, sharp thorn-like little ear...” Palgrave 1862 *“...marked depth of jowl also width between the cheek bones. The ears are fine and beautifully shaped but not very small. The eye is large and mild, the forehead prominent and the muzzle fine, almost pinched...”* Blunt 1880.

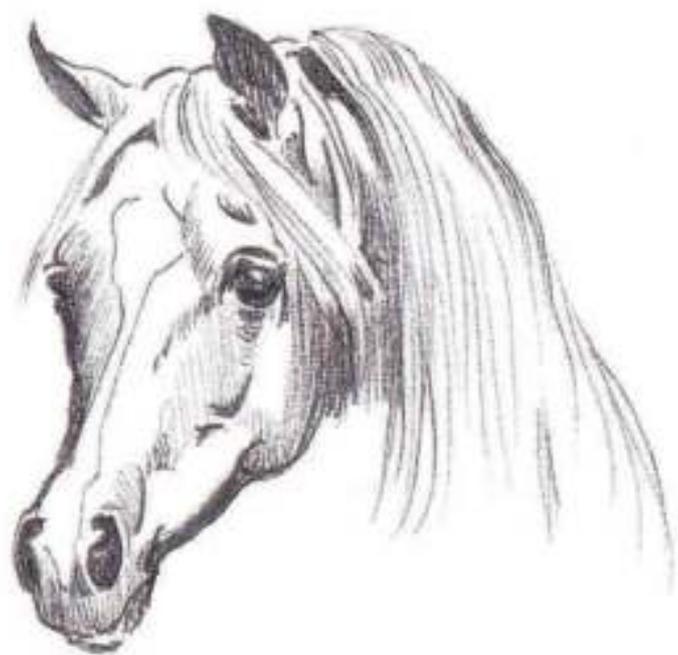
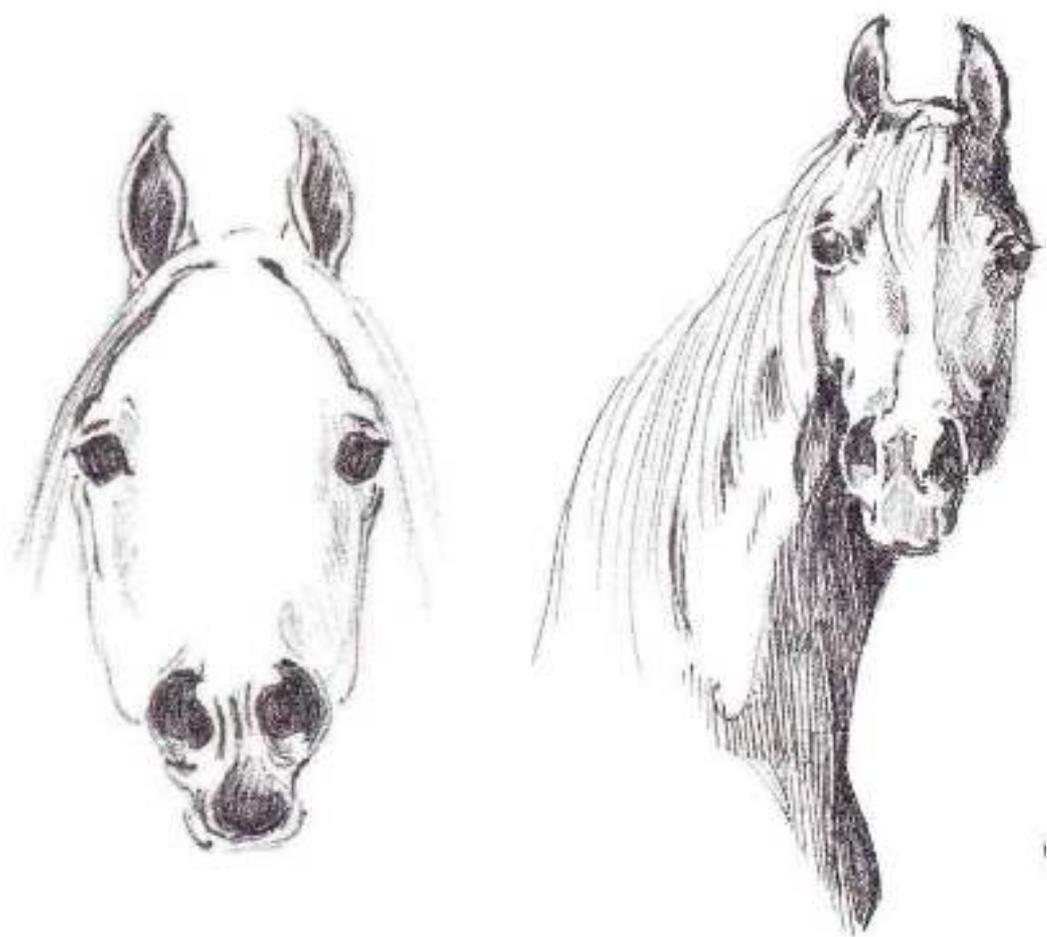
One of the most distinctive features of the Arabian is its head, which is extremely refined with the bone structure clearly defined. When seen from the side the head appears wedge-shaped, broad across the cheek bone and tapering to a fine “pint-pot” muzzle. The eyes set low in the head are large and of a limpid dark colour. It is not a fault to have some white round the eye like a human eye. The nostrils in repose lie parallel to the profile of the face and are capable of real expression. The cheek bones are large, sharply edged and set wide apart with clean flesh between (a clenched fist should fit between the jaw bones) – thus allowing throat room. The shafts of the under jaw are straight and not convex in shape, meeting cleanly at a clearly defined curb groove. The narrow lower lip, particularly in certain mares, may be loose and pendulous in repose but when interested or excited it is drawn up tight. The mouth is long with a kind expression. A “dish” in the profile below the eyes is desirable but by no means essential. The forehead may be flat or can bulge somewhat (in a jibhá). Seen from the front

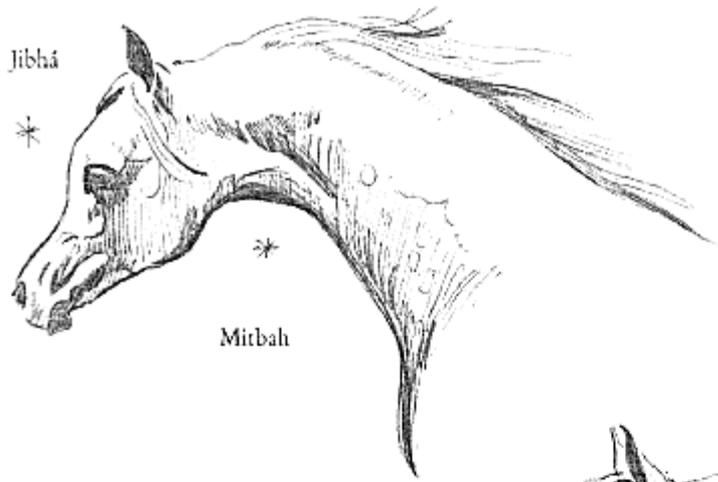
the head appears broad across the forehead, the eyes set well out, and the edges of the cheek bones must be cleanly defined and the muzzle small across the forehead, the eyes set well out, and the edges of the cheek bones must be cleanly defined and the muzzle small. Yet the nostrils are large and finely edged with a delicate curl and extremely flexible with great expansion. Ears are quite close together, finely chiselled and expressive with the tips often curved. Mares often have somewhat larger ears than stallions.



Good heads

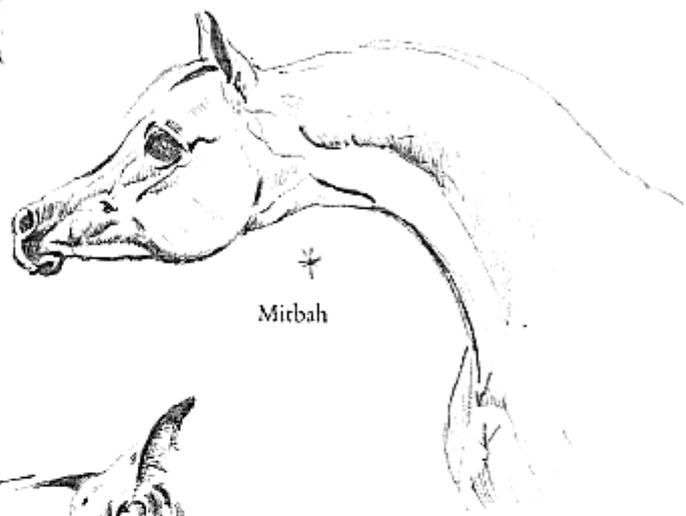






Jibhá

Mitbah



Mitbah



Jibhá

2. The Neck, Shoulder and Withers

“The head, too, and this is perhaps the most distinguishing feature, is set on at a different angle... the neck of the Arabian is light.” Blunt.

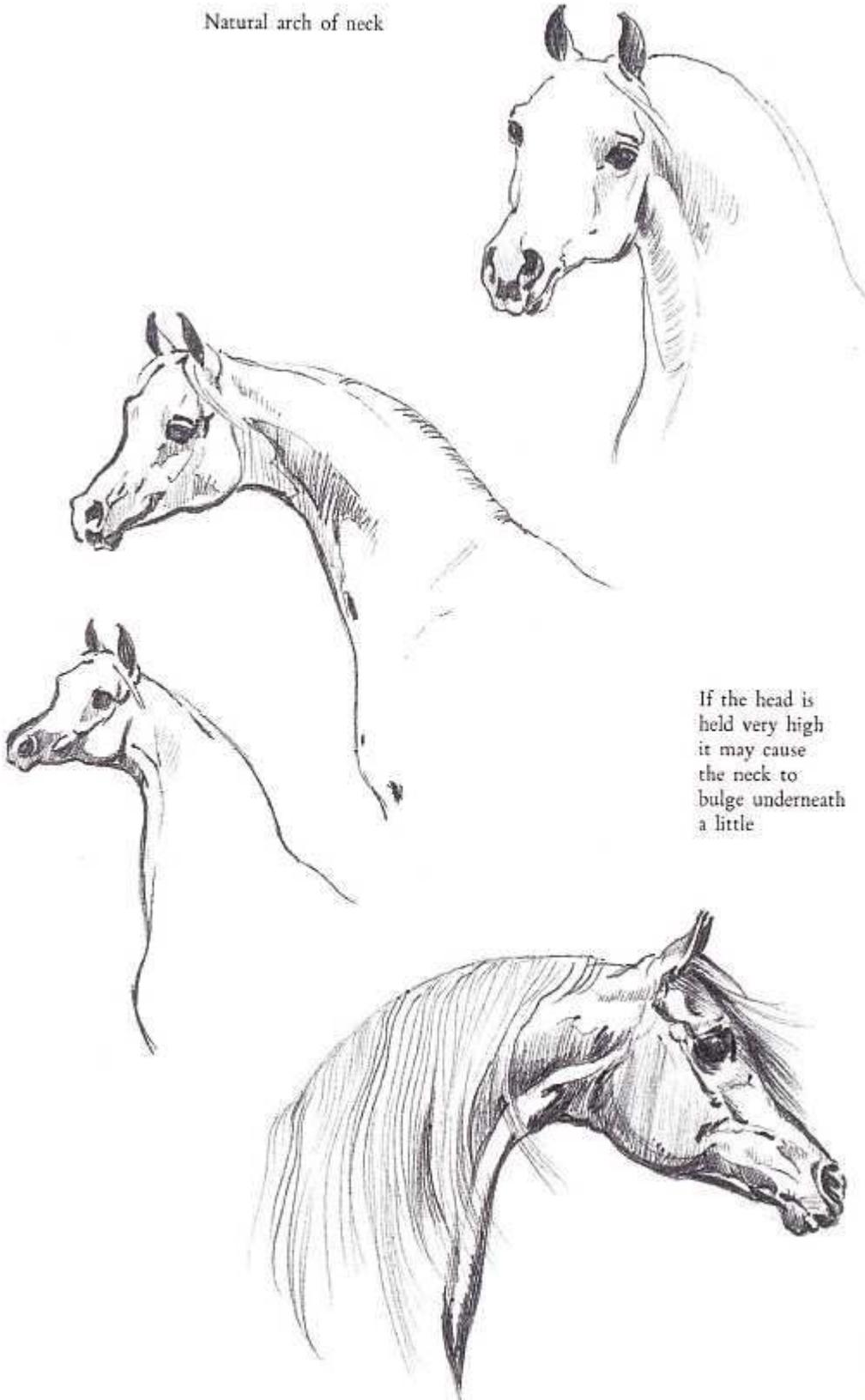
The head fits to the neck at an angle of more than 90°, so that it appears to spring out in a natural curve which allows for an open throat line (Mitbah), giving the neck an arched appearance at all times. The modelling is clean and not fleshy, there being no appearance of acute angles. Stallions usually have a definite crest and may therefore be a little thicker through the throat.

Length of neck is important but Arabians generally are not so long in the neck as the Thoroughbred, although its flexibility, high carriage, natural curve and fine throat give an appearance of length.

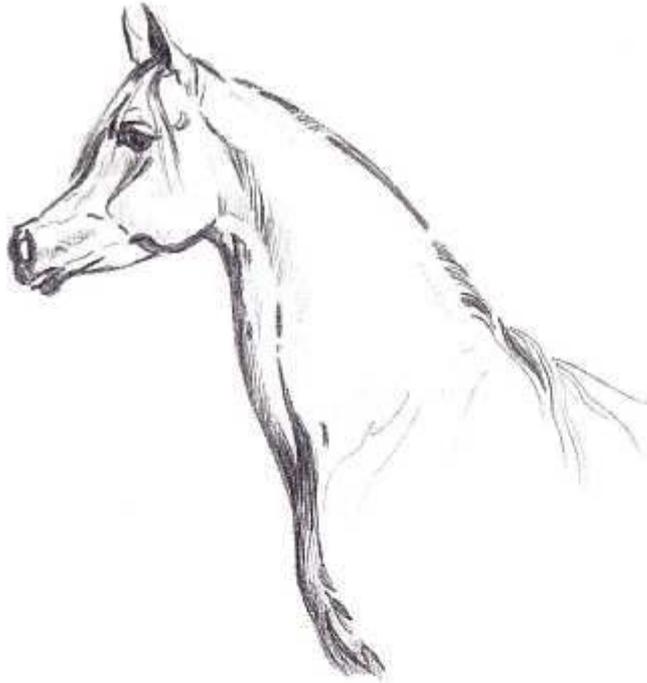
The shoulder is well laid-back, long and clearly defined at the withers – which are usually less prominent than the Thoroughbreds.

The neck springs from the top of the chest – not low down – and runs well back to the withers. The chest is deep and reasonably wide.

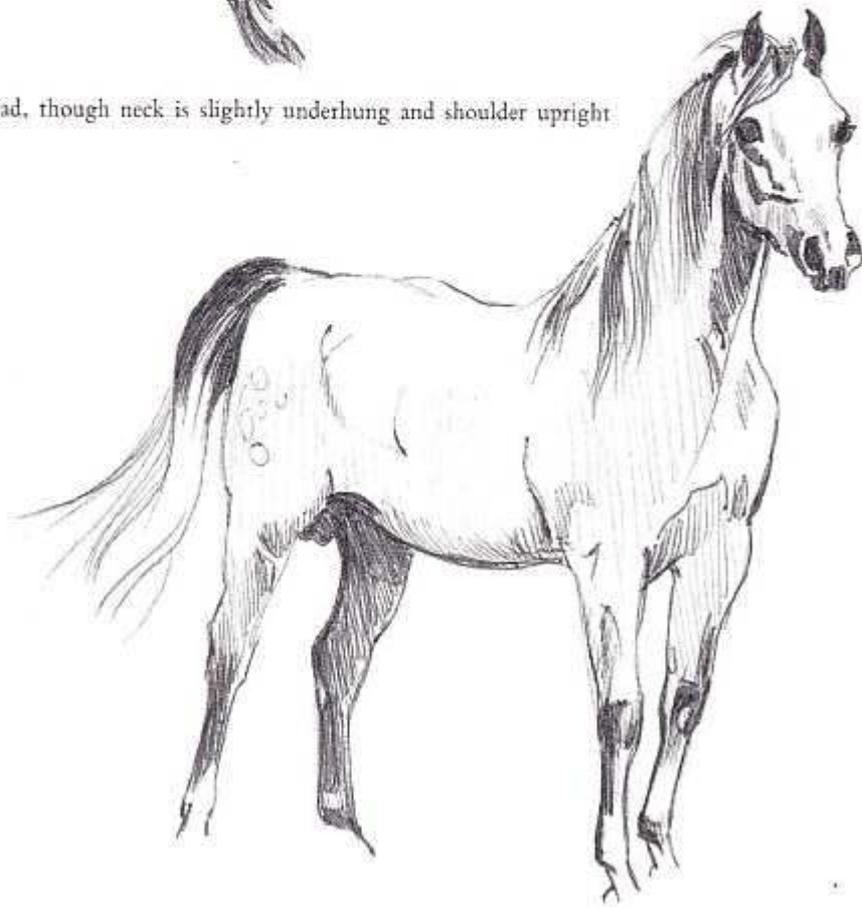
Natural arch of neck

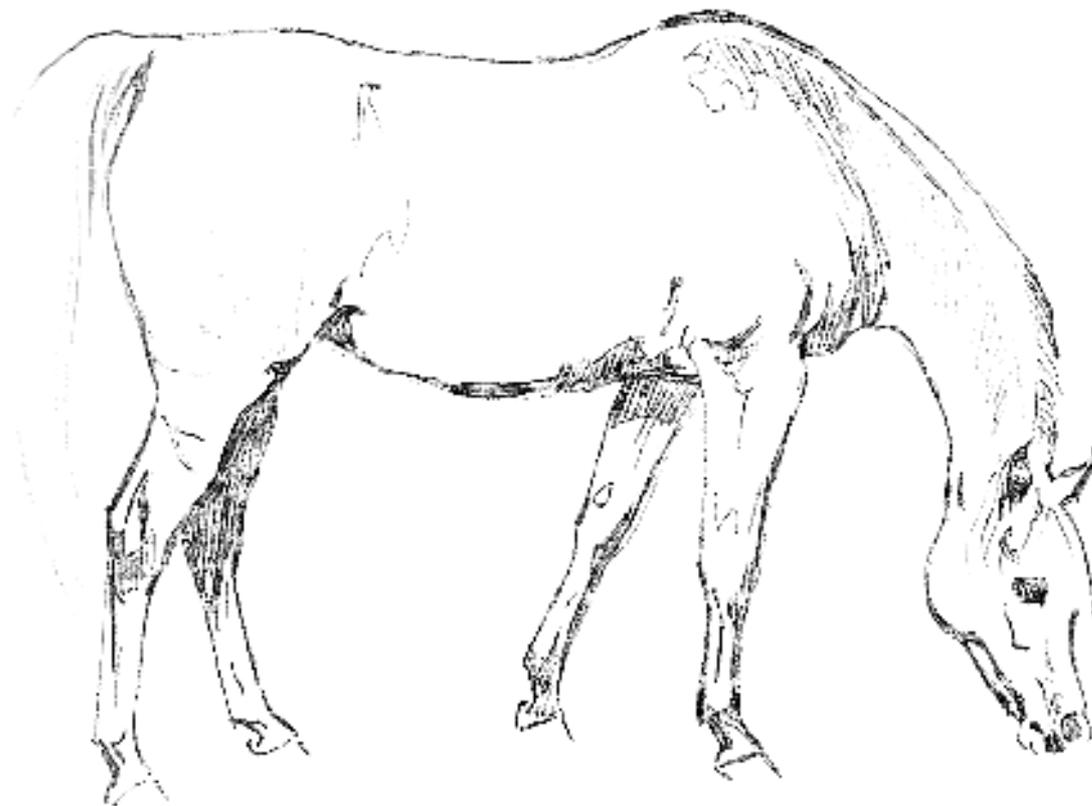


If the head is held very high it may cause the neck to bulge underneath a little

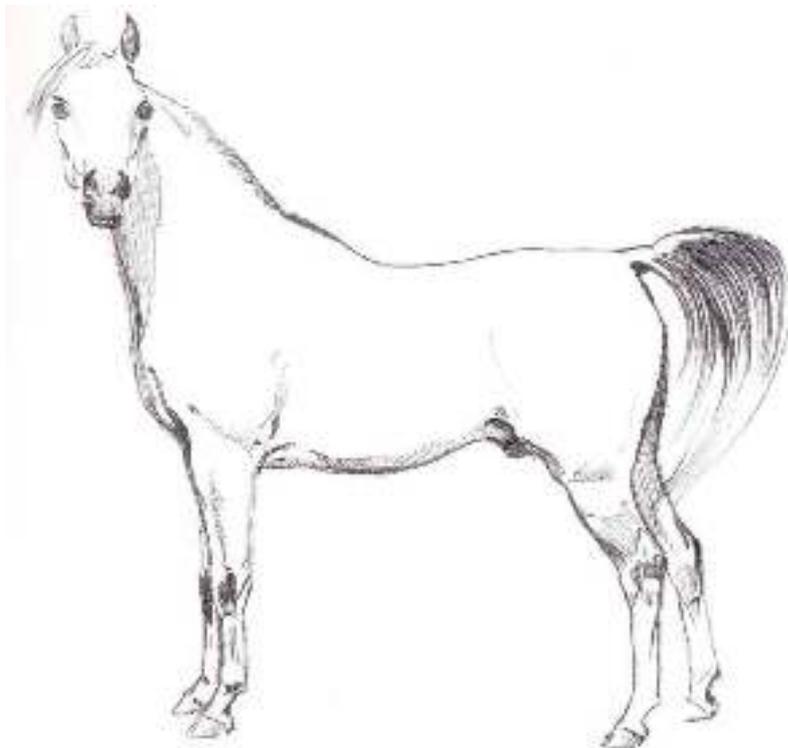


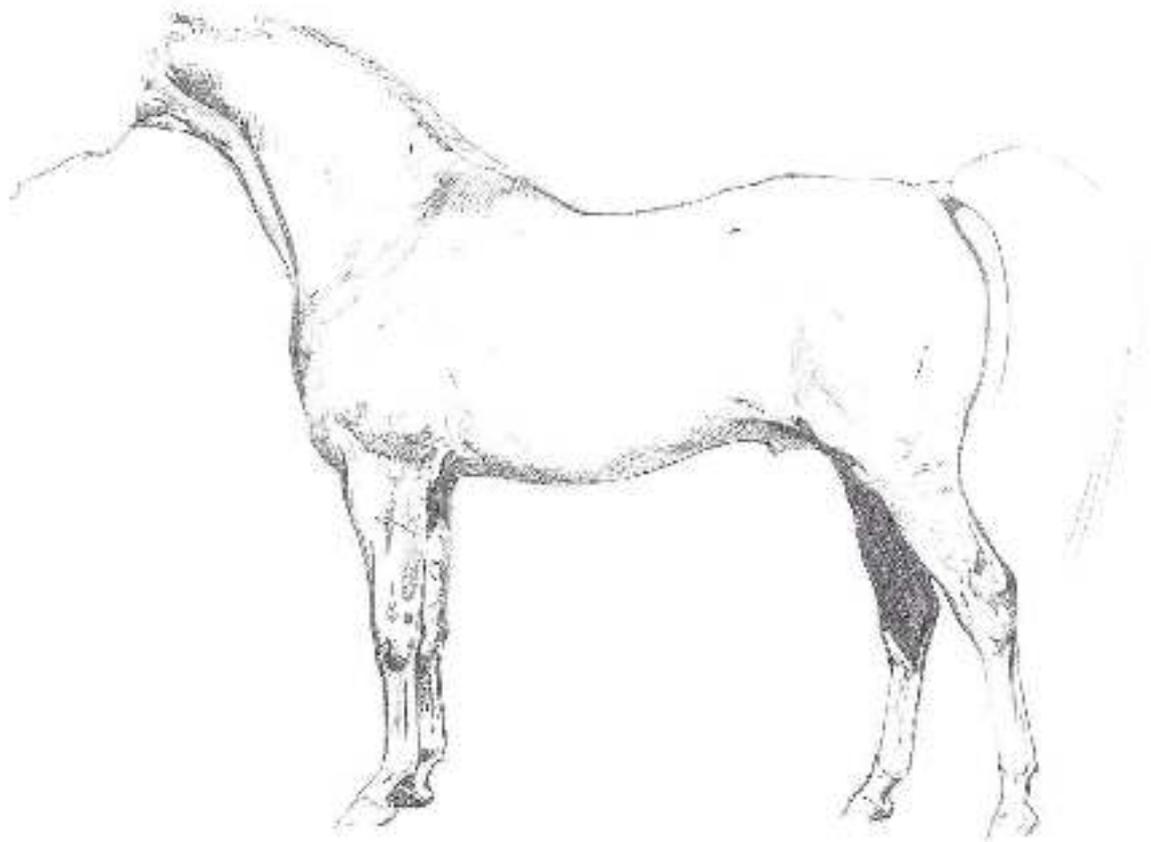
Lovely head, though neck is slightly underhung and shoulder upright





Good mare - note easy reach of head and natural curve of neck





3. Back and Body

“A little saddle-back, just the curve that indicates springiness without weakness.” Palgrave.
“The back is shorter than in our thoroughbreds and the barrel rounder.” Blunt.

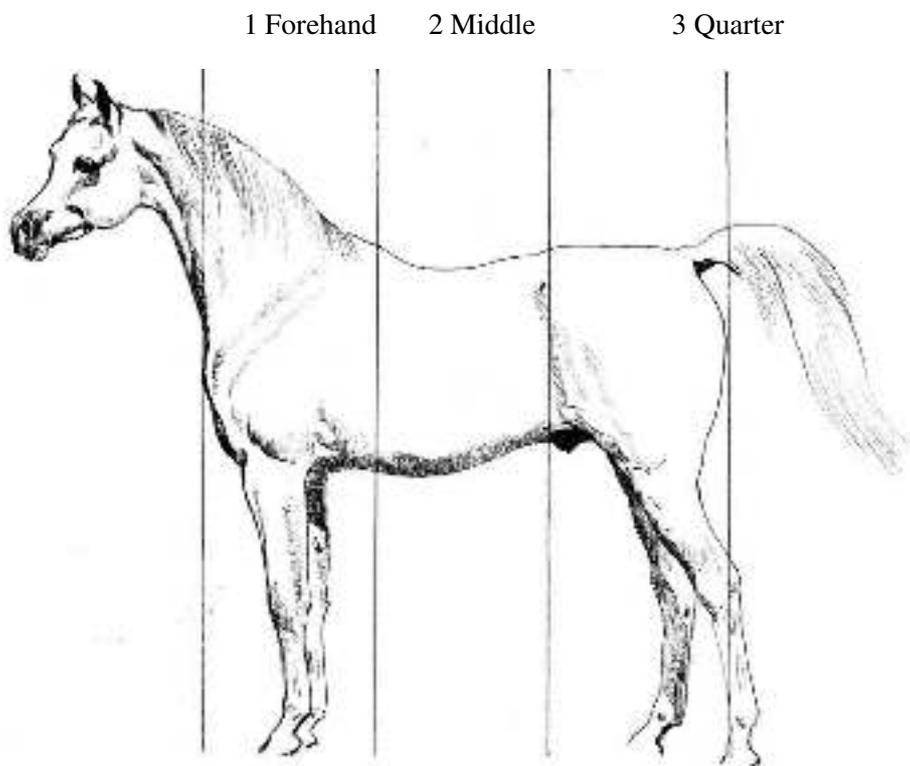
The back is quite short and strong though often somewhat longer in a mare. A slight concave line is desirable between the well-defined withers and the loins which spring strongly in a curve to the quarters. Being a riding horse there must be a place for a saddle.

The body is deep through and quite wide, for the ribs are particularly round and well-sprung, the flank must be set low, giving a closely-coupled look. Although the back is short, the well laid shoulder gives a long underline so that the horse stands over a lot of ground.

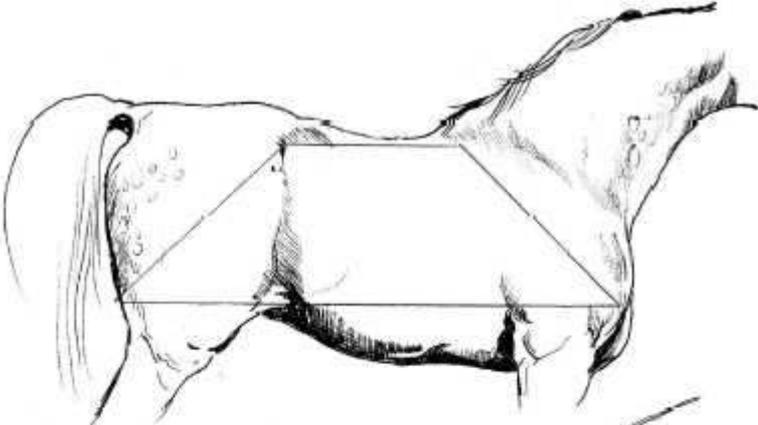
Proportions of the Arab Horse's body 1

1 = 2 = 3

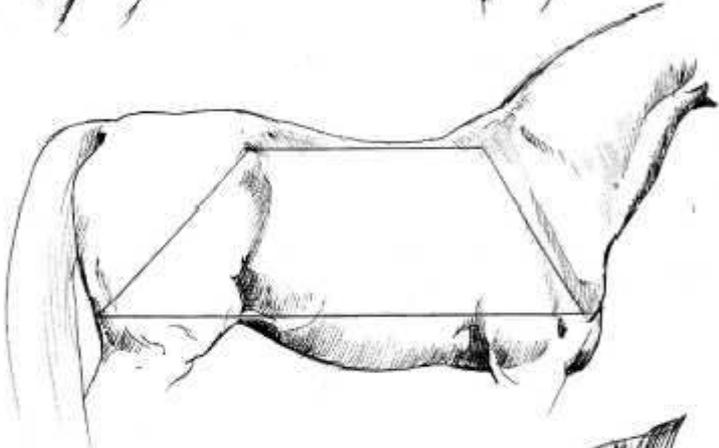
GOOD = Forehand, Middle and Quarter is equal



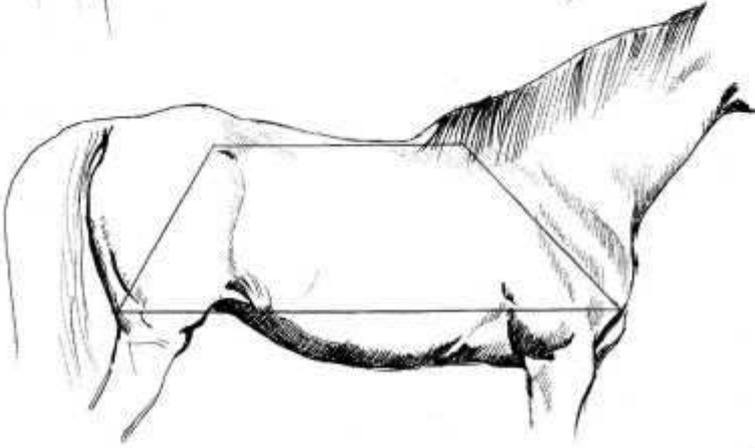
Proportions of the Arab Horse's body 2



correct



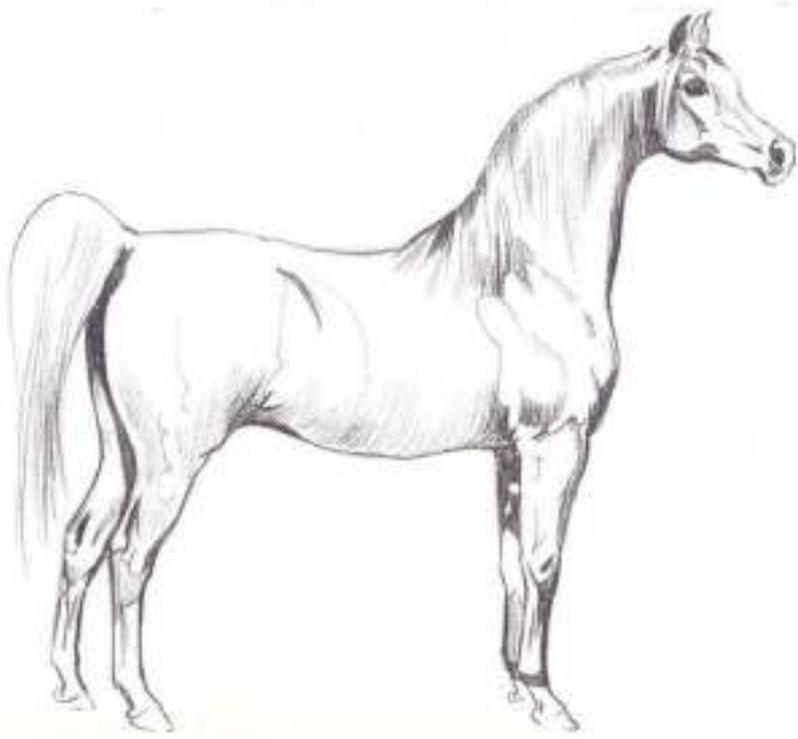
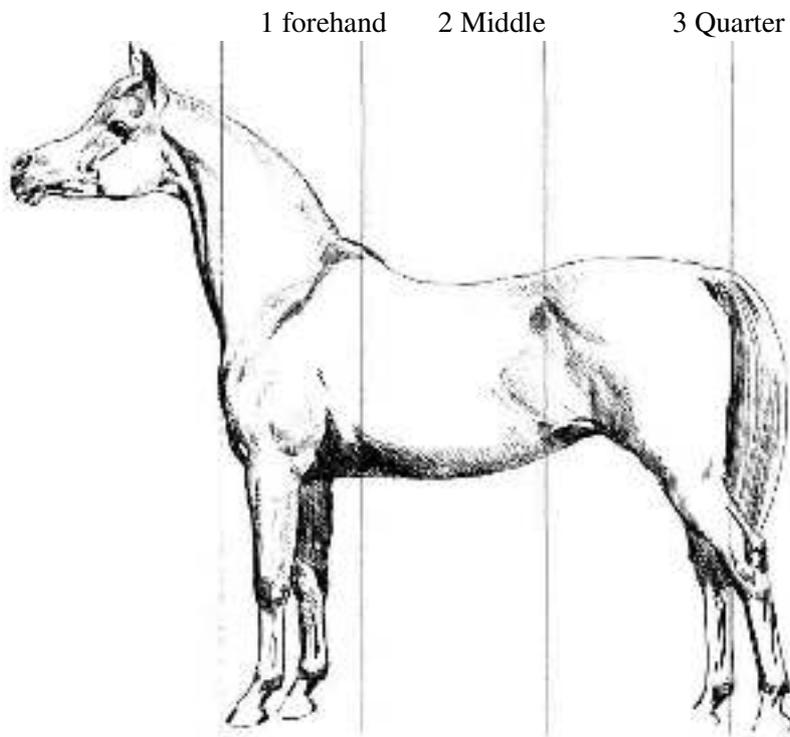
upright shoulder



short quarter

BAD: unequal (Forehand is shorter than Middle and Quarter)

- upright shoulder



Standing over a lot on the ground

4. Quarters and Tail

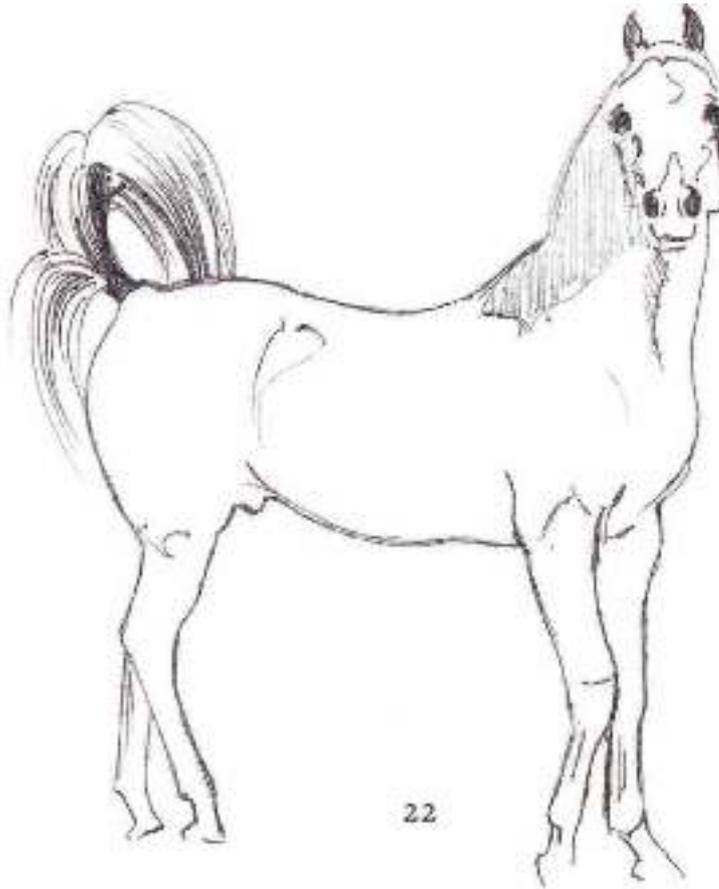
“A tail set on high, rather thrown out at a perfect arch.” Palgrave.

“The tail is carried high both waling and galloping and this point is much looked to as a sign of breeding.” Blunt.

Good length from hip to point of buttock is necessary and also good width across both hips and thighs when seen from behind. The point of croup must not be higher than the withers and the line of the quarters should be nearly horizontal with the tail appearing as a natural extension to this line.

The thighs are strong and well-muscled up.

A distinguishing feature of the Arabian is its elevated tail carriage, arching away from the quarter or held like a flag particularly when the horse is moving or excited. When very excited the Arabian may plume his tail right over his quarters. A slight sideways carriage of the tail is acceptable.

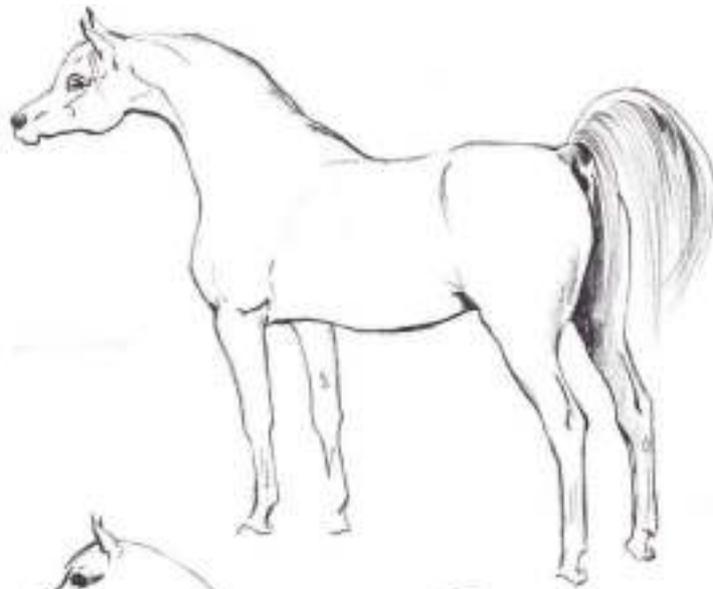


Tail carriage



Sideways twist to tail

Good tail carriage



Excited



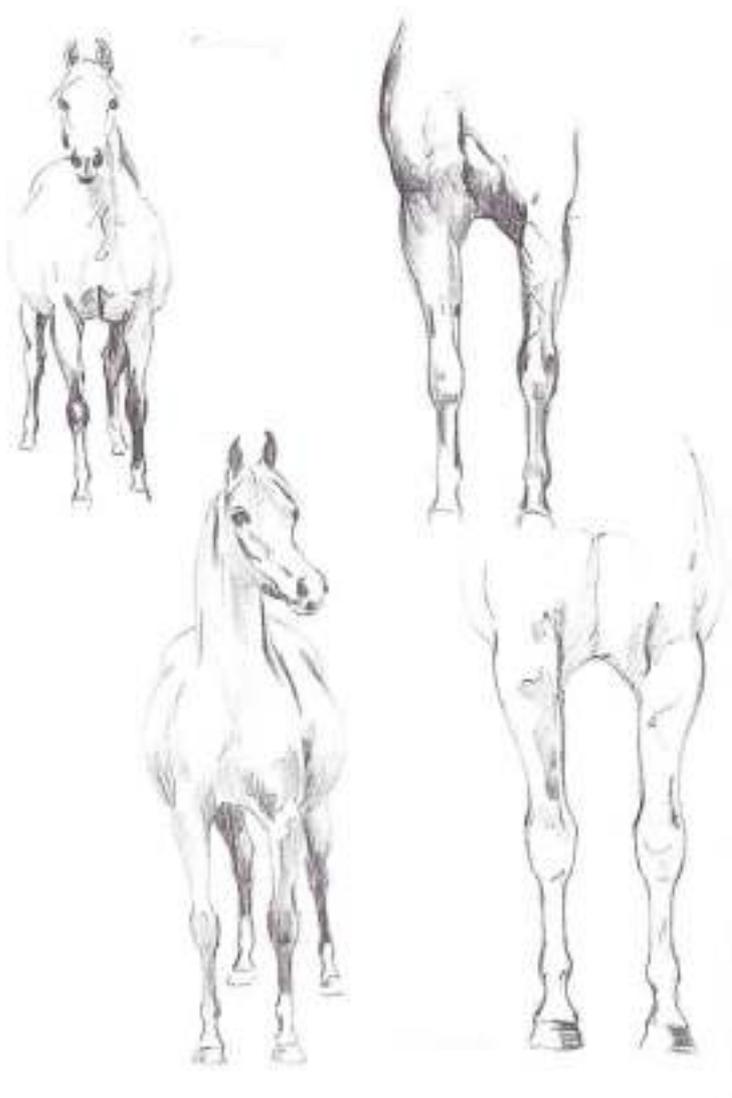
5. Forelegs

“Legs fore and hind that seemed as if made of hammered iron.” Palgrave

“The legs are strong but with less bone in proportion than back sinews. This last is perhaps the finest point of the Arabian, in whom a breakdown seldom or never occurs.” Blunt

The Arabian must stand over a lot of ground with the forelegs set well forward thus leaving the elbows clean and free. The scapula should be well laid back and long, the humerus short and relatively upright so placing the radius well forward. See Skeleton. The forearm is strongly muscled and long with well sent down large, flat knees and short cannon bones between the joints. Tendons are clean, clearly-defined, hard like steel and parallel to the bone. Pasterns are of a reasonable length and slope with an elastic action and joints must be clean-cut and not rounded.

When viewed from the front the legs must be parallel to each other and the chestnuts small.



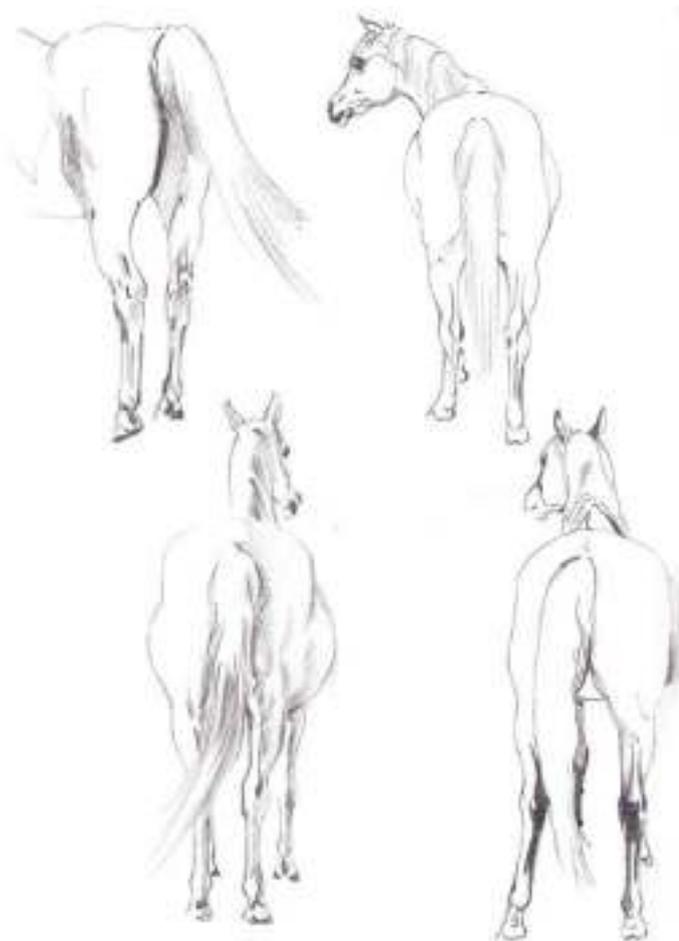
Good forelegs

6. Hindlegs

“The hocks are larger, better let down and not so straight.” Blunt.

Hocks are large and absolutely clean with a straight drop, ie. whatever the position of the hind leg when the hoof is on the ground an imaginary line drawn from fetlock to point of hock if extended upwards will meet the point of buttock. Gaskins must be strong and well muscled-up. Cannon bones, tendons and fetlock as with forelegs but pasterns are little steeper behind than in front.

When viewed from behind the legs should be parallel.



Good with hipbones placed high and wide across

Straight legs

7. Feet

“A neat round hoof, just the requisite for hard ground.” Palgrave.

“The hoofs are round and large and very hard.” (Blunt)

Fore hoofs are circular in form and open, the hind ones more oval in shape with a smooth surface giving a naturally polished look. The horn is very hard and the angle of pastern and hoof should be similar at approximately 45° although the hind pasterns tend to be slightly steeper than the front ones.



Ideal foot

Flared foot

Club foot



Normal pastern

Short
upright
pastern

Long
upright
pastern

Long
sloping
pastern

8. Coat, Hair and Skin

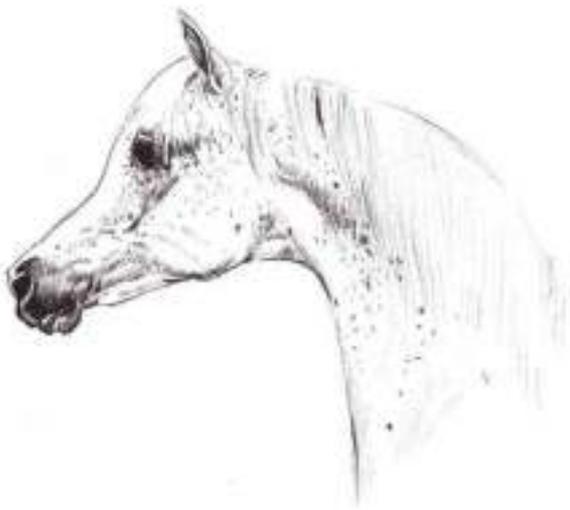
The coat is extremely fine and silky in quality – so fine that veins and skin markings show through. Around eyes and muzzle the hair is so sparse that the skin colour predominates, giving an appearance of the application of kohl. The skin is refined, velvety to the touch and of a deep black colour, except where natural white markings occur when the skin is pink. The thinness of the skin is such that blood vessels are often visible. Manes and tails are fine and silky, not too profuse and of a natural length. Legs and heels are clear of excess hair. And indentation, usually in the neck and known as the Prophet's thumb-mark appears on many Arabians.

Colour and Markings

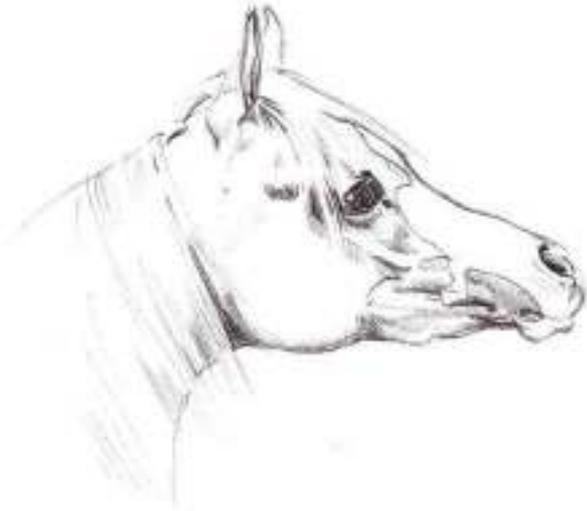
Colours are grey, chestnut, bay, brown and black, but whatever the colour it should be strong. Some browns are so dark that they may appear black, but a true black has black muzzle and flanks. Chestnuts range from dark liver (the colour of Victoria plums) through copper to golden with an almost metallic iridescent sheen and their manes and tails vary from pale cream to red. Bays vary from red through to so dark a bay that it is almost brown. Bays always have black points and manes and tails. Greys, born dark, go through stages of colour change from rose grey – foaled chestnut, iron grey – foaled black brown to dapple grey. These dapples are usually dark on a lighter ground, but can be more rarely, light on a dark ground “snowflakes”. Eventually greys turn quite white, though the mane and tail may remain darker, or they go fleabitten which occurs with red or blue, black flecks. Some fleabitten greys are so heavily marked that the colour of the fleck is more evident than the grey base. With greys the head often whitens before the body. It may also be noticed that as greys go whiter with age the skin tends to darken. This is possibly due to the retention of melanin in the skin which would normally have passed into the hair colour. It may also be seen that foals that will turn grey are usually born with particularly dark coats whether bay/brown or chestnut, though some grey usually appears around the eyes and the base of the ears. On some greys there appear “bloody shoulder” marks. These are like birth marks where partial flecking is retained.

White markings are a notable feature in many Arabians and so they have been for generations. They are most commonly found in the form of face marking such as stars, blazes and snips, or in leg markings like socks or stockings. However on occasions, white markings take unusual or extreme forms giving the horse a parti-coloured appearance. Body spots and white flecking are also found and when the flecking is excessive it give an appearance of roaning.

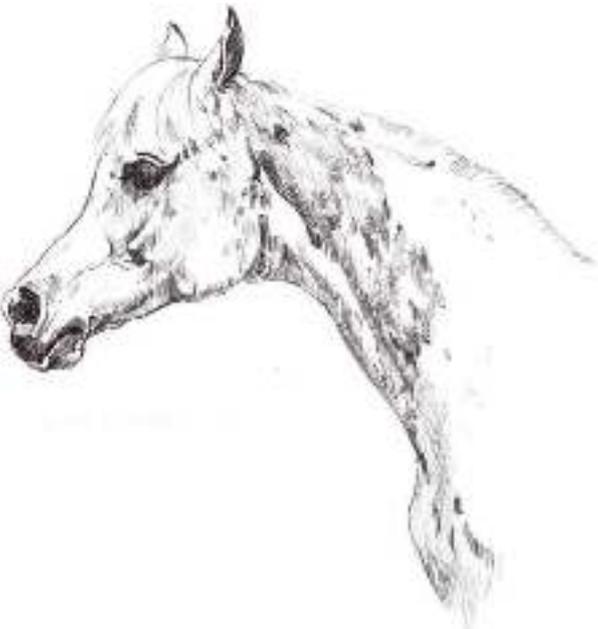
	Grey		Bay Reddish-brown coat, black mane and tail
	Fleabitten grey		Chestnut coat, mane and tail same or lighter in color than the coat
	Liver-chestnut the darkest from all Chestnut shades		Black
	Dapple grey		Rabicano
	Roan		“Bloody mark shoulder”



Fleabitten grey



Unusual face markings



A "Bloody shoulder" mark

9. Height

“Their stature was indeed somewhat low, I do not think any were above 15hh., but they were exquisitely well-shaped that want of greater size seemed hardly, if at all, a defect.” Palgrave.

“The pure-bred Bedouin horse stands from 14 to 15 hands.” Blunt

There is no height limit. Arabians usually stand between 14.2 to 15.2 hh (144 – 154 cm), though many are both larger or smaller than this. However quality and type tends to be lost when increased height is of the first consideration.

Arabians should make perfect riding horses and although it may be said that lack of size is a limiting factor, they in fact ride big, due to their natural balance, good conformation and harmony of action. The average weight of the Arabian is 850-1000 Lbs (385 – 455 kg).

10. Strength

The strength and power of the Arabian is well illustrated by the example of Maidan, foaled in 1869 in Nejd and sold to India. Not only did he win races as a two year old on the flat but he was still winning steeplechases 20 years later and in between times he had served Lieut-Col Brownlow, a man of 19 stone, as a charger in the campaigns in India and Afghanistan and taken part in a famous march of 300 miles from Kabul.

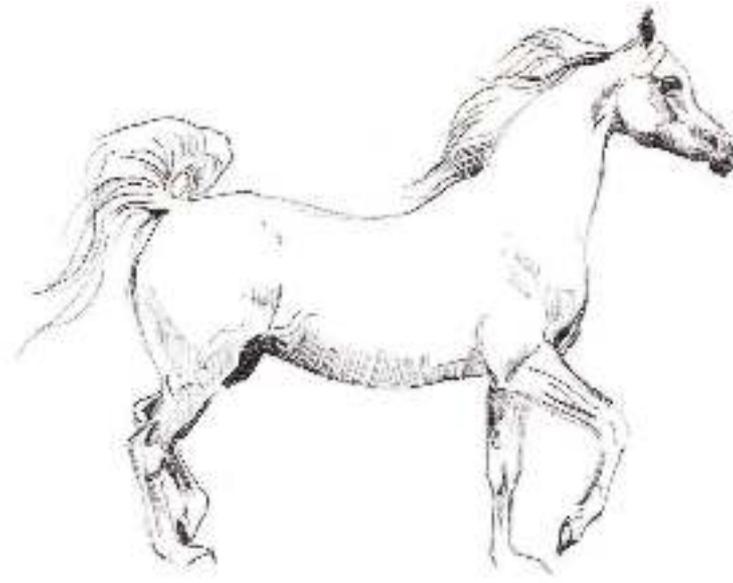
11. Action and Style

The action is free and expressive and naturally balanced, so that the horse moves lightly and easily over the ground. There must be good flexion of all the joints and not a stiff “daisy-cutting” action. Therefore the forelegs should move freely with unrestricted shoulder and knee action giving a long stride with the movement generating from the top of the shoulder. The hocks are engaged well under the horse so providing great impulsion and suppleness. The hind legs should track up well, ie the imprints of the hind hoofs must overstep those left by the front hoofs. This and the high carriage of the head and forehead tends to place the centre of gravity further back than is generally found in other breeds of horse. The whole action is full of such harmony that the horse appears to float and dance. From the front the action is absolutely straight. Viewed from behind the Arabian may well swing the hocks inwards slightly on the forward movement – particularly at the extended paces. (This is due to the necessity of the stifle to move outside the well-sprung ribs especially if the horse tracks up well as it should.) Some families go wind behind instead. Both are alternative ways overcoming an anatomical necessity.

When in action the head and the tail are carried high. Pride and spirit are distinguishing Arabian characteristics, which can be seen when the horse is moving. Its overall outline, tremendous activity, arch of neck, high tails carriage and dilated nostrils can then be viewed best, and of course some faults are often more obvious when the horse is in motion.

Note: In assessing a horse the first overall impression is usually based on type, action and style. This is then supported by a closer analysis of the head, neck, shoulder and withers, back and body, quarter and tail, legs and feet, coat, hair, skin and movement.

MOVEMENT



There are three natural gaits that every horse will use without special training and artificially earned gaits.

Artificially learned gaits may appear naturally in some individuals but usually they occur only in certain breeds and often require special training of the horse. In the show ring we normally have to judge just the natural gait “walk” and “trot” because the gallop can only be judged in liberty but not in hand.

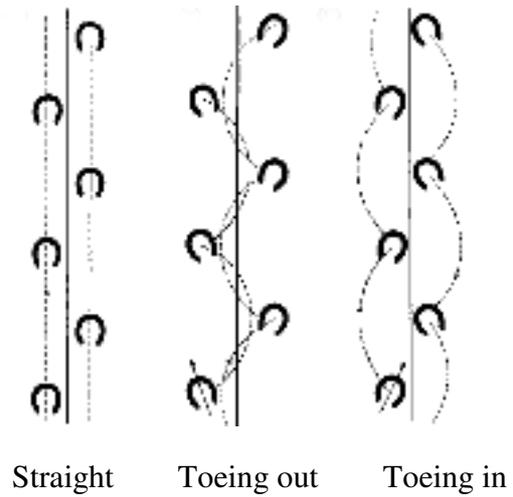
1. Walk

The walk is the base for all the other gaits. The walk is a four-beat gait. When walking, a horse's legs follow this sequence: right front leg - left hind leg - left front leg - right hind leg, in a regular 1-2-3-4 beat. One foot will always be raised and the other three feet are on the ground, save for a short moment when weight is being transferred from one foot to another. Head and neck follow in a slight up and down motion to maintain the balance.

The advancing rear hoof should overstep the spot where previously advancing front hoof touched the ground. The more the rear hoofs overstep the smoother and more comfortable the walk becomes.

From the front the action should be straight; a movement from the knee with the foot swinging inwards indicates turning out toes and movement narrow and winding inwards from the forelock indicates offset cannons. Forelimbs swinging outwards indicate turning in toes.

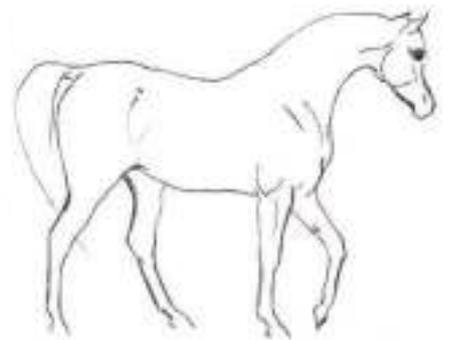
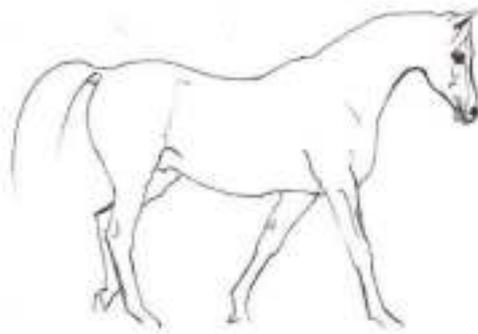
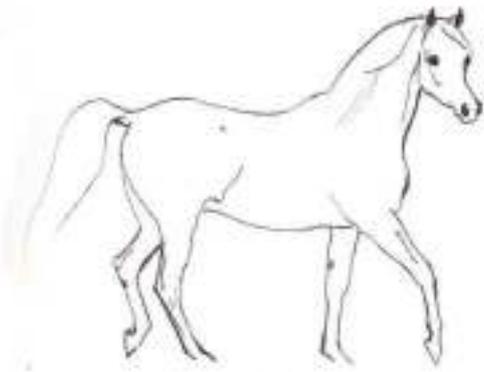
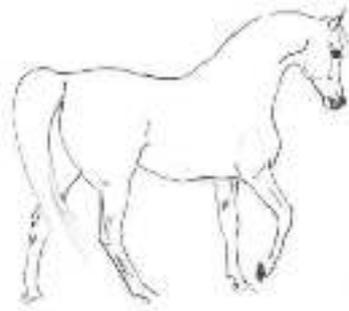
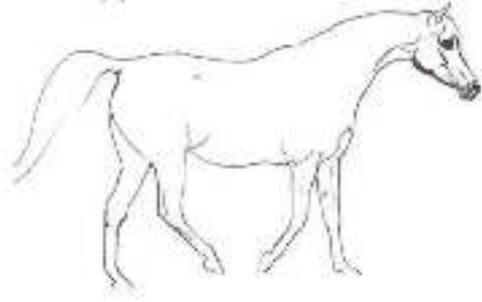
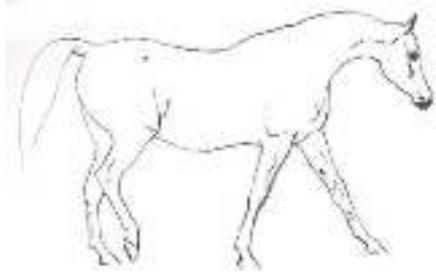
Deviations are also discussed under leg faults. All deviations are undesirable but swinging in ones are more serious as they can cause one leg to injure another.



Walk: 4 time

The horse moves his legs laterally and consecutively so that there are 4 hoofs beats to a stride. 2 or 3 feet are always on the ground and there is no period of suspension.

- (1) Off-hind
- (2) Off-fore
- (3) Near hind
- (4) Near fore (If the rhythm is irregular, the walk is impure.)



2. Trot

The trot is a two-beat natural gait in which the legs move in diagonal pairs: Left front and right hind leg hit the ground simultaneously and a period of suspension follows before the right front and the left hind leg hit the ground and another period of suspension follows. In dressage there are variations of this gait which are referred to as:

Collected trot

Working trot

Medium trot

Extended trot

Motion in the horse comes from several sources:

The hindquarters are the horse's motor, the back is the transmission and the forelegs constitute the suspension system. The forelegs have no necessary function in moving the horse forward. The power comes from behind and his back governs the type of movement his legs will make.

Angles are the key to horse's motion. Angle in shoulders, quarters and pasterns greatly determine the action and freedom of motion and the horse's ability to move in balance. For example if the shoulder is too steep it puts the horse's front legs too far under, cramping his stride and making him restricted in reach. A horse with a long, sloping shoulder has more room for a better length of muscle. A horse with an upright shoulder and similar angle in the quarters is cramped in his leg action and the gait is lacking activity.

The steeper the angles are, less ground covering movement will result. The more sloping the angles the more ground covering the gait will be.

When the angles match together the horse will move with more rhythm. Mismatched angles will create conflicting movement and a tendency towards mixed-gaitedness or without the ability to maintain form for any length of time.

Horses that are able to extend, use their motion and sloping angles to their advantage, actually lengthen their stride, not just go faster in an up-and-down restricted manner. It should always be the quality of motion rather than the mechanical motion that separates the good movers from the bad.

Watching the trot from the front any possible deviation seen at walk will increase, from behind an Arab may move - this is due to his rounder barrel and fewer vertebrae. But here must be no stiffed movement in the hock which indicates faulty structure.

Trot: 2 time

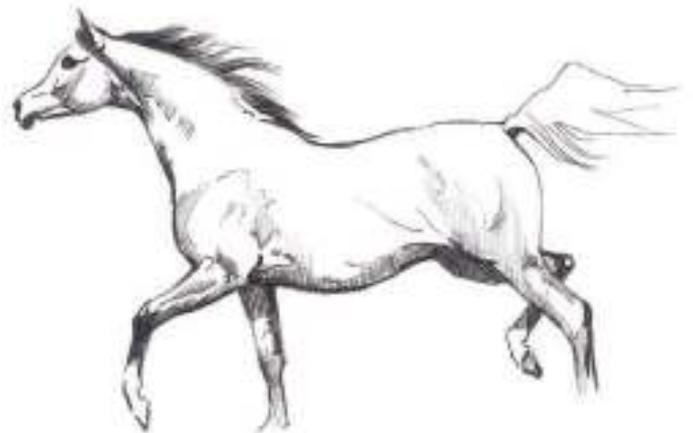
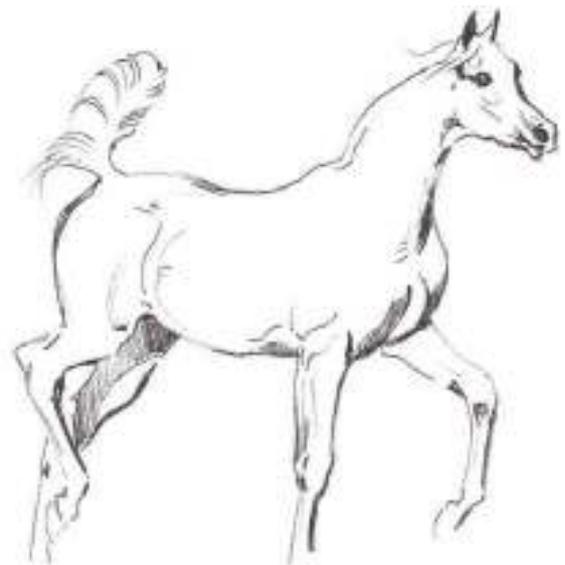
Alternative diagonals are moved simultaneously giving 2 hoof beats to a stride.

The diagonals are separated by a moment of suspension.

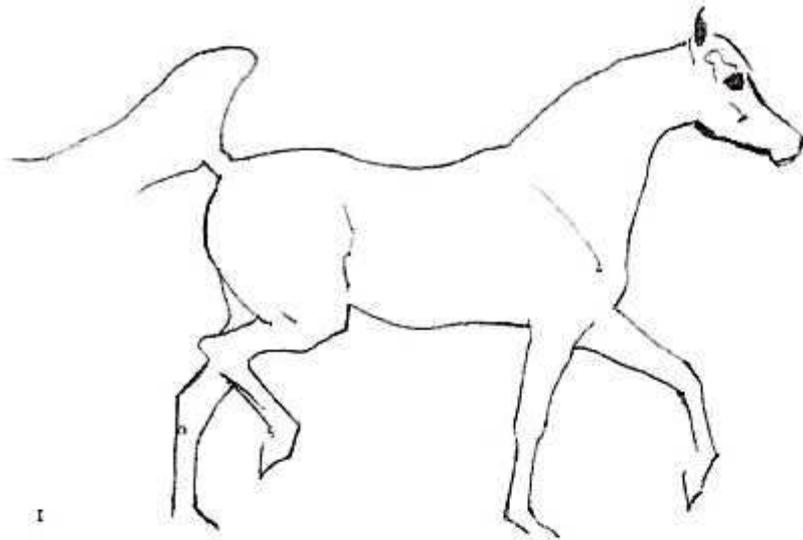
(1) Left diagonal – near fore and off-hind.

(2) Right diagonal – off fore and off-hind.

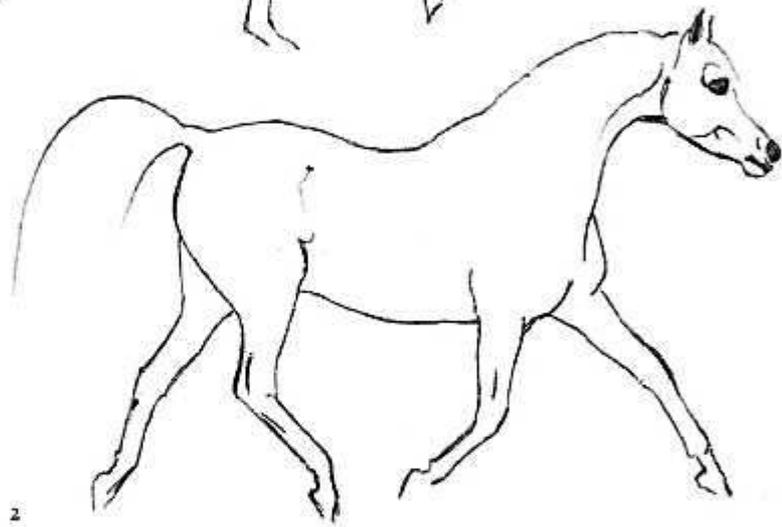
(If the rhythm is irregular, the trot is impure eg foreleg in advance, hind leg in advance, hind legs at canter.)



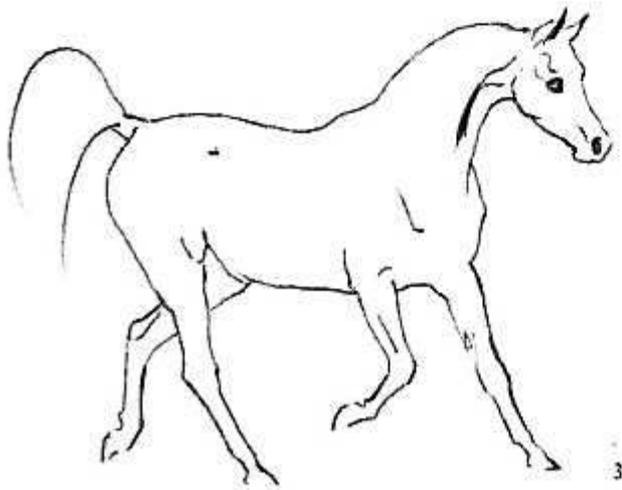
The Trot



1

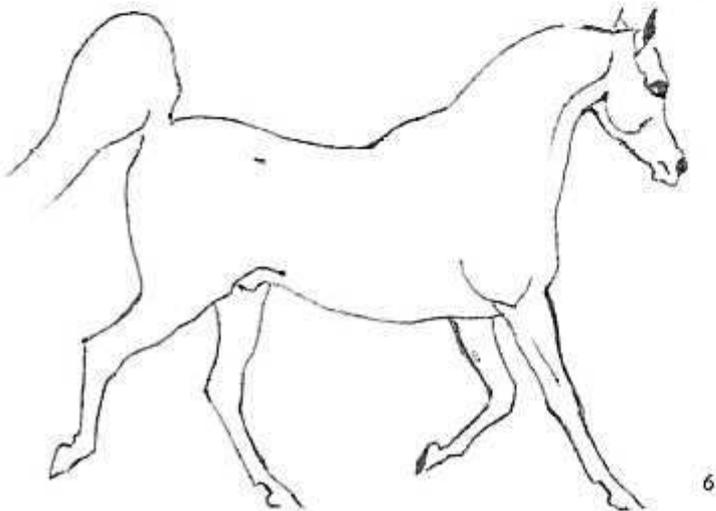
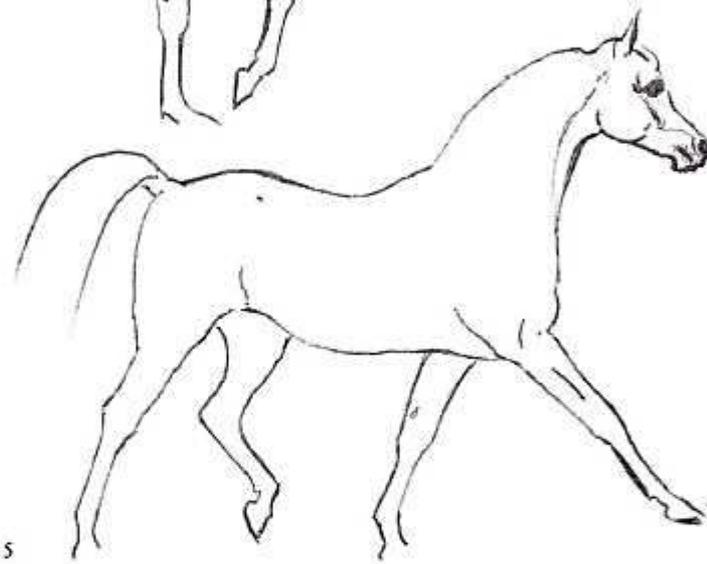
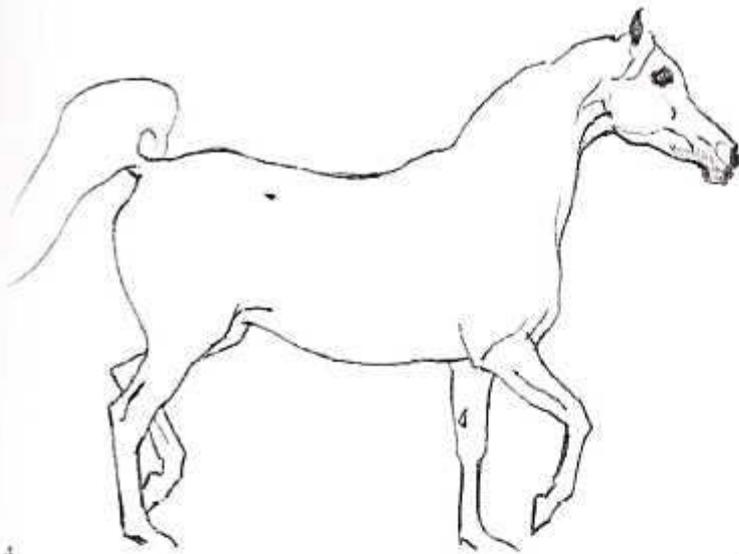


2



3

Trot cont:



3. Gallop

The gallop is a four-beat gait that is fast and asymmetrical. The limb sequence is non-lead hind, non-lead fore and lead fore leg followed by a suspension. When the horse turns to the left the left forelimb and right hind limb should lead. When the horse turns to the right side, it should lead with the right fore limb and left hind limb.

The gallop is more ground covering than the canter. The canter is merely a restrained form of the gallop. It is three-beat gait in which two diagonal legs are paired. If the horse is cantering to the right, the sequence in which the foot falls is right hind, right fore and left hind together followed by a moment of suspension with all four feet of the ground before the following stride. A good canter has regular strides with good rhythm and balance.

Canter: 3 time

A bounding movement of 3 hoof beats to a stride. Sequence of feet on ground (1) hind and 2 forelegs (2) 1 foreleg (3) suspension (4) 1 hind leg (5) 2 hind and 1 foreleg.

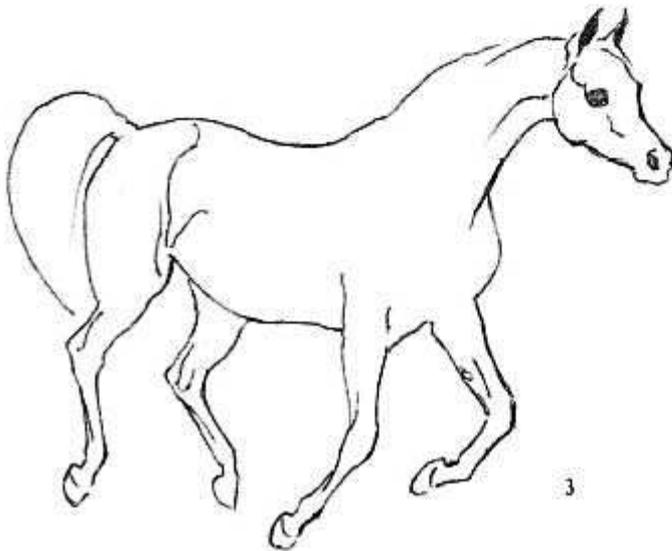
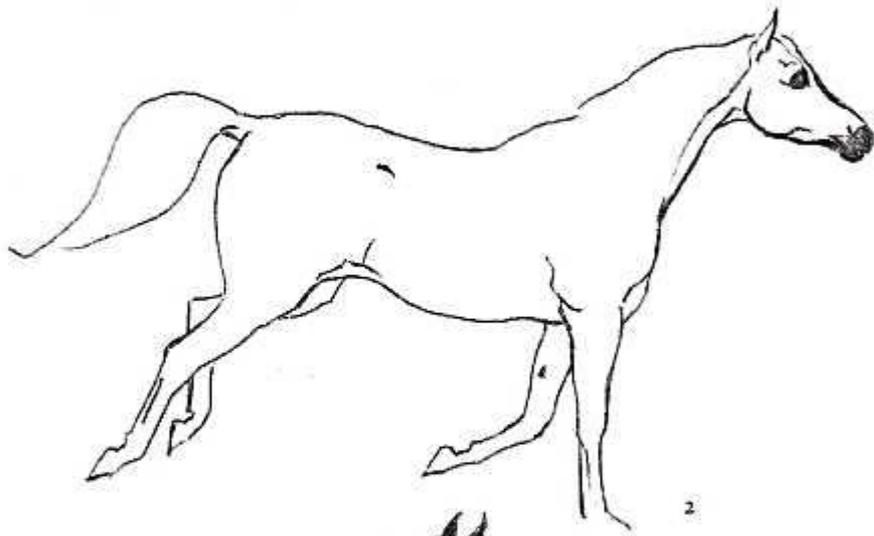
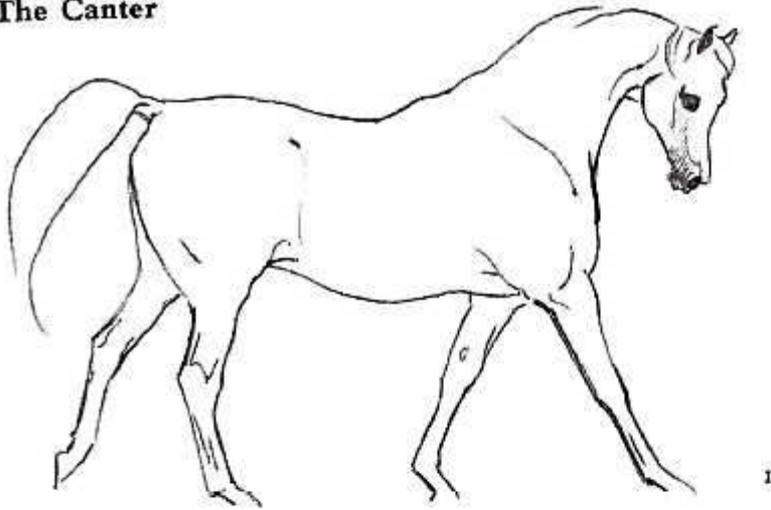
Off-fore lead:

- (1) Near hind
- (2) Diagonal of off-hind and near fore
- (3) Off-fore

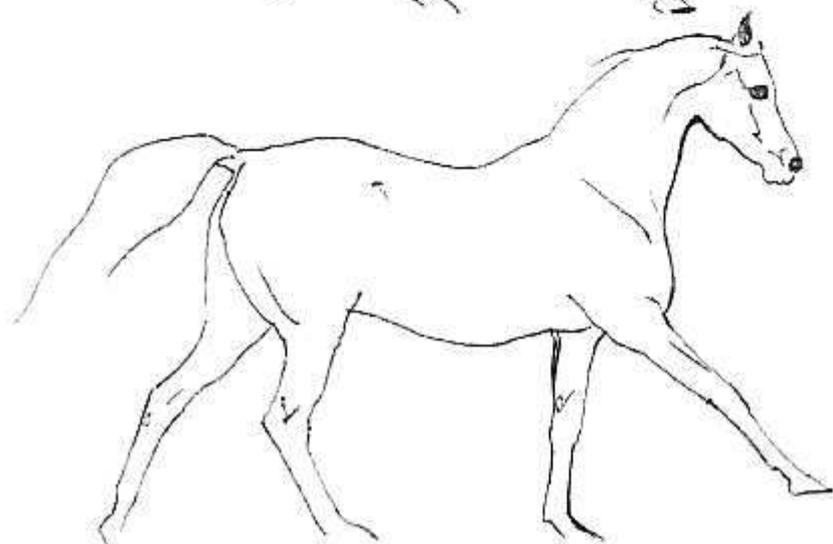
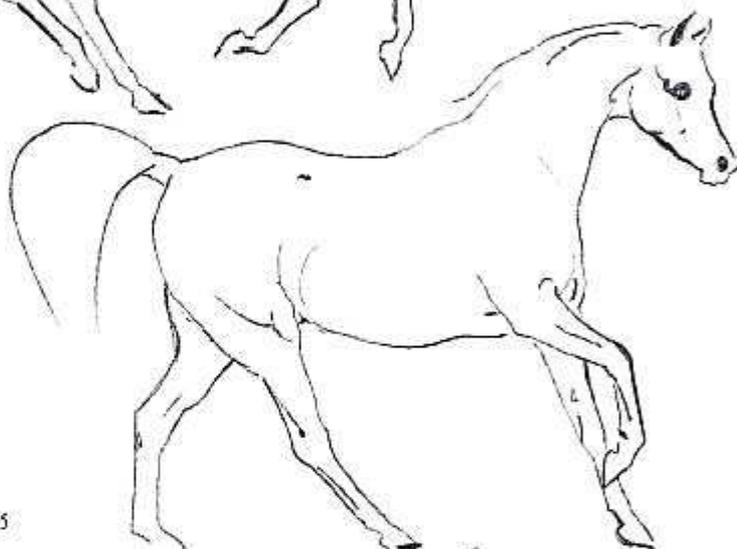
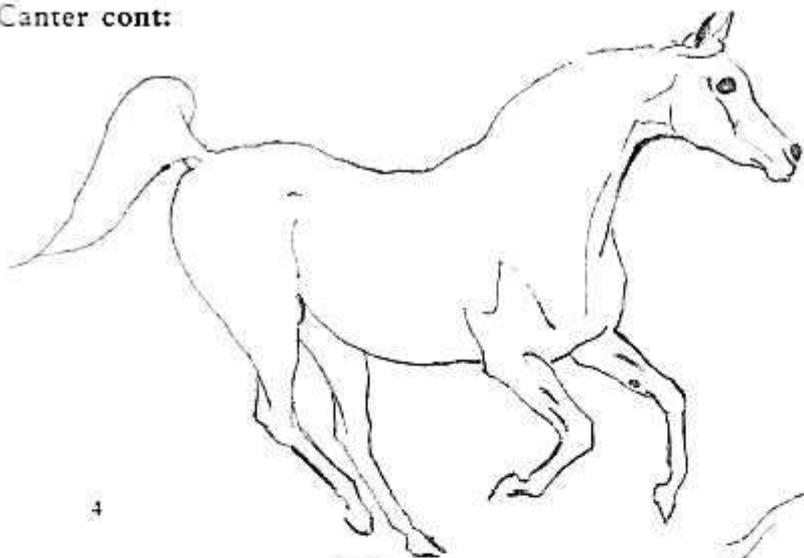
For near-fore lead (1) off hind (2) diagonal near hind and off fore (3) near-fore.

(A disunited canter is impure as is a canter when 2 hoofs beats are heard which means that the diagonal hind is in advance of the fore leg.)

The Canter



Canter cont:

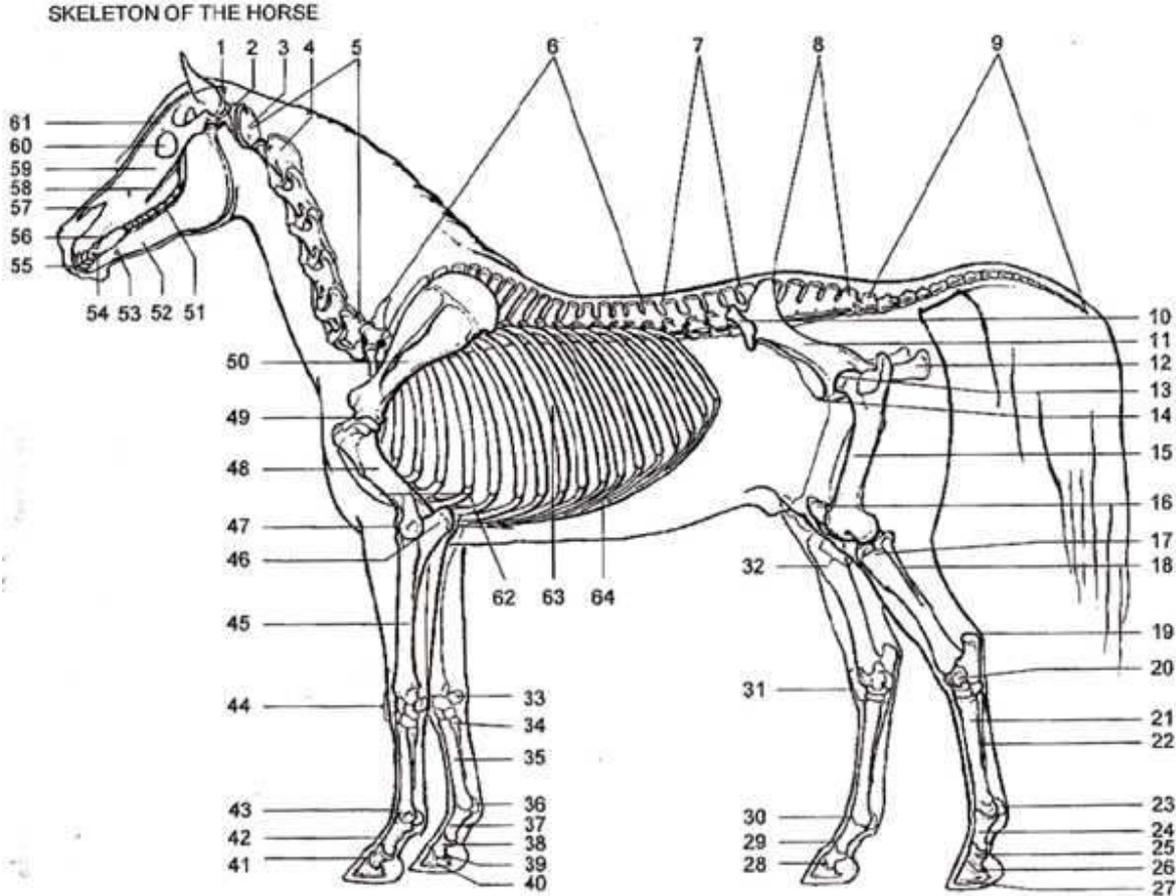


SKELETON OF THE HORSE

The most important feature of the Arabian’s skeleton is the particular quality and density of the ivory-like smooth bone. It is not size of bone but density of bone that counts; this is not to say that lack of bone is acceptable.

The skull is short and tapering with large round eye sockets, small teeth and long mouth bars. A dip usually appears in the profile below the eye sockets and the underjaw has straight shafts and a large circular jaw bone.

The Arabian often has only 17 pairs of ribs instead of the more usual 18 or 19, 5 lumbar vertebrae instead of 6 and 16 instead of 18 tail vertebrae. The cervical vertebrae, especially where the Atlas joins the occipital at the top of the skull, meets at a less acute angle than in other breeds. The shaft of the ulna, the small none of the lower foreleg, is complete.



Skeleton of the horse

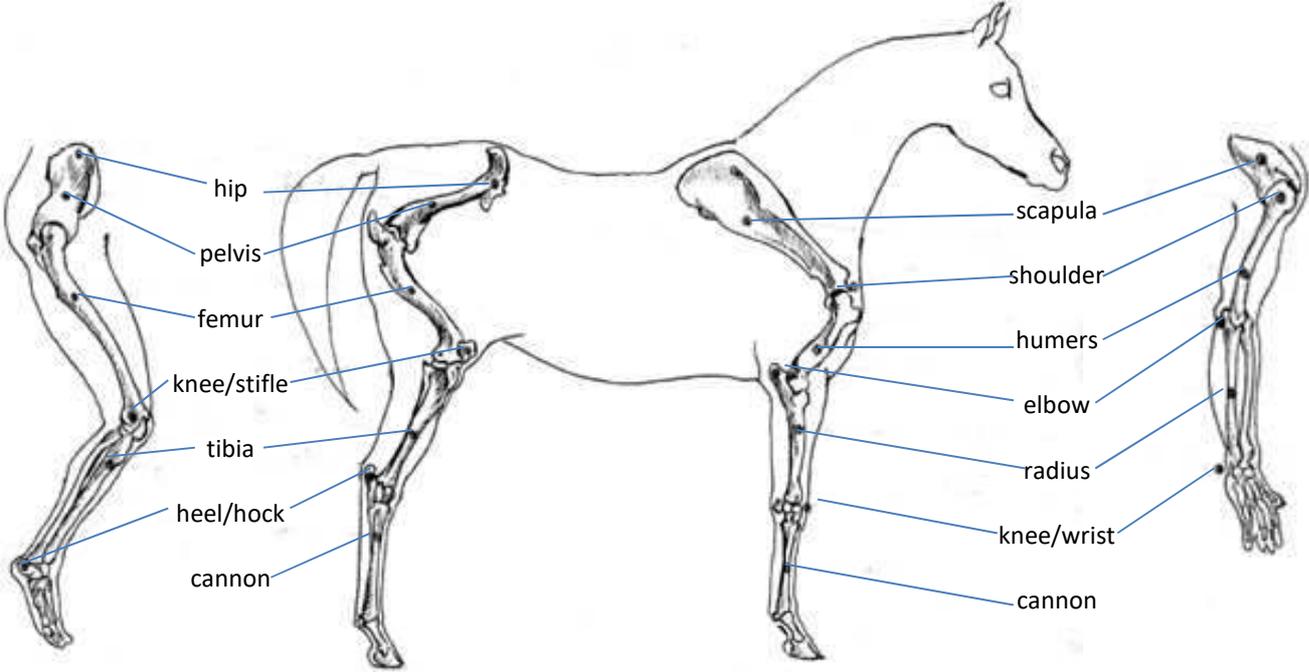
1.	Occipital bone, occiput
2.	Temporomandibular joint
3.	First cervical vertebra, atlas
4.	Second cervical vertebra, axis, (epistrophus)
5.	Cervical vertebrae (7)
6.	Dorsal vertebrae, thoracic vertebrae (+7)
7.	Lumbar vertebrae 6 (5)
8.	Sacral bone (os sacrum, 5)
9.	Caudal vertebrae, coccygeal vertebrae (1521)
10.	Hip bone
11.	Ileum
12.	Ischium
13.	Hip joint
14.	Pubic bone
15.	Femoral bone, femur
16.	Patella
17.	Tibial bone, tibia
18.	Fibular bone, fibula
19.	Heel bone, calcaneus (os calcis)
20.	Talus (astragalus)
21.	Cannon bone, metatarsal bone III
22.	Splint bones, metatarsal bone II / IV
23.	Sesamoid bone
24.	Fetlock bone P I (large pastern bone)
25.	Pastern bone, P II (small pastern bone)
26.	Navicular bone
27.	Pedal bone, P III
28.	Coffin joint
29.	Pastern joint
30.	Fetlock joint
31.	Hock, tarsal joint
32.	Stifle, femoro-tibial joint
33.	Accessory bone, pisiform
34.	Splint bones, metacarpal bone II / IV
35.	Cannon bone, metacarpal bone III
36.	Sesamoid bone
37.	Fetlock bone, P I (large pastern bone)
38.	Pastern bone, P II (small pastern bone)
39.	Navicular bone
40.	Pedal bone, P III
41.	Coffin joint
42.	Pastern joint
43.	Fetlock joint
44.	Carpal joint
45.	Forearm, radial bone
46.	Olecranon (ulna)
47.	Elbow joint
48.	Humerus
49.	Shoulder joint

50.	Scapula
51.	Molar teeth
52.	Lower jaw, mandibular bone
53.	Lower bars, mandibular bars
54.	Canine teeth
55.	Incisor teeth
56.	Upper bars, maxillar bars
57.	Nasal bone
58.	Facial crest
59.	Upper jaw, maxillar bone
60.	Eye socket
61.	Frontal bone
62.	Sternum
63.	Ribs 18 (17), sternal ribs 8, asternal ribs 10 (9)
64.	Chondral rid arch

Skeleton of rearing horse and man. (Drawn from a photograph taken by the American Museum of Natural History, New York)



Horse's limbs compared with human limbs



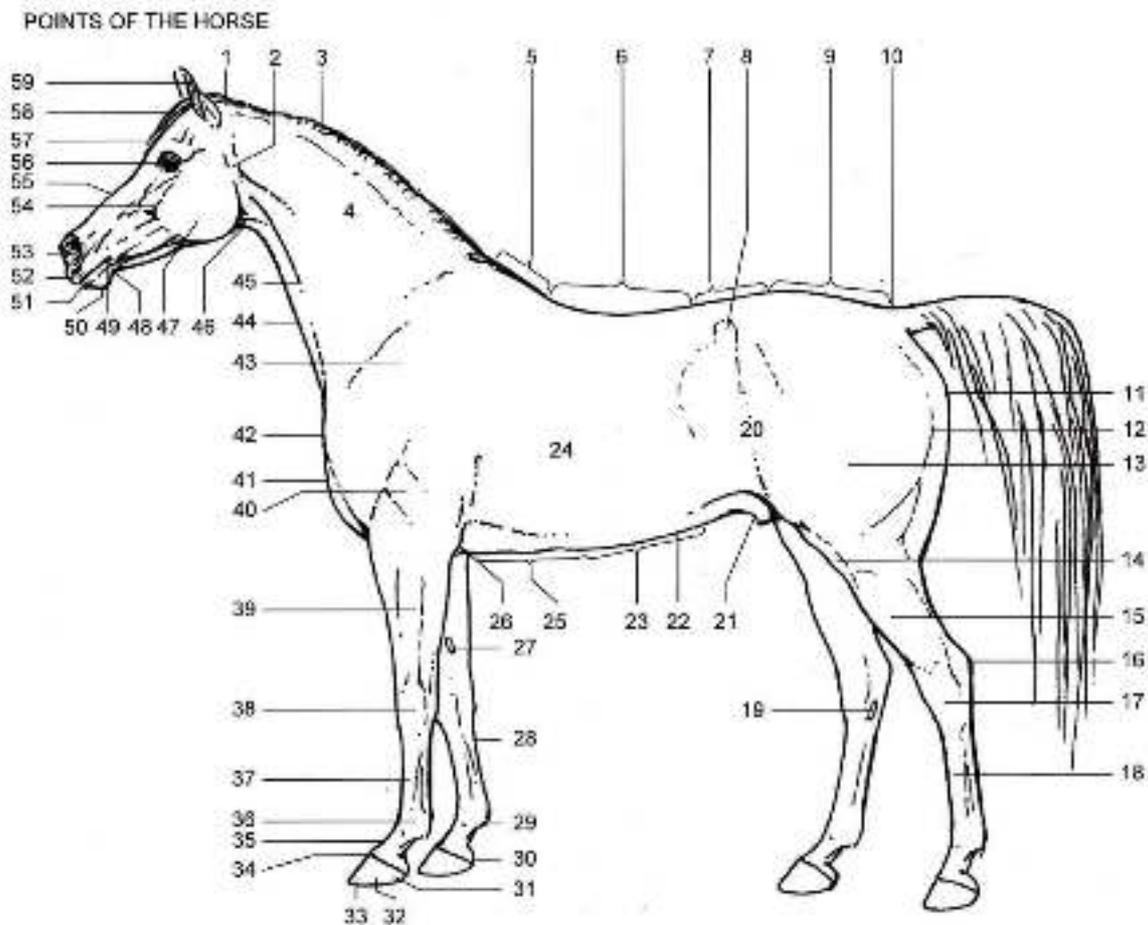
human leg

hind leg

foreleg

human arm

Points of the Horse



1.	Poll, nuchal region	31.	Hoof, Quarterwall
2.	Parotid gland	32.	Hoof, Sidewall
3.	Dorsal Crest	33.	Hoof, Dorsalwall
4.	Neck	34.	Coronet
5.	Withers	35.	Fetlockjoint
6.	Back	36.	Fetlock
7.	Loin	37.	Cannon front
8.	Point of Hip	38.	Carpus
9.	Croup	39.	Forearm
10.	Dock of tail	40.	Upperarm
11.	Point of Buttock	41.	Frontal Chest
12.	Buttock	42.	Point of Shoulder
13.	Thigh	43.	Shoulder
14.	Stifle	44.	Underneck
15.	Gaskin	45.	Jugular Groove
16.	Hock	46.	Throat
17.	Tarsal Joint, Hock	47.	Cheek
18.	Hind Cannon	48.	Chin Groove
19.	Chestnut	49.	Mouthangle
20.	Flank	50.	Chin
21.	Prepuce	51.	Lower Muzzle
22.	Umbilical Region	52.	Upper Muzzle
23.	Belly, Body	53.	Nostril

24.	Lateral Chest	54.	Facial Crest
25.	Ventral Chest, Girth Groove	55.	Nose
26.	Elbow	56.	Eye
27.	Chestnut	57.	Forehead
28.	Flexor tendor	58.	Forelock
29.	Spur	59.	Ear
30.	Heel		

APPENDICES

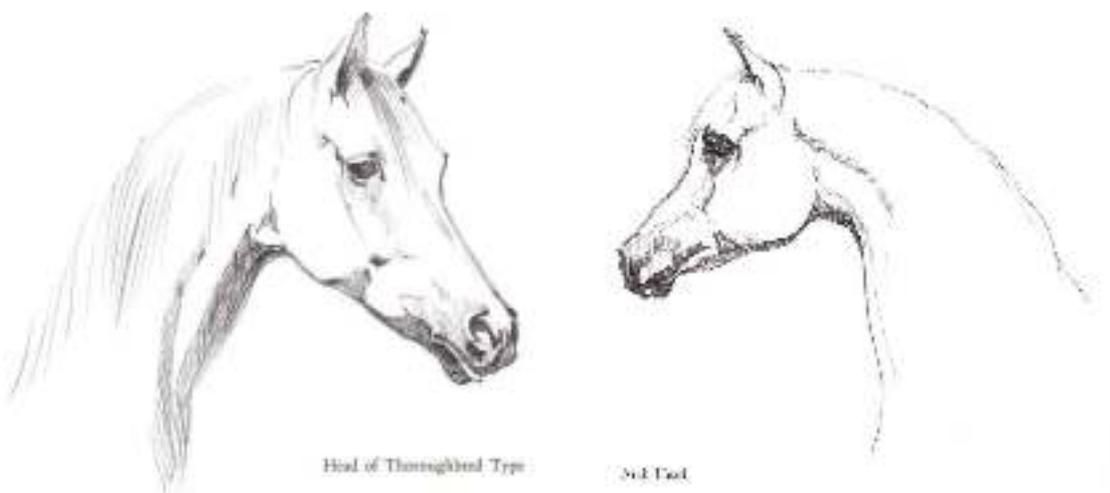
Defects and Faults

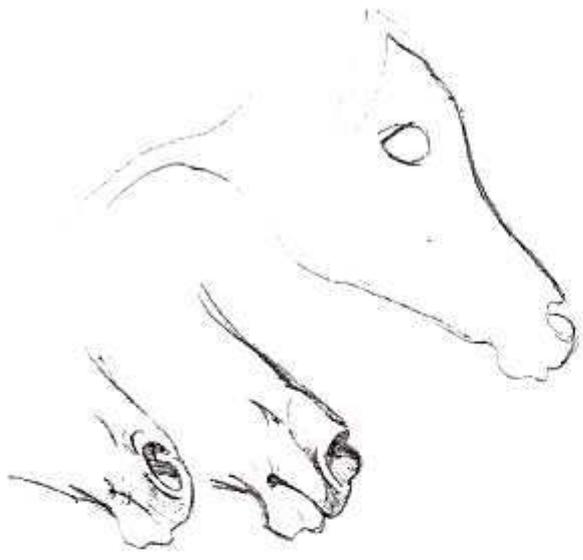
Lack of Arabian type is in itself a fault and all faults are deviations from the ideal.

Head

- Heavy common head.
- Roman nose.
- Elk nose.
- Coarse heavy muzzle.
- Convex shafts to underjaw. (Some animals develop tooth bumps between the ages of 2 to 5 year when the first molars are replaced by the permanent teeth. These although unsightly, usually disappear and are not faults. Likewise tooth development in the upper jaw sometimes causes filling in the face – this too eventually disappears).
- Small or narrow eye.
- High set eye.
- Deep set eye.
- Small cheek bones or narrowness or fleshiness between the cheek bones.
- Small thick nostrils at right angles to the profile.
- Undershot or overshot mouth.
- Short mouth.
- Lop ears or long ungraceful ears like mules.
- Narrow forehead between the eyes.

A wall eye is unsightly and should be discouraged.

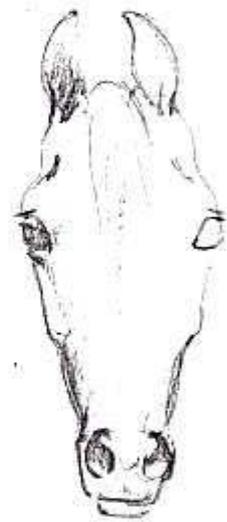




nostril flat and extended



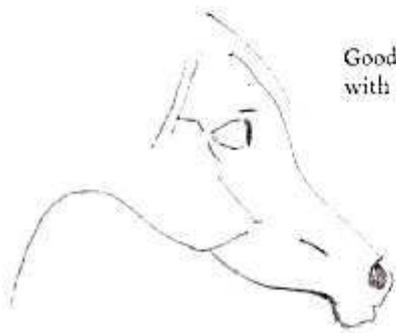
good heads



good head



Good mare's head with loose lower lip



Convex shafts to underjaw



narrow face



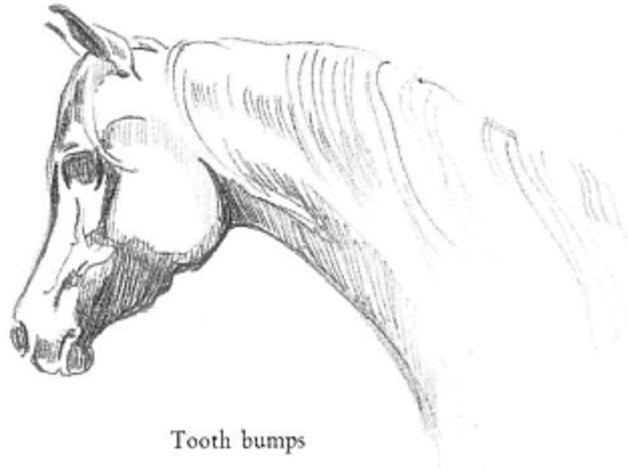
Elk-nose
shallow jaws



Roman nose
Straight ears
Small nostrils and slant eye



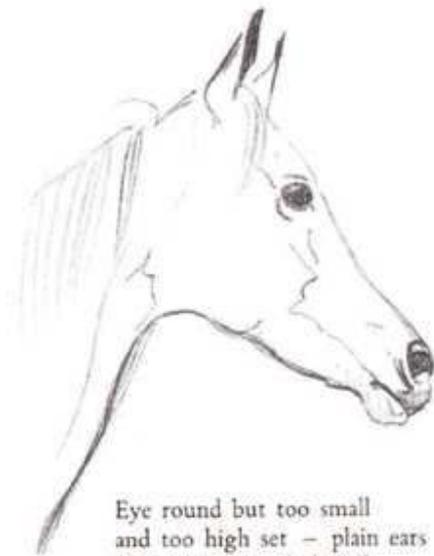
A good head



Tooth bumps



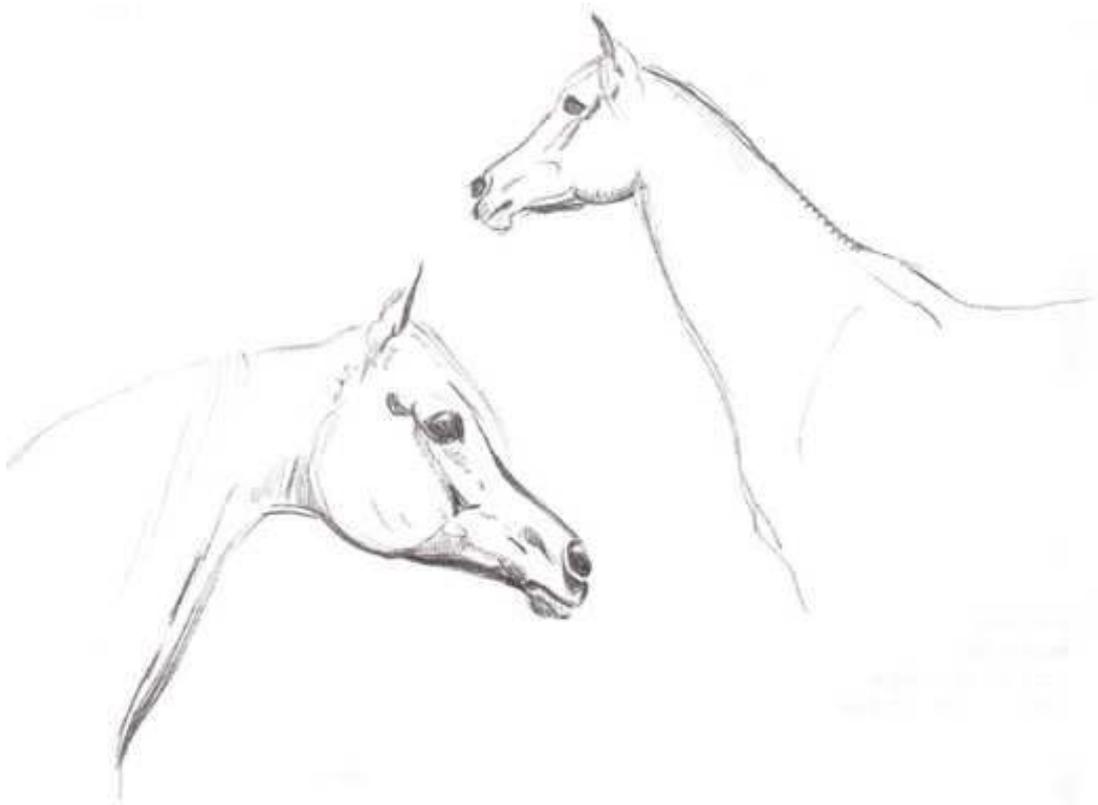
An overshoot or parrot mouth when the teeth of the upper jaw are not in line with the teeth of the lower jaw, but overshoot them.
(This must not be confused with a horse which when tense may tighten its lower lip.)



Eye round but too small and too high set – plain ears head not wedged shaped enough due to too small cheek bone

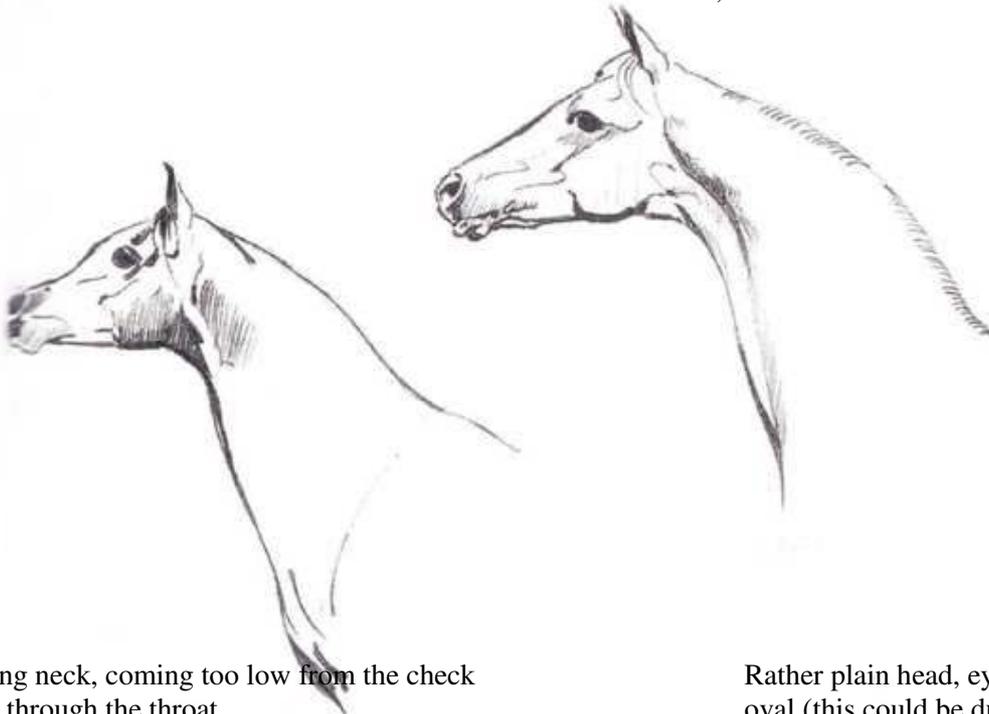
Neck, shoulder and withers

- A straight neck or worse an upside down, “ewe” neck, meeting the head at an acute angle.
- Thick throat.
- Short, thick neck.
- Neck running low into the chest (often associated with an upright shoulder).
- No crest on a stallion or alternatively a too heavily crested, thick neck.
- Too heavy a neck on a mare.
- A short, upright shoulder.
- Low fleshy withers, giving a horse a “downhill” appearance.
- Narrow chest.



Lovely head

Ewe neck, high set eyes, angle of throat acute, neck too low into chest



Underslung neck, coming too low from the check and thick through the throat

Rather plain head, eye rather oval (this could be due to head held too high so causing the horse to look down with half-closed eyes)



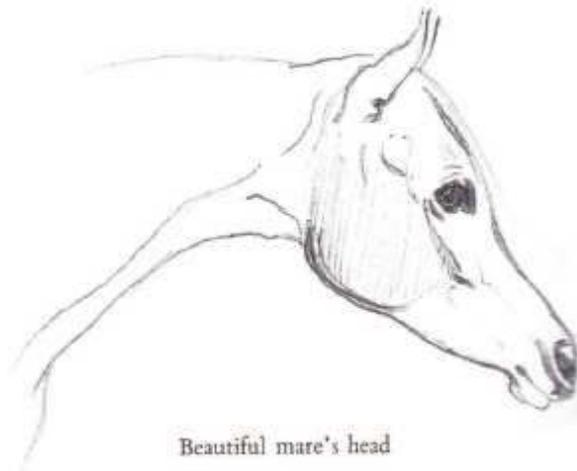
Stallion
too thick through throat



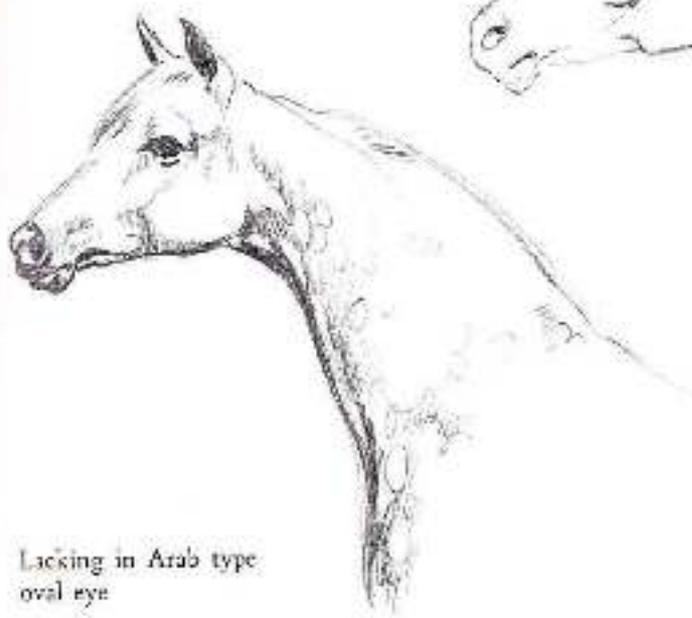
excellent Stallion's head



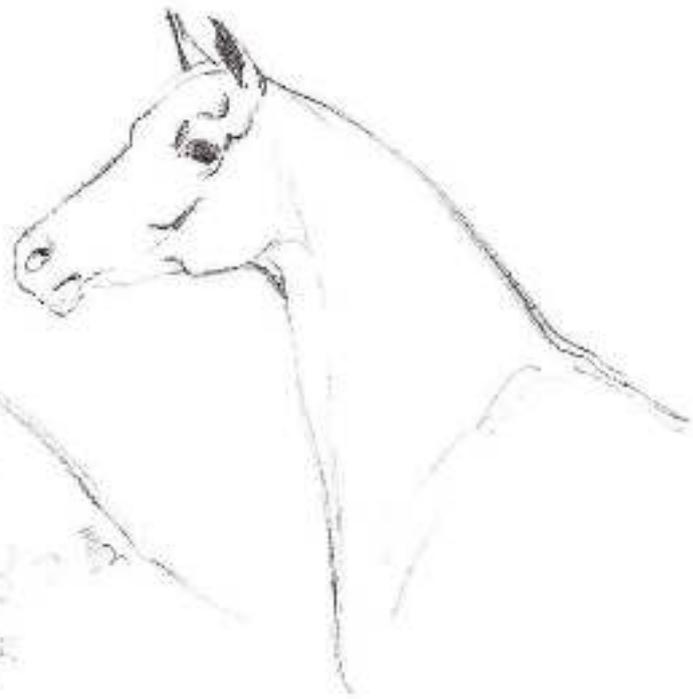
Eye round but too small
convex jaw shafts
heavy muzzle, small cheek
bone



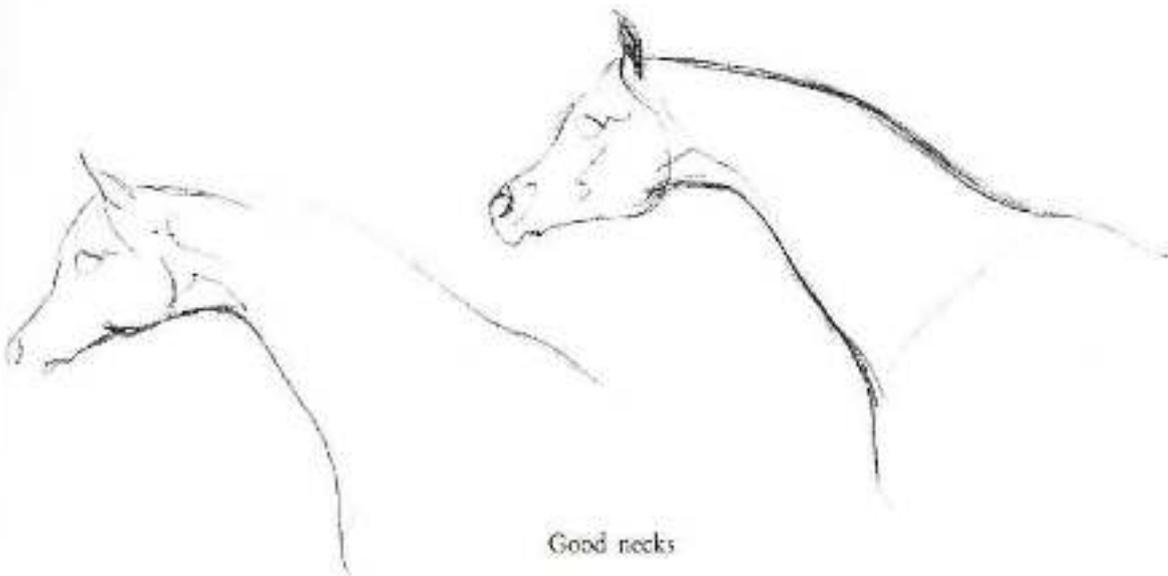
Beautiful mare's head



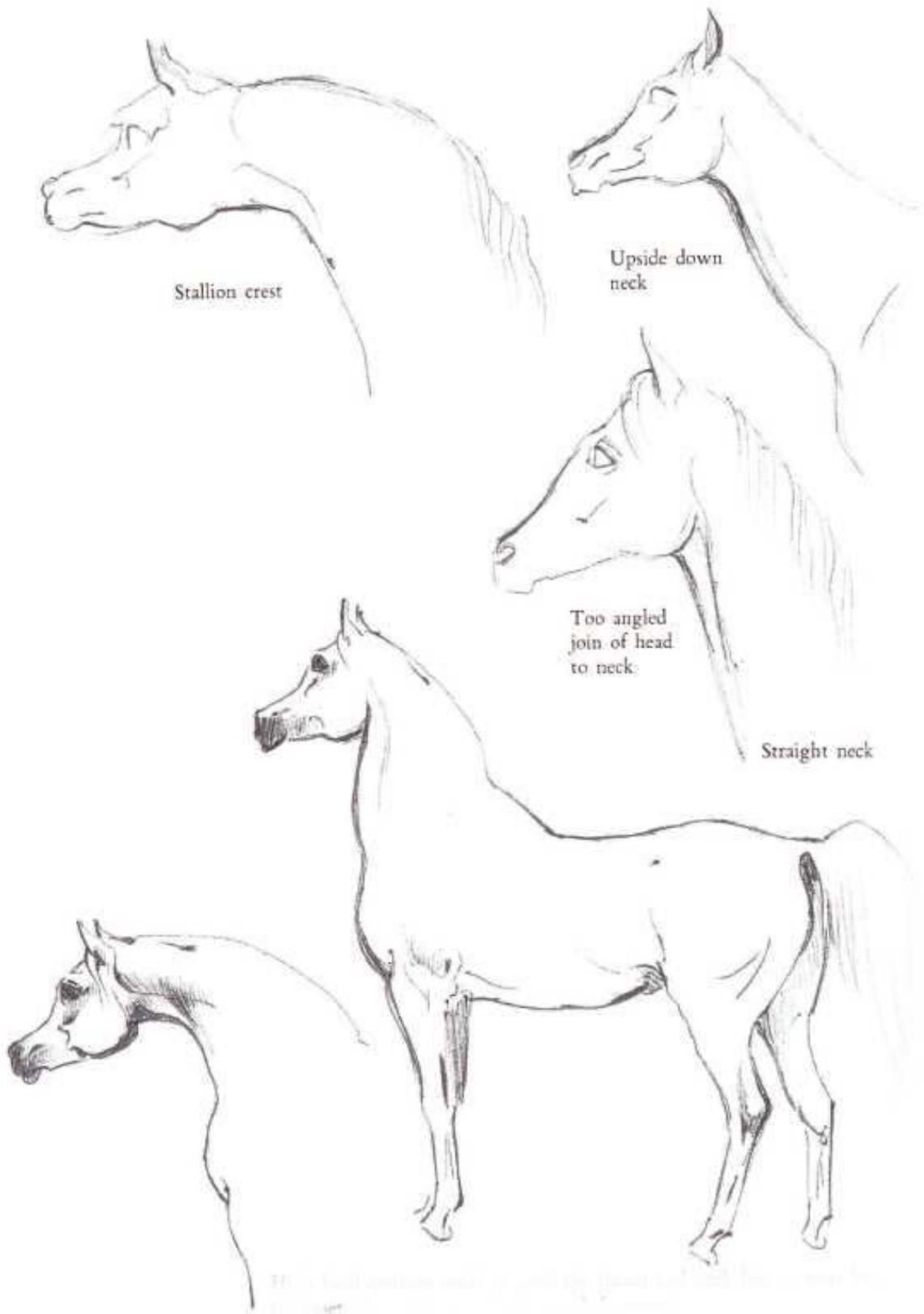
Lacking in Arab type
oval eye



Plain ears
narrow eye, set
too high.



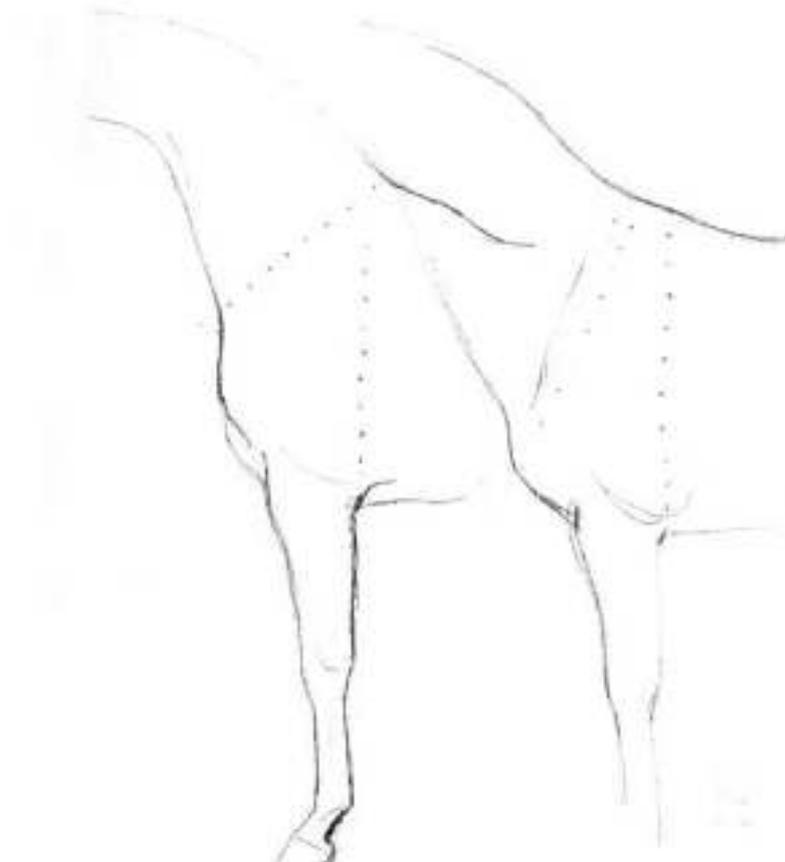
Good necks



The head carriage tends to spoil the throat and neck line – note how in the inset the same horse looks much better.

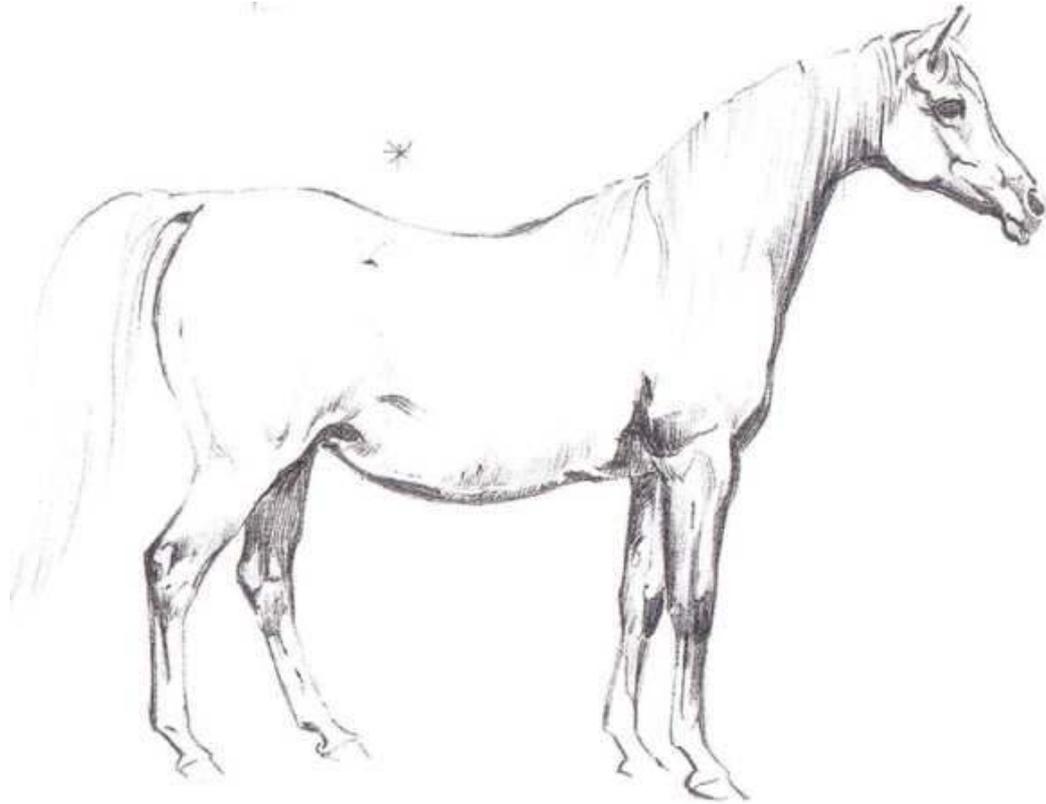
Back and body

- A sway back is a weak back, particularly when associated with slack loins.
- A roach back or cow's back.
- A long back. (This is partly matter of proportion. In a mare be long and low with long fine neck, well-laid shoulder and good length from hip to point of buttock then a slightly longer back would indeed be in proportion. On the other hand a long back would be quite wrong if coupled to a short neck, upright shoulder and short quarter).
- Flat or slab sides.
- Herring-gutted when the flank is tucked up giving the appearance of loose-coupling.



Good shoulder and foreleg

Straight shoulder, neck too low into chest, forearm set too far back



Sway

back

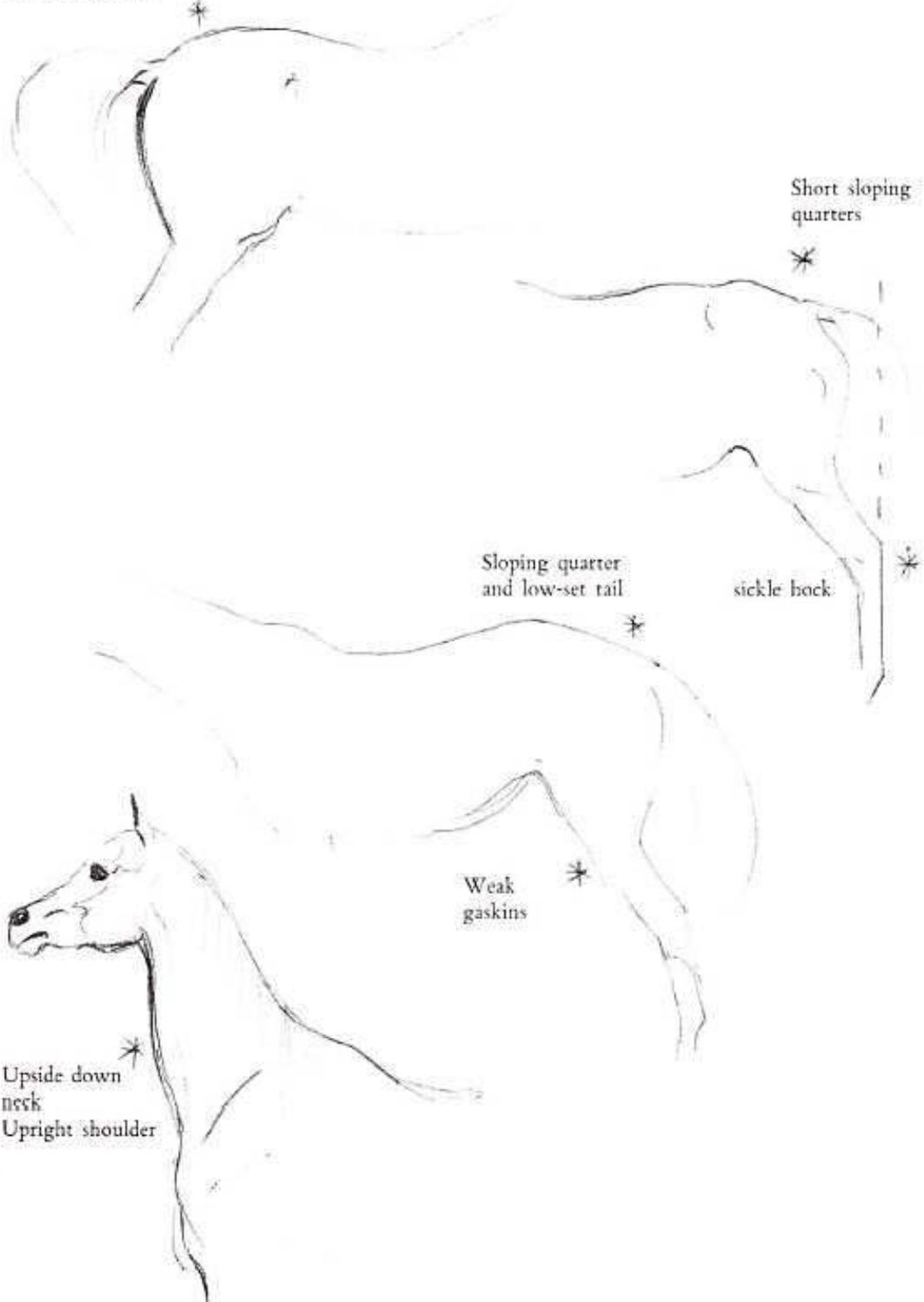
Quarters

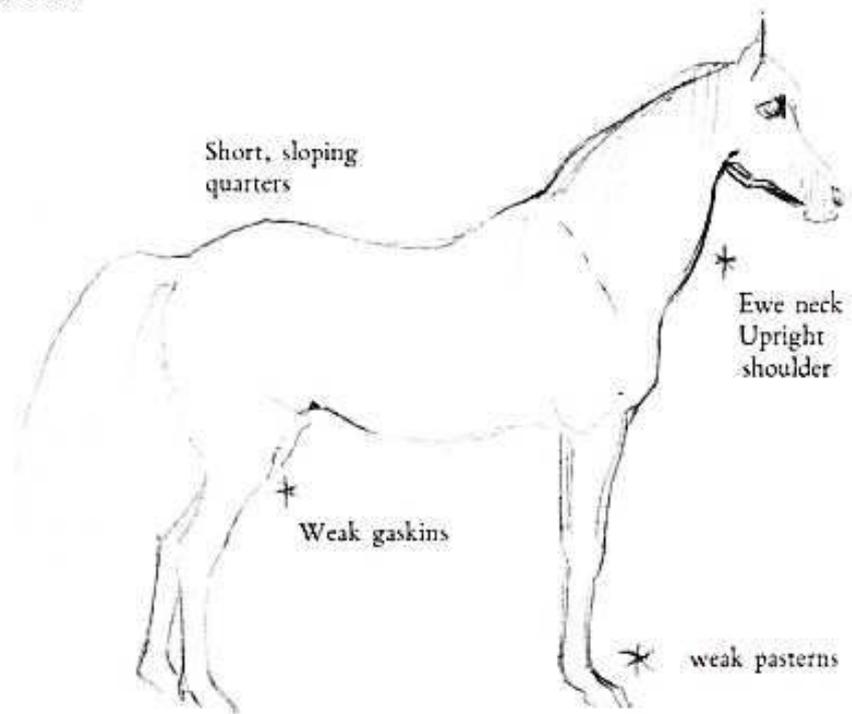
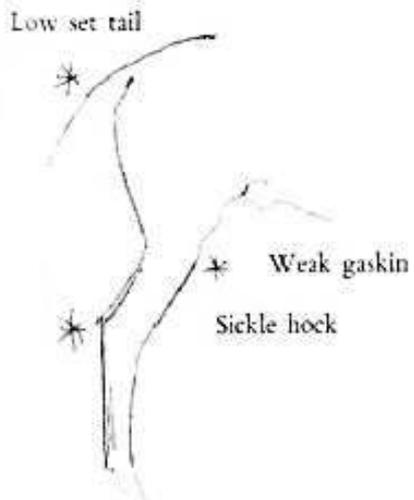
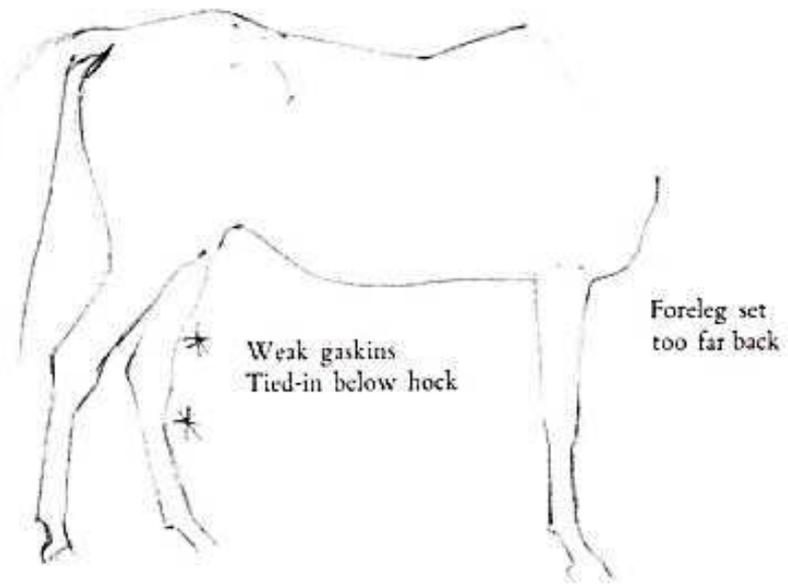
- Short from hip to point of buttock. (This should not be confused with a peaky croup giving an appearance of a short quarter when the length from hip to buttock is still acceptable – this condition though not ideal is found among Arabians, particularly in mare with foals at foot).
- A sloping quarter or apple rump are decided faults.
- The tail must not start low down or be set in. (A set-in tail and short quarter usually denotes in a mare an excessively sloping vulva which is more prone to infection).
- Narrow across the hips or a displaced hip – when one appears lower than the other when viewed from behind.

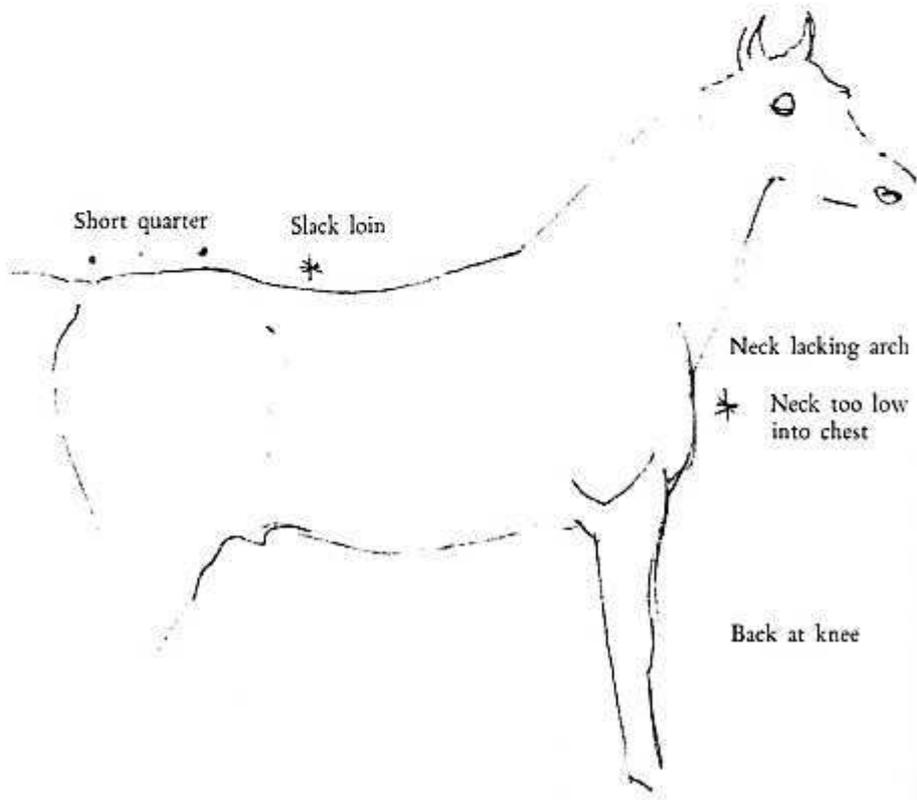
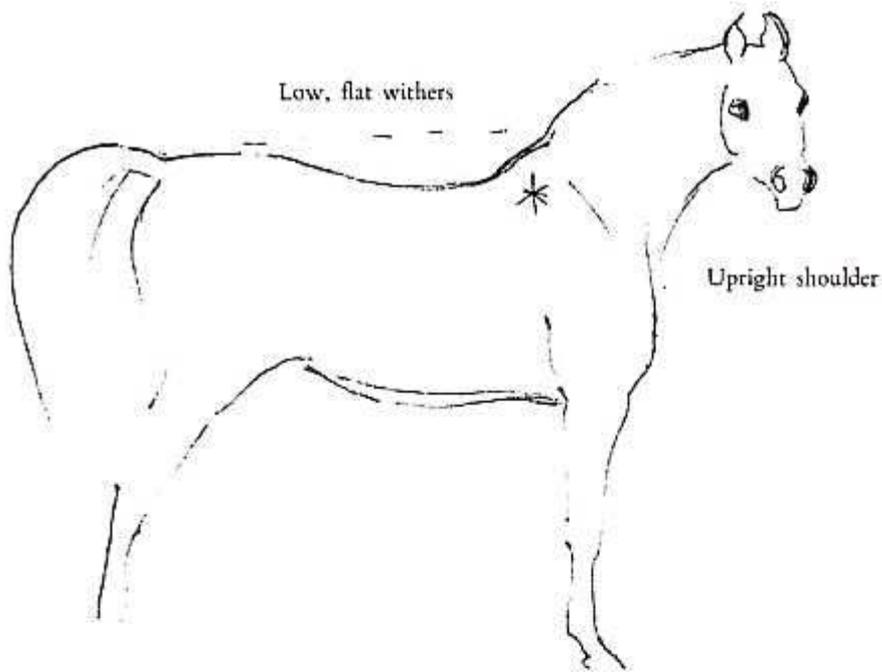
Tail

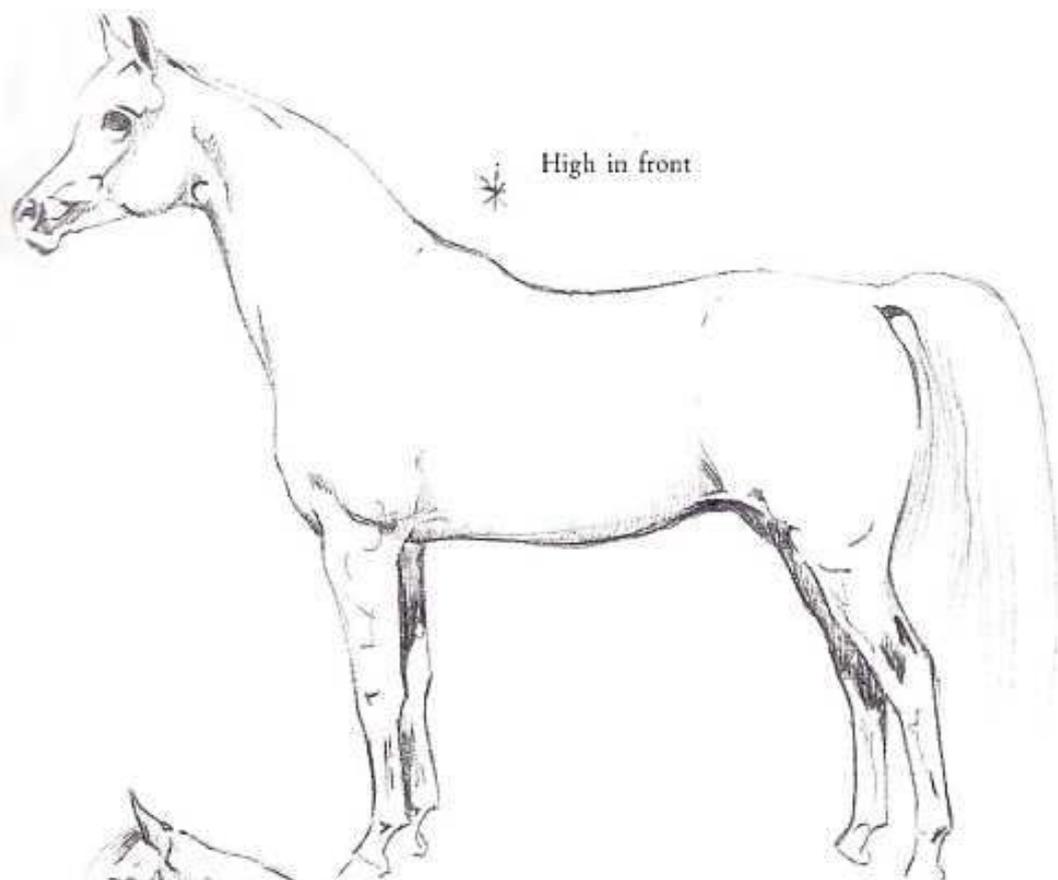
- A low tail carriage is usually associated with low quarters and is one of the worst faults.

Apple rump
and low-set tail

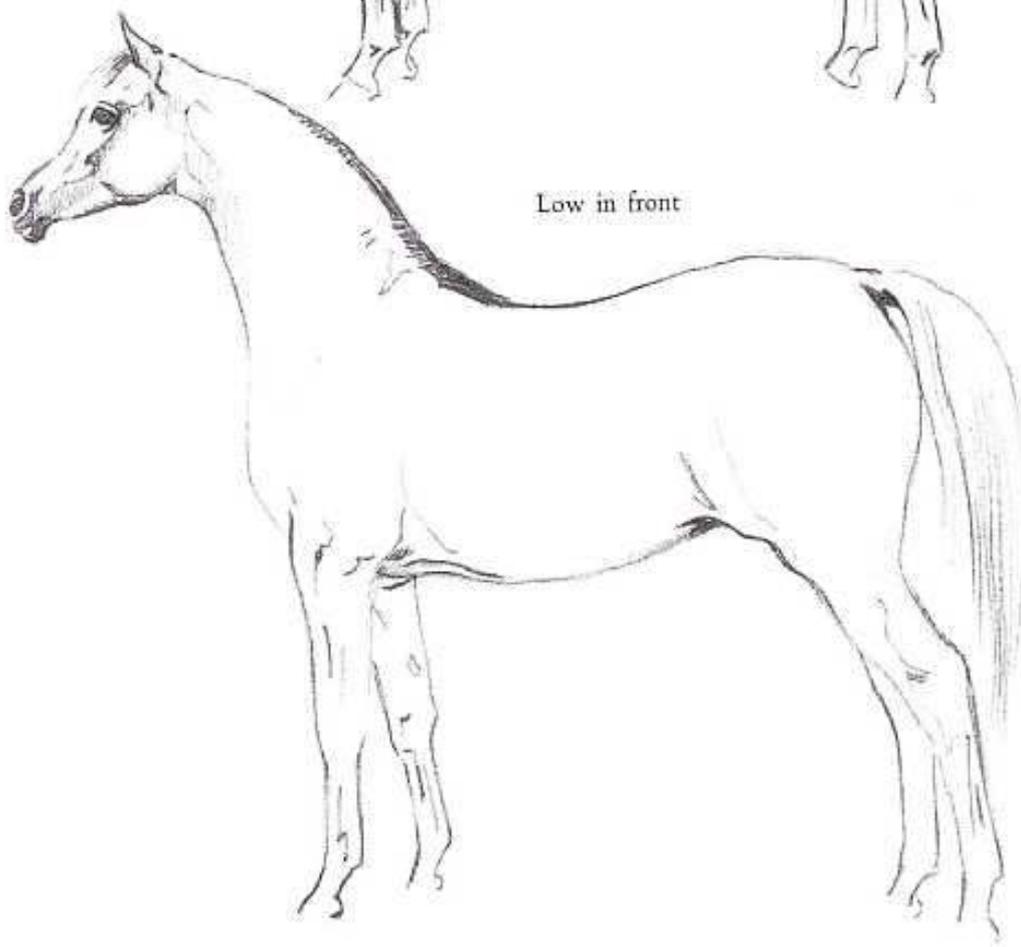




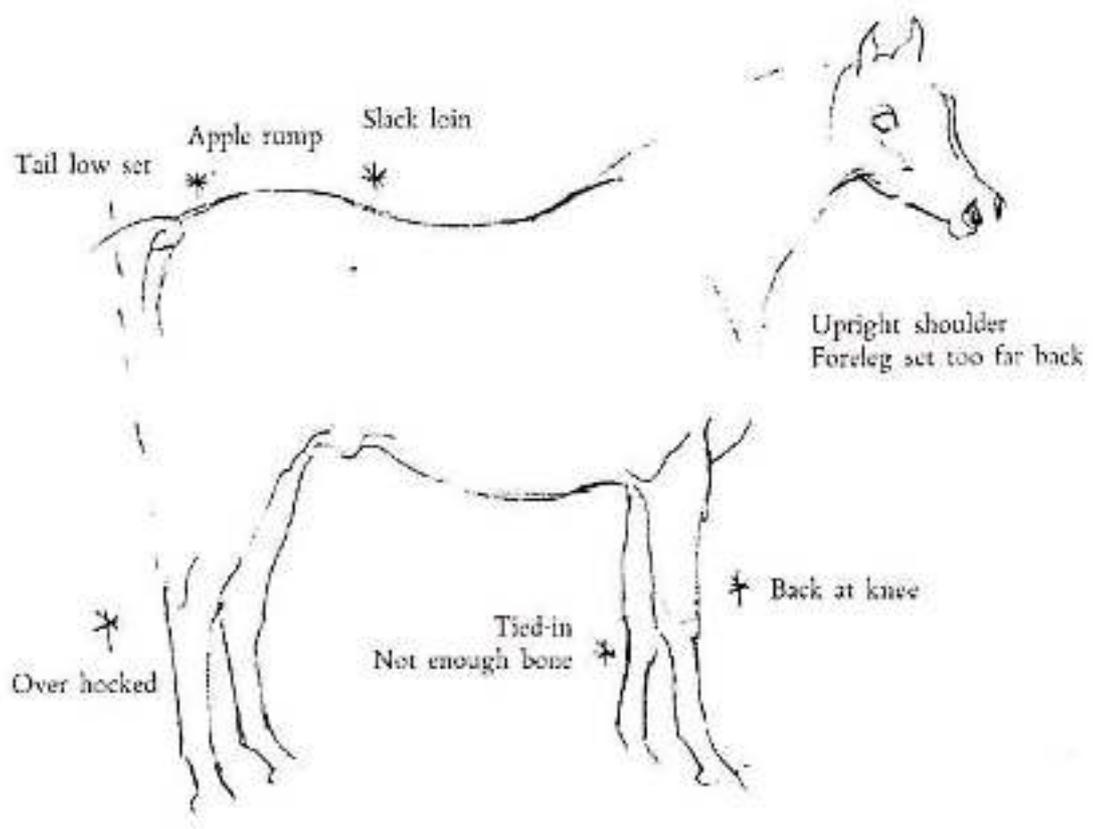




High in front

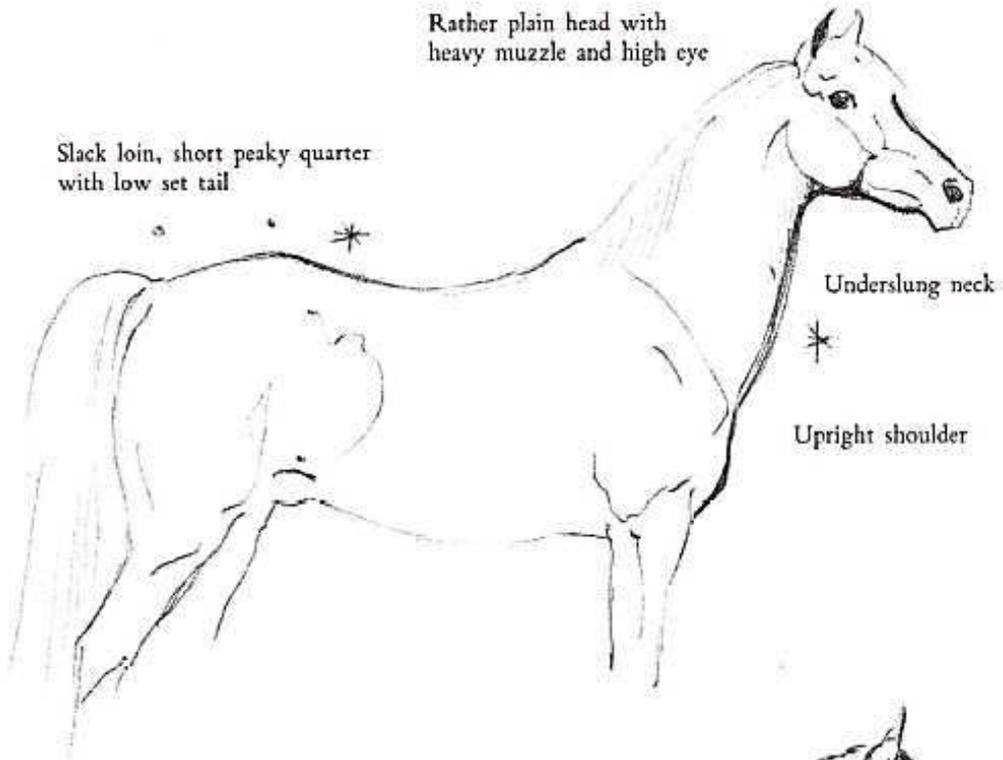


Low in front



Rather plain head with heavy muzzle and high eye

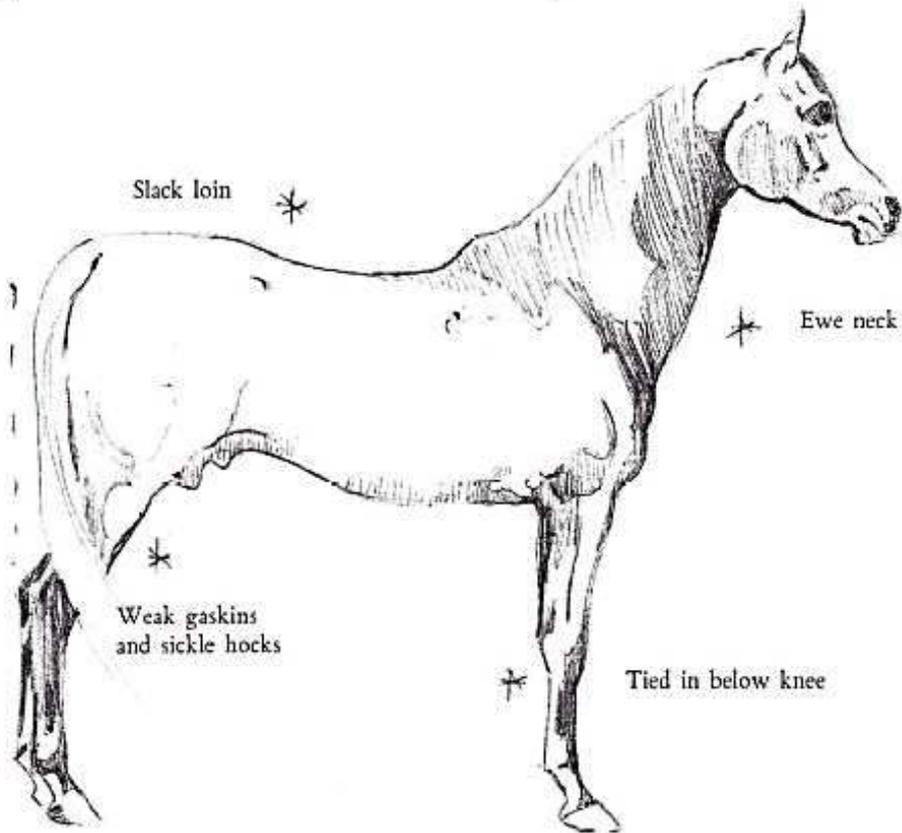
Slack loin, short peaky quarter with low set tail



Underslung neck

Upright shoulder

Slack loin

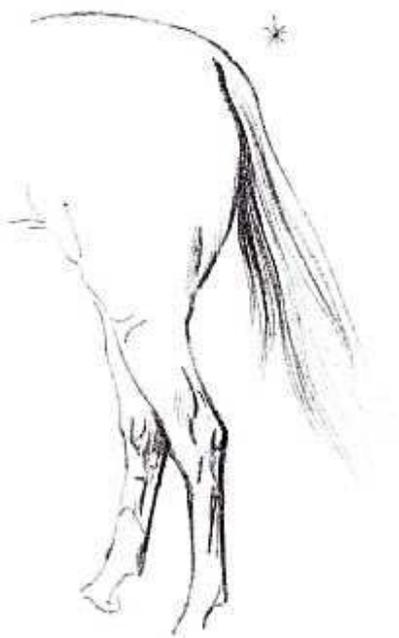
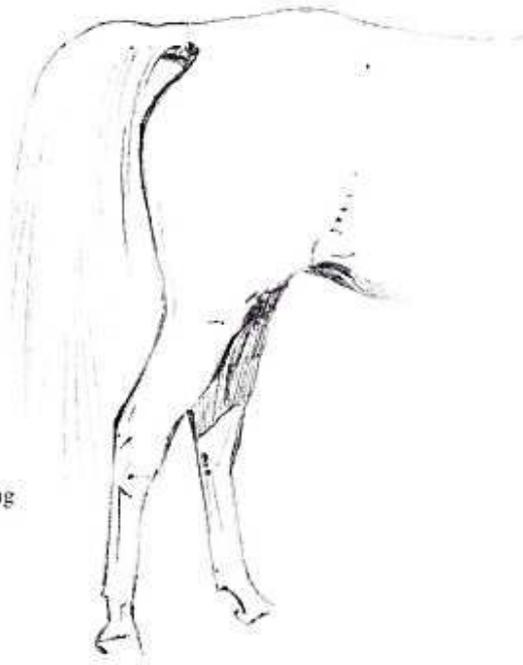


Ewe neck

Weak gaskins and sickle hocks

Tied in below knee

Tail set on well, vulva sloping rather straight in hocks



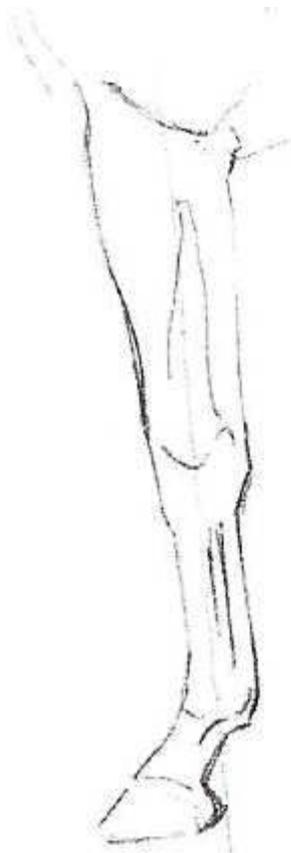
Tail held in close



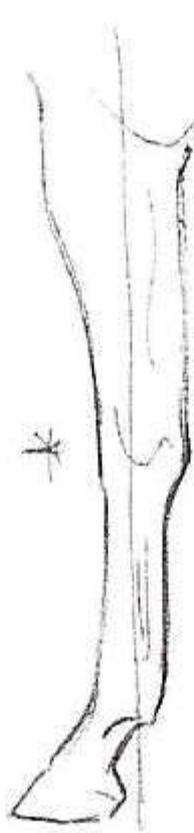
Apple rump and low set tail

Forelegs

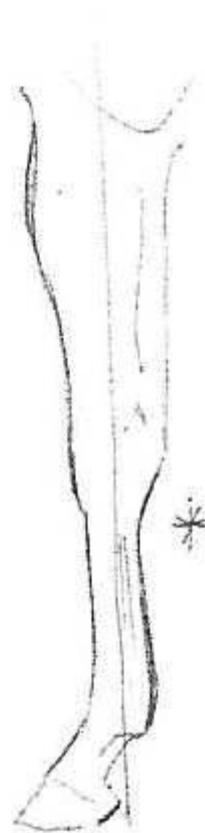
- Set back under the shoulder.
- Tied in at elbows.
- Weak forearms.
- Long in bone between the joints.
- Round joints.
- Back at knee.
- Knock-kneed.
- Offset cannon bones.
- Tied in below the knee.
- Too short and upright pasterns.
- Excessively long, narrow and sloping pasterns and weakness.
- Tendons not clearly defined.



Good foreleg

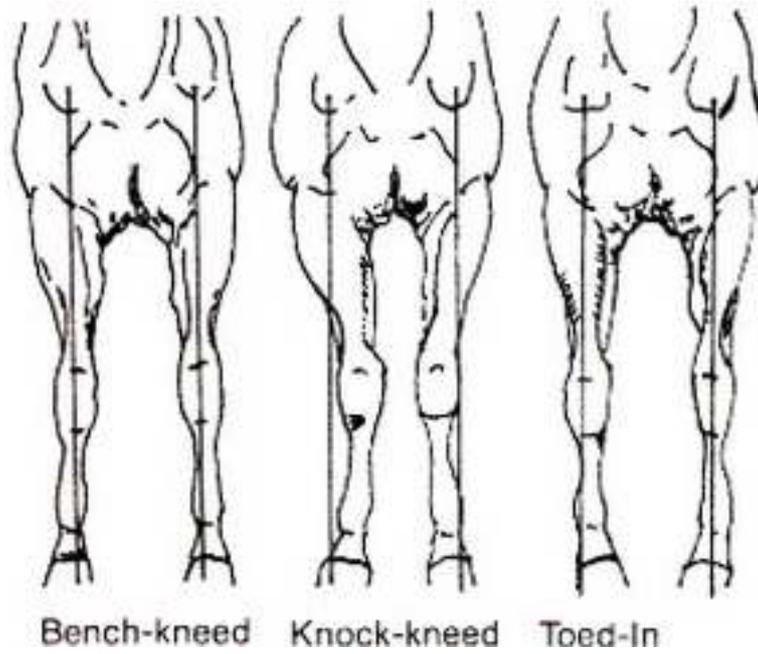
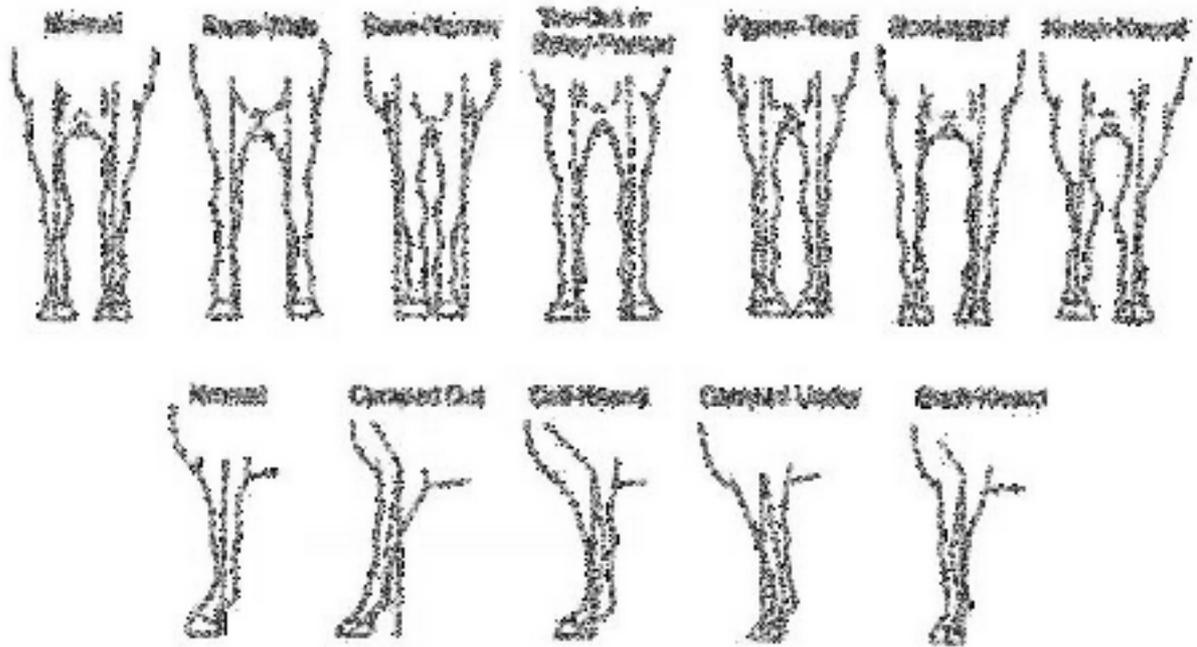


Back at knee



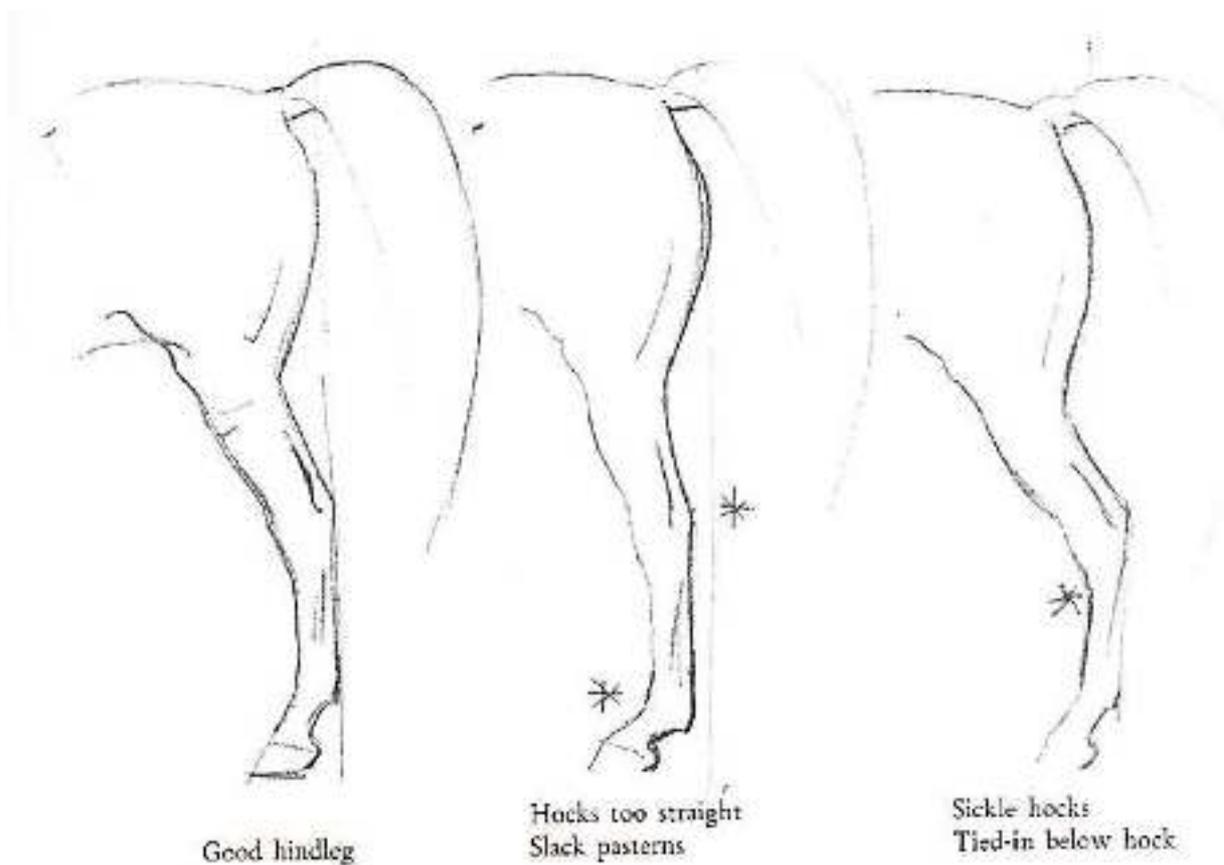
Tied-in below the knee

Conformation faults of forelegs



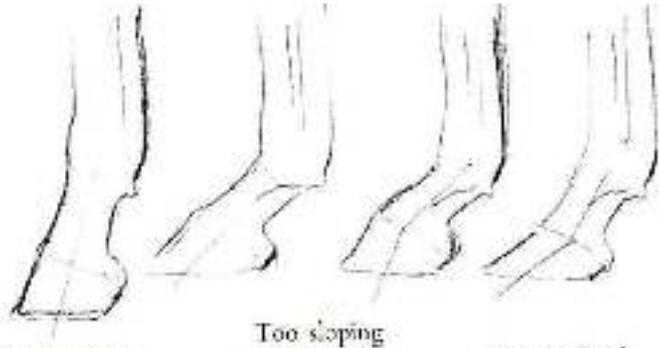
Hindlegs

- Narrow or weak gaskins.
- Puffy or small hocks.
- Cow hocks (turned-in).
- Sickie hocks (often associated with tied in below the hock and long narrow gaskin).
- Too straight in the hock (often associated with slack pasterns).
- Too long in bone between the joints.
- Too short and upright pasterns and excessively long and sloping pasterns.
- Split up behind.





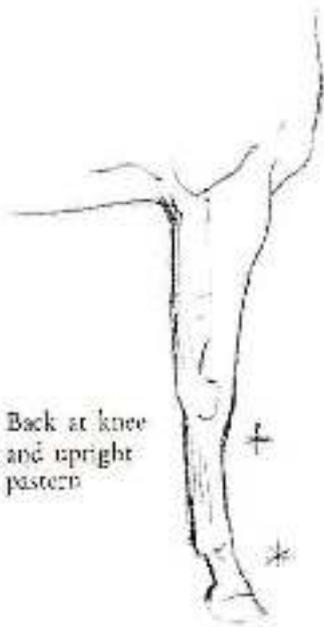
Front 47°
Back 50°



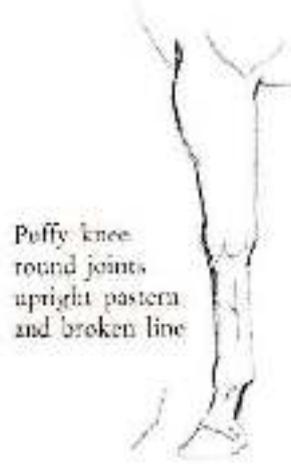
Too upright
Pastern &
box hoof

Too sloping
and slack
pastern
splay hoof

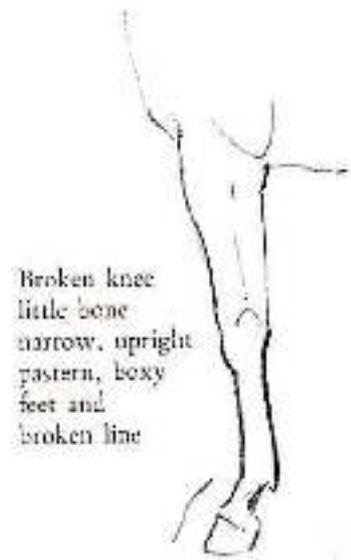
Bent axis of
pastern and hoof



Back at knee
and upright
pastern



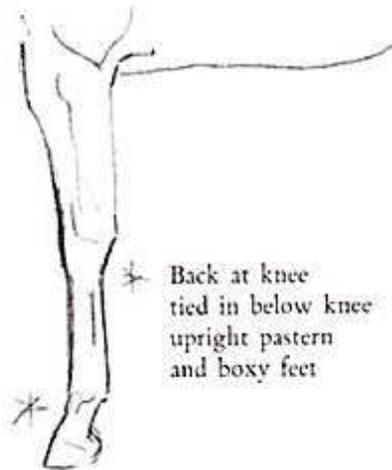
Puffy knee
round joints
upright pastern
and broken line



Broken knee
little bone
narrow, upright
pastern, boxy
feet and
broken line



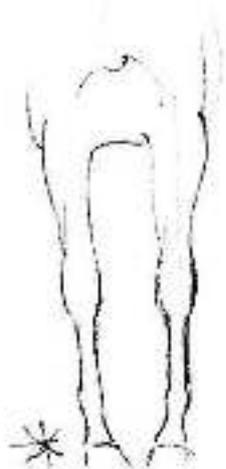
Slightly
back at knee
upright pastern
and boxy feet



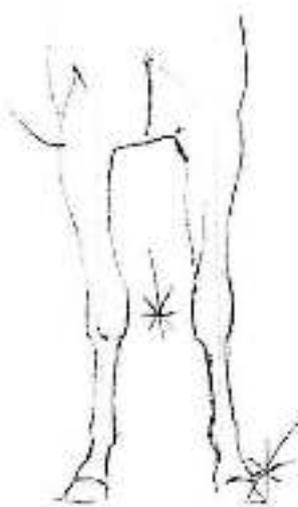
Back at knee
tied in below knee
upright pastern
and boxy feet



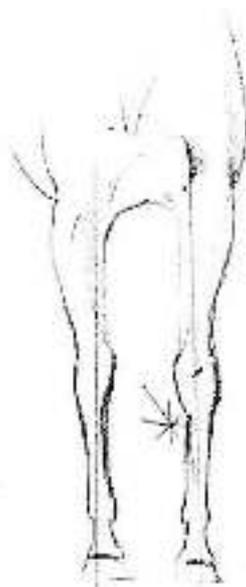
Tied-in below
hock



Toes turned in



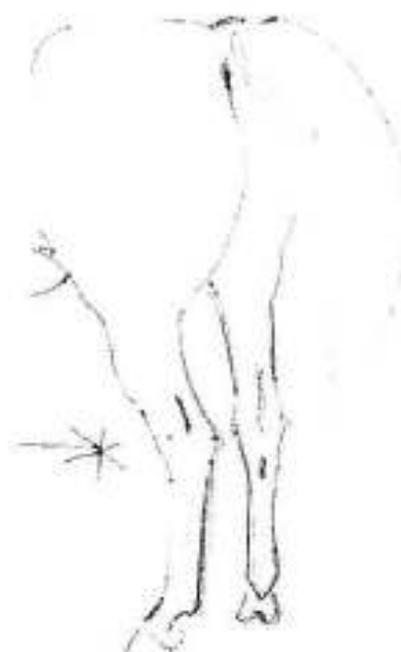
Knock knees and toes turned out



Off-set cannon bones

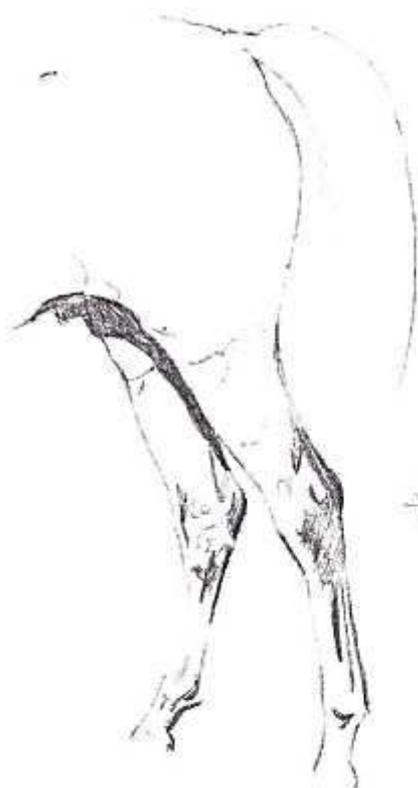


Straight hock
capped hock, puffy joints
too sloping pasterns and broken line

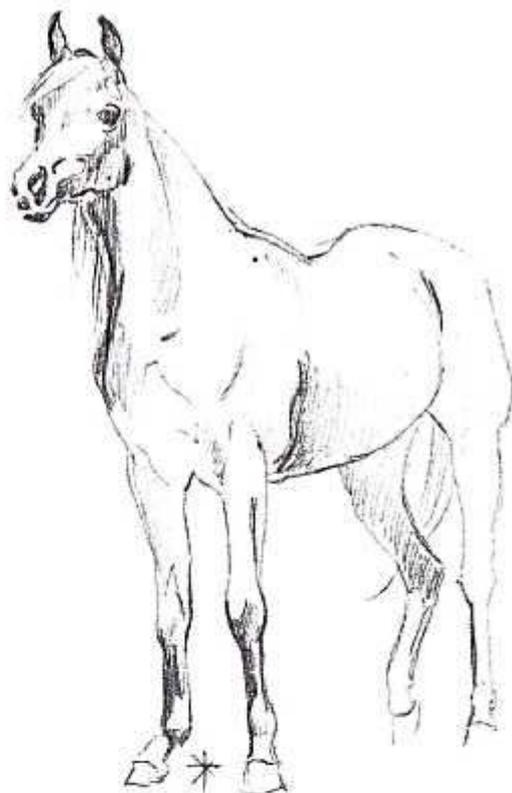


Cow hocks

Overhooked
weak gaskin
puffy joints



hocks turned in

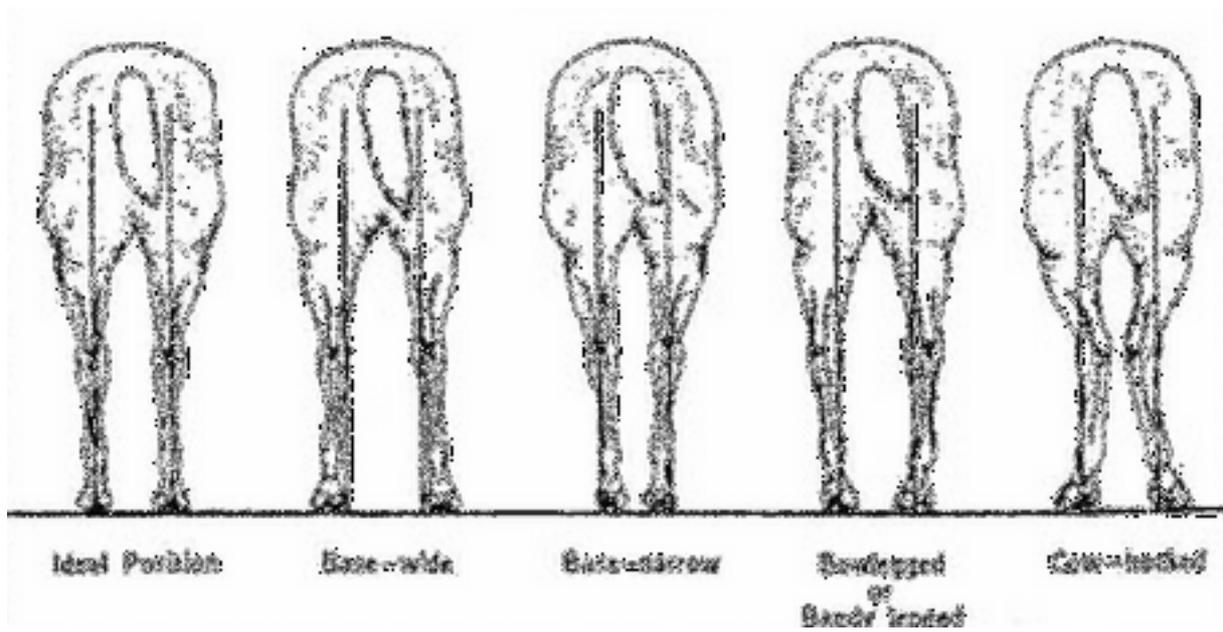


Toes turned out and narrow in front



Split up behind

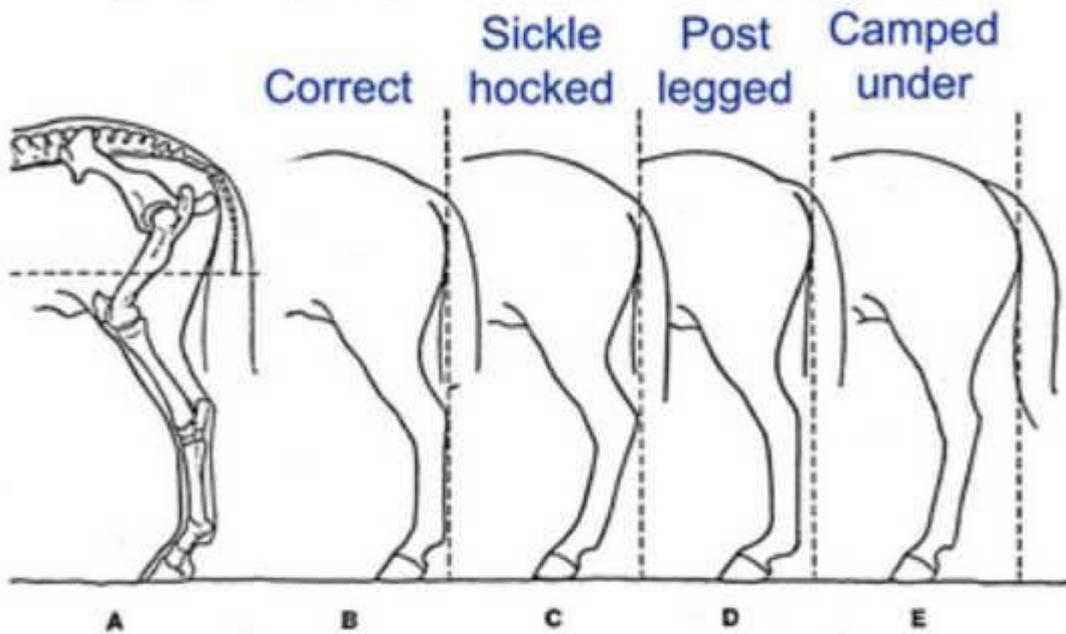
Hindleg conformation (rear view)



CORRECT AND INCORRECT STRUCTURE OF THE REAR LEGS

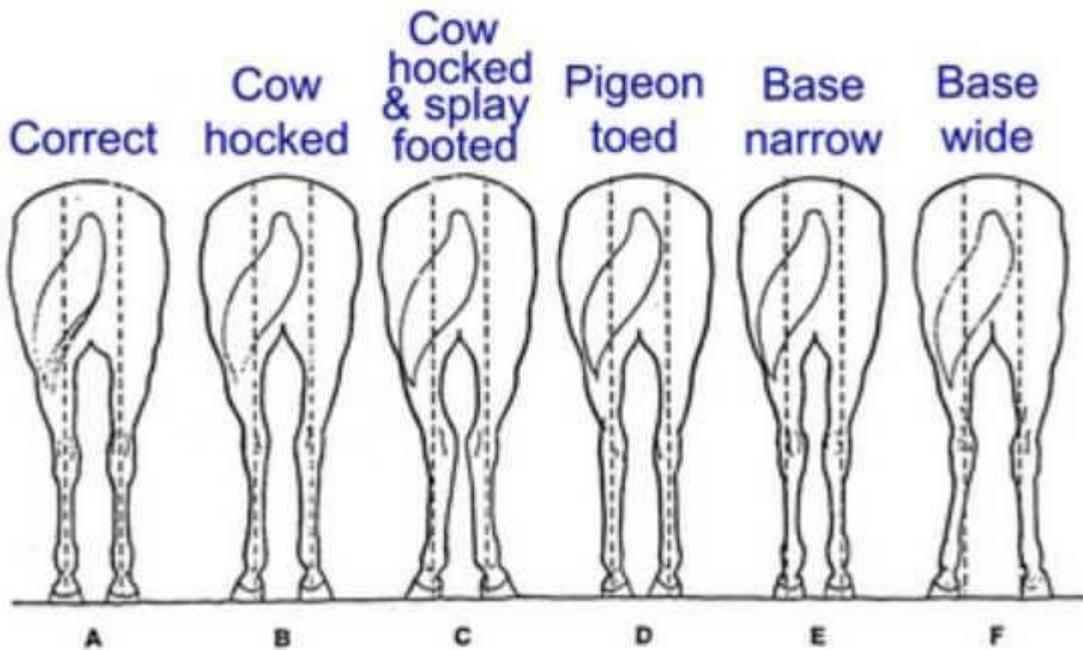
Side View

(Drop imaginary line from point of the buttock)



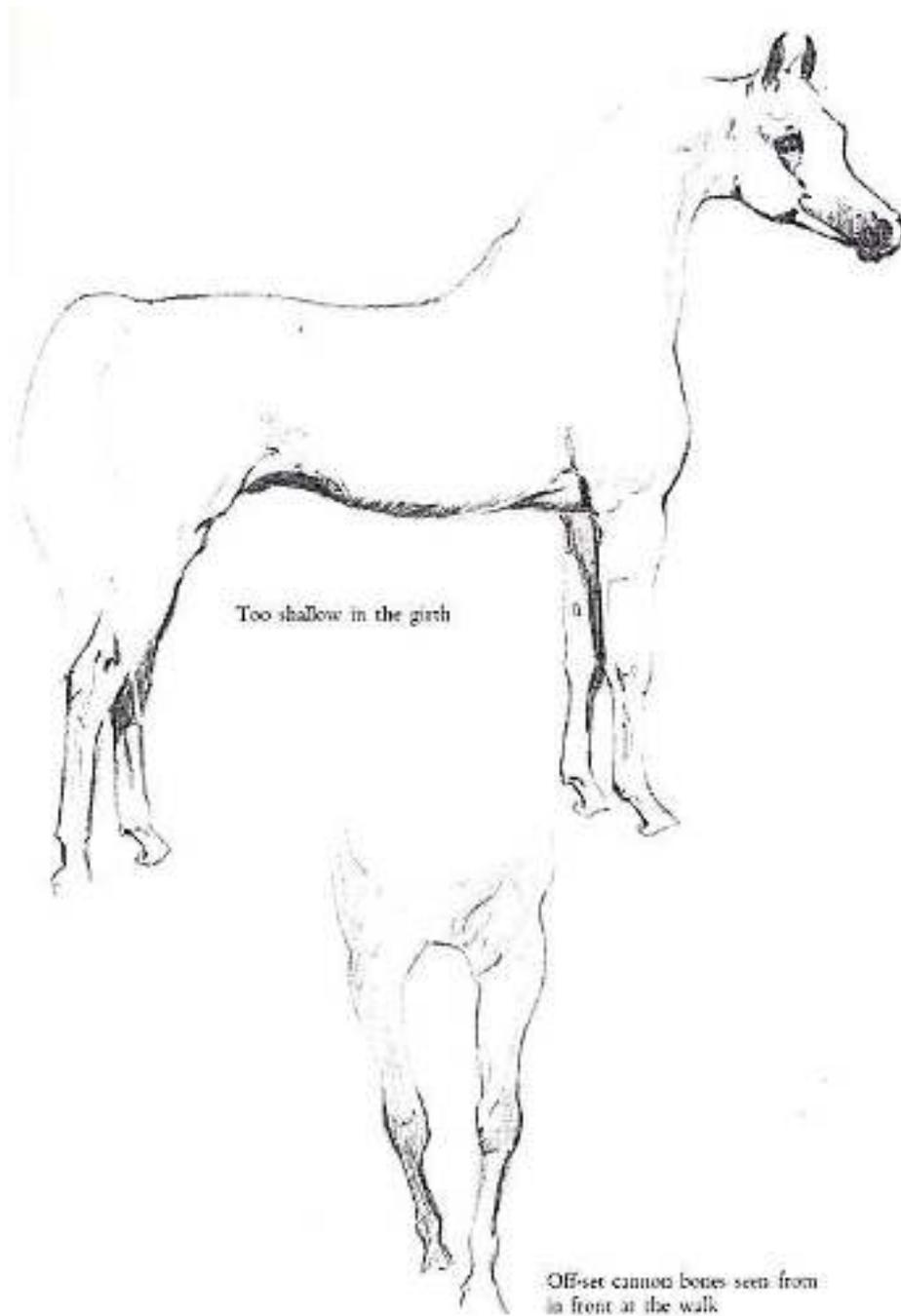
Rear View

(Drop imaginary line from point of the buttock)



Foot

- Narrow (mule) feet.
- Small feet often boxy and/or contracted at the heels. Splay feet. Rough or ribbed surface to hoof.
- Convex wall to hoof.
- Toes out or toes in.
- Broken angle of hoof and pastern.
- Feet not appearing as a pair.



Leg faults – photos











Coat, hair, skin

- A woolly coat (obviously a winter is denser than the summer but it should not be excessively hairy or woolly).
- A coat lacking in lustre (condition can affect this).
- Brittle or coarse, curly hair (a slight wave to coat or hair is perfectly acceptable).
- A thick skin with excessive lack of pigment (pink pigmentation is more liable to sun blister, mud fever etc.).
- Excessively profuse mane or tail.
- Hairy legs, heels or chin.

Colour and markings

- Piebalds, Skewbalds and Duns are not allowed.
- Palomino true roans are not Arabian colours (some horses, in the early stages of going grey, or with excessive white flecking can look rather like roans).
- Colours should not be washy.

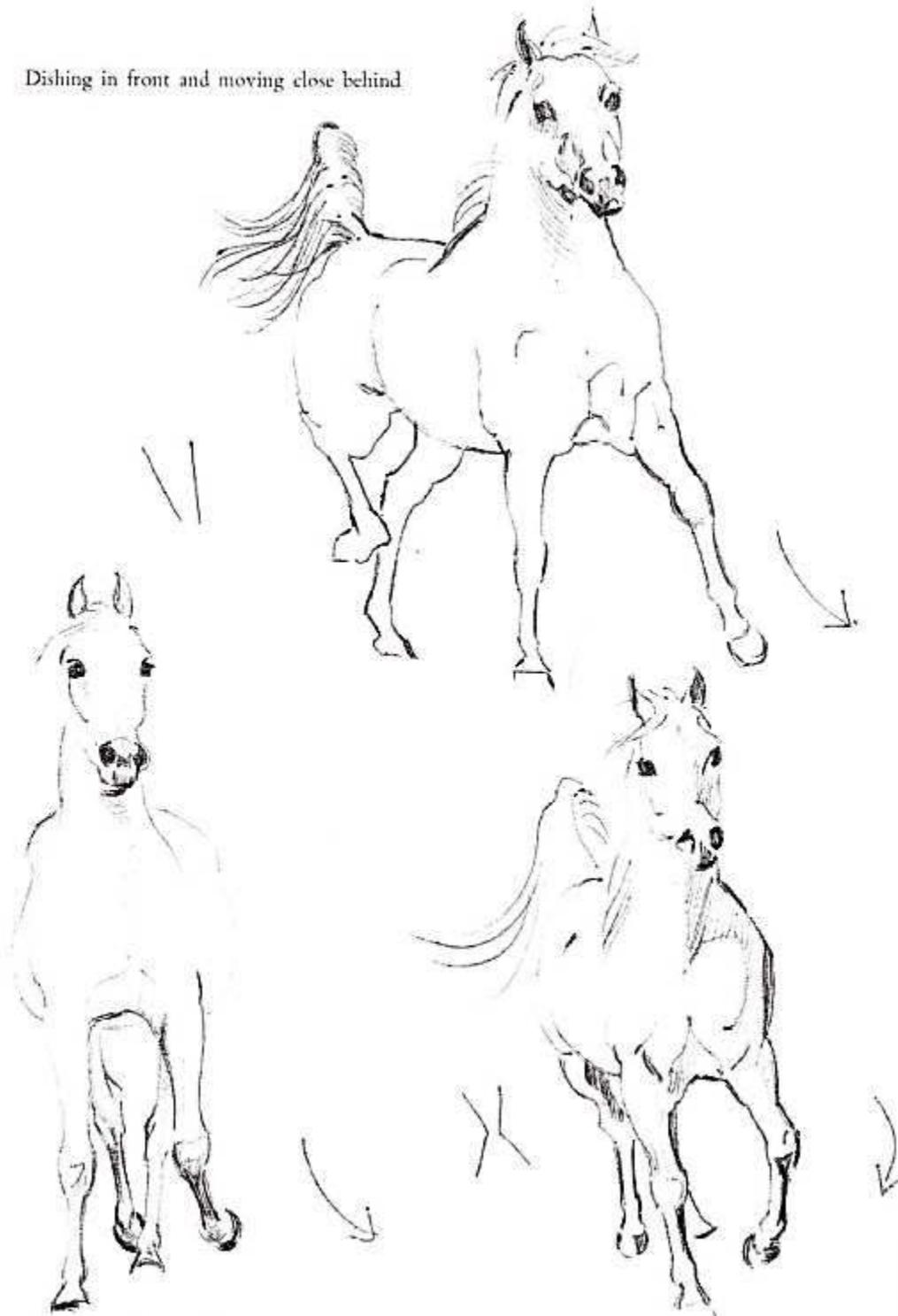
		
Piebald (black and white)	Skewbald (white and any other colour)	Dun (face mask, shoulder bars, leg bars, and dorsal stripes)

Action

- A short stride.
- Stiff movement lacking flexion of joints.
- Trailing hocks.
- On the forehand.
- Heavy round movement.
- Uneven movement lacking in rhythm.
- Mixed (the gaits must be true).
- From in front:
 - Anything not straight.
 - Moving too close or wide.
 - Dishing.
 - Knees moving out.
 - Toes scooping in.
- From behind:

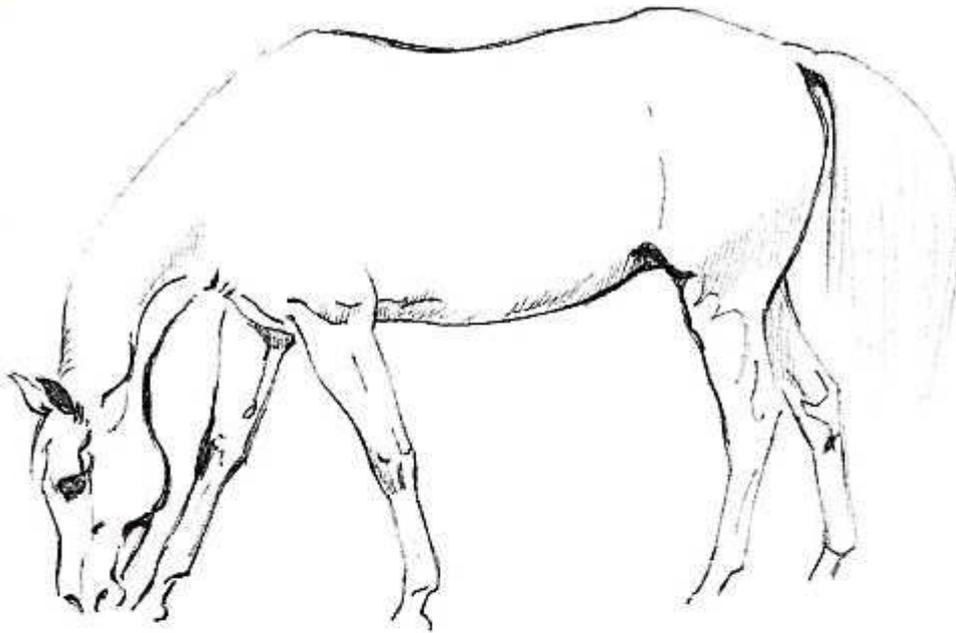
- Straddling.
- Too close.
- Cow hocks.
- Swinging legs due to lack of flexion of joints.
- Low head and tail carriage.

Dishing in front and moving close behind

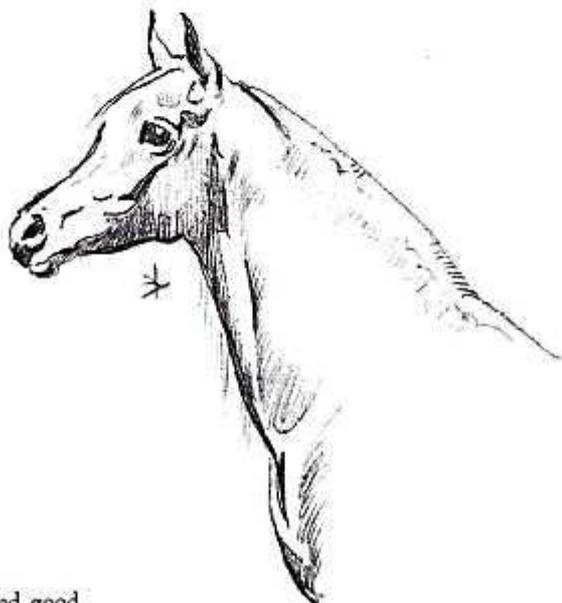


Dishing seen from in front at the trot

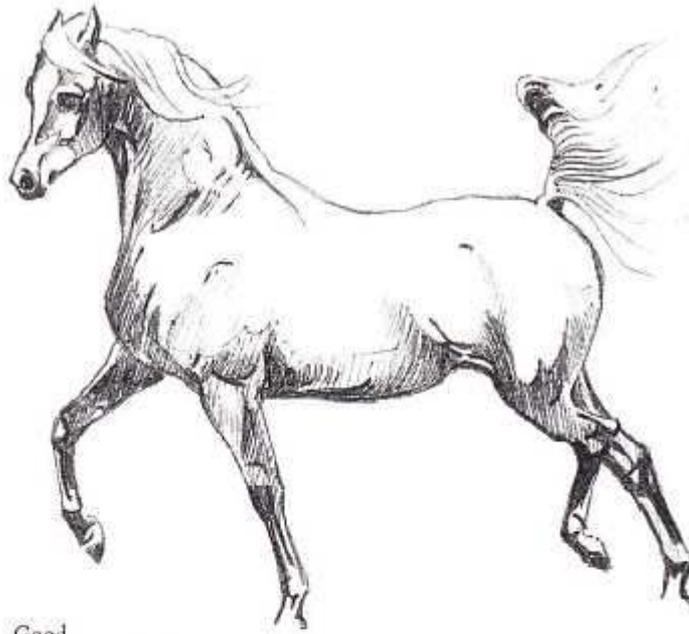
Narrow behind and knees out



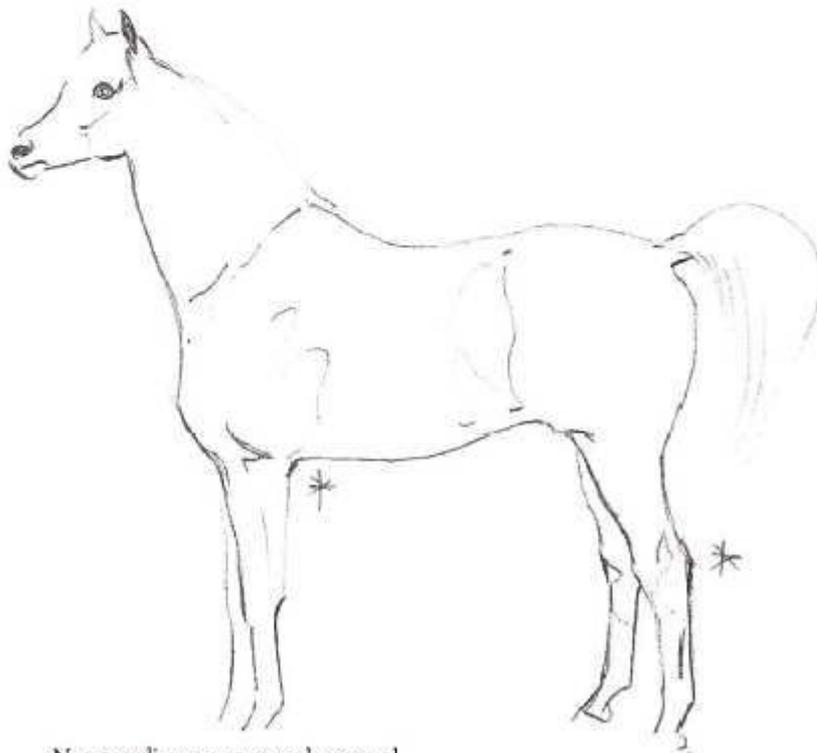
Grazing mare - back at knee
spread of forelegs suggests a short neck
quarters droop and tail is set low though the
position of the near hind well under the body
could well aggravate the angle of the quarters



Head good
but throat too thick
through and neck heavy



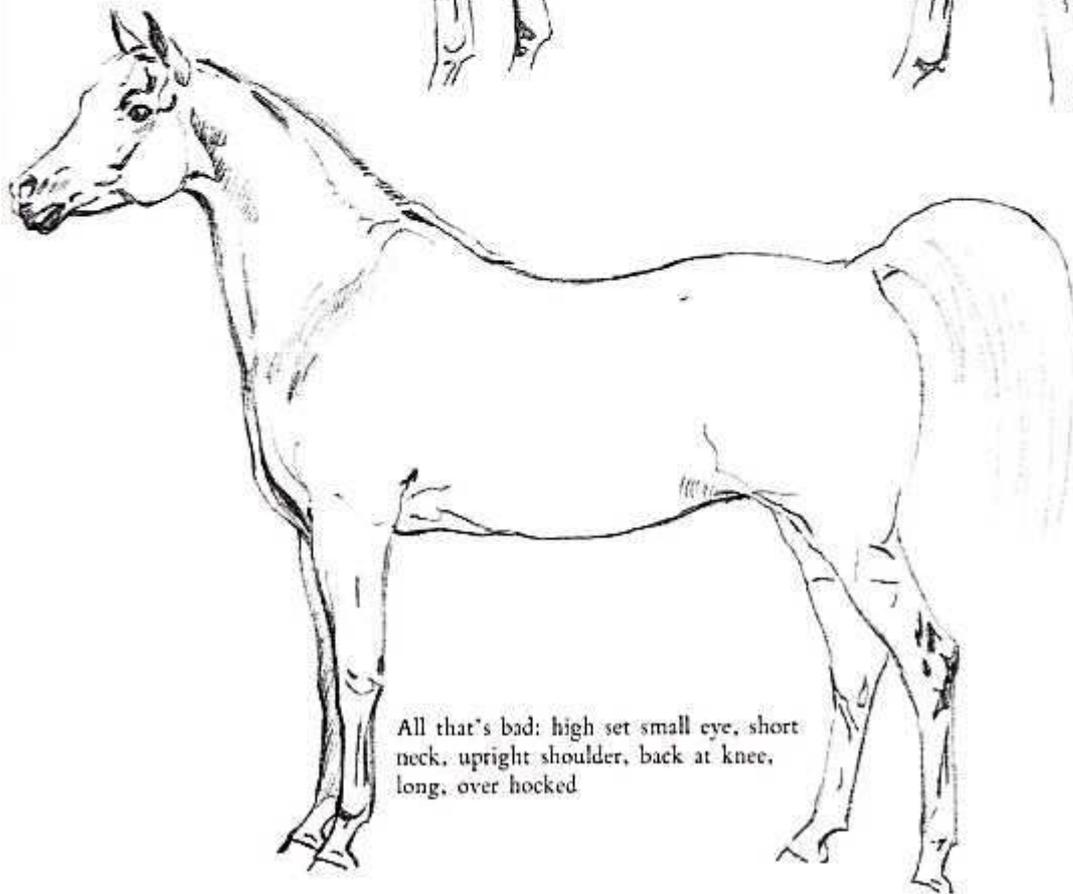
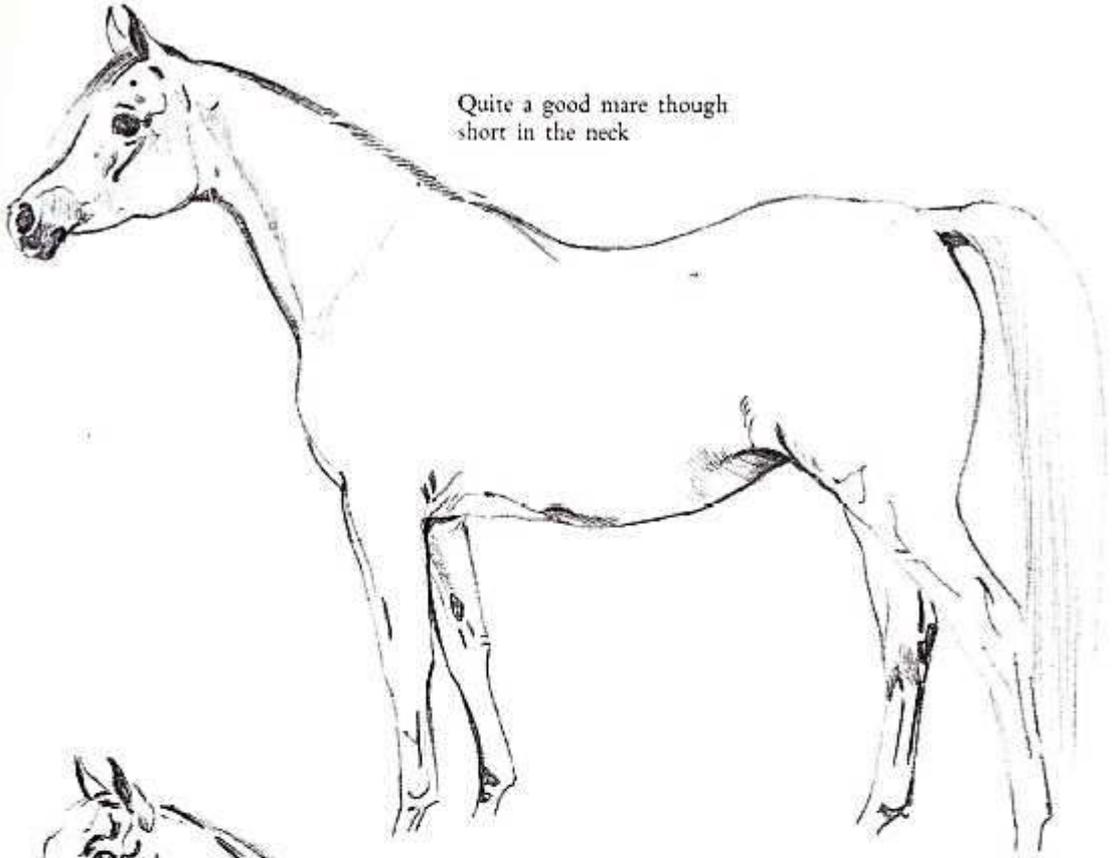
Good
Moving well when excited



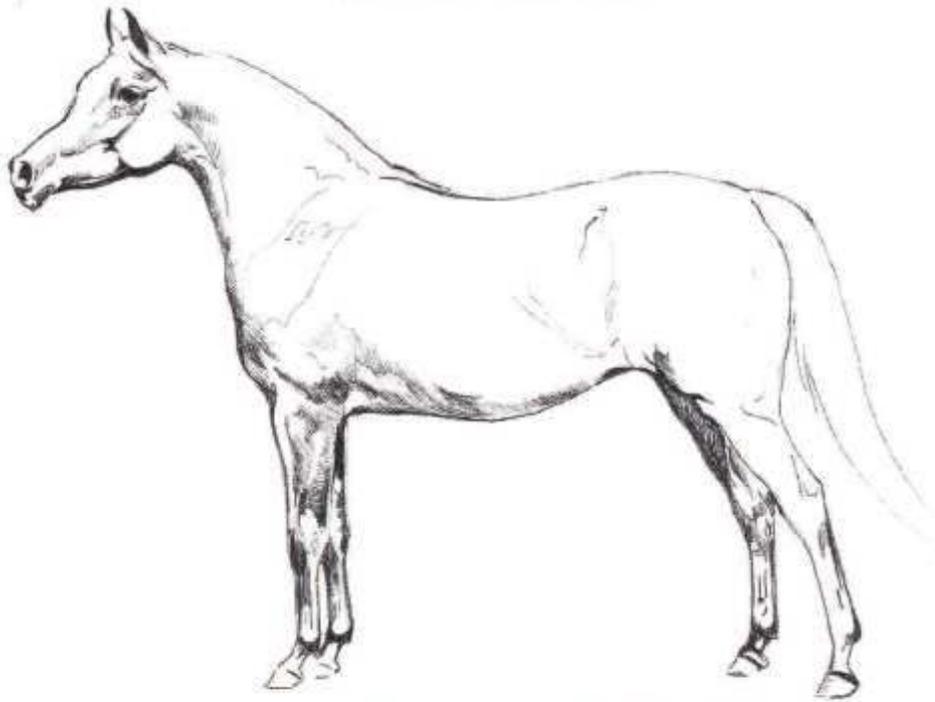
Not standing over enough ground
and hocks too straight

Forelegs too far back

Quite a good mare though
short in the neck



All that's bad: high set small eye, short
neck, upright shoulder, back at knee,
long, over hocked



Head too large, short neck, long in the back and very light bone

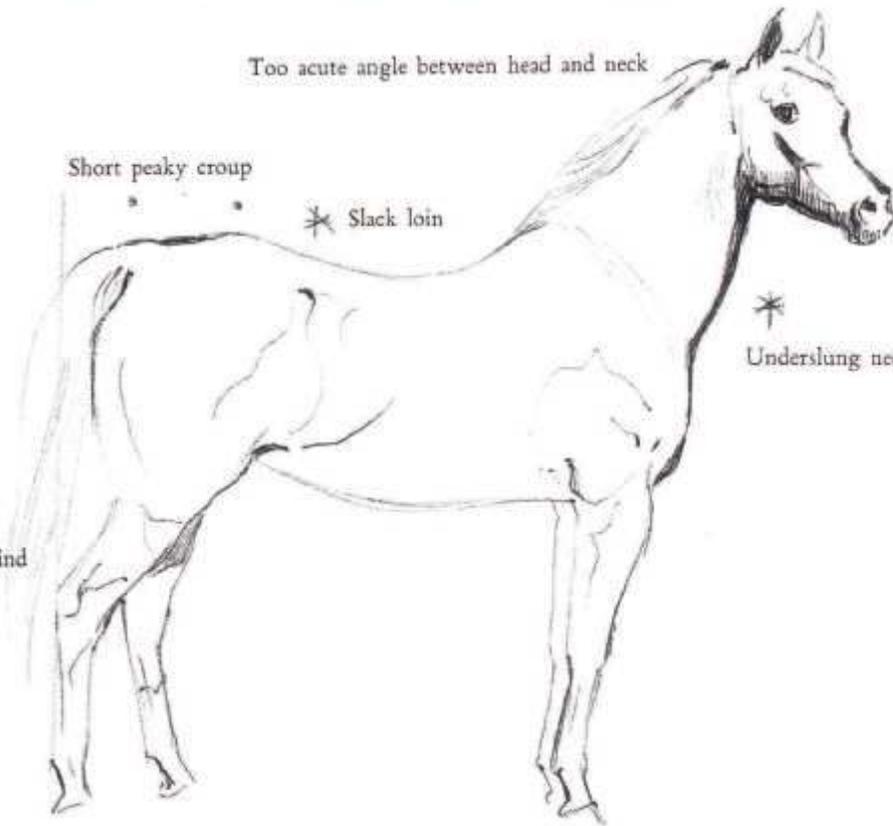
Too acute angle between head and neck

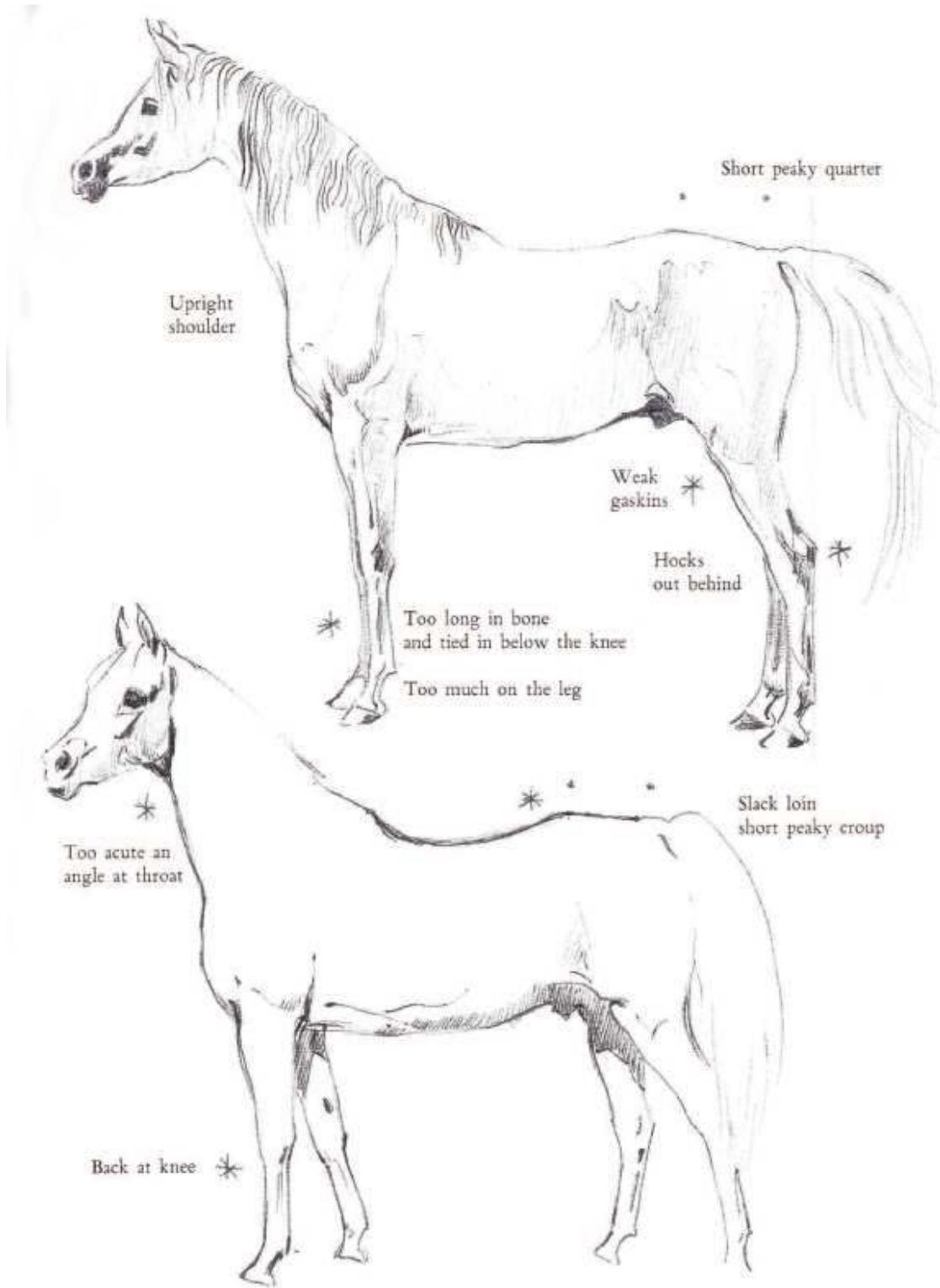
Short peaky croup

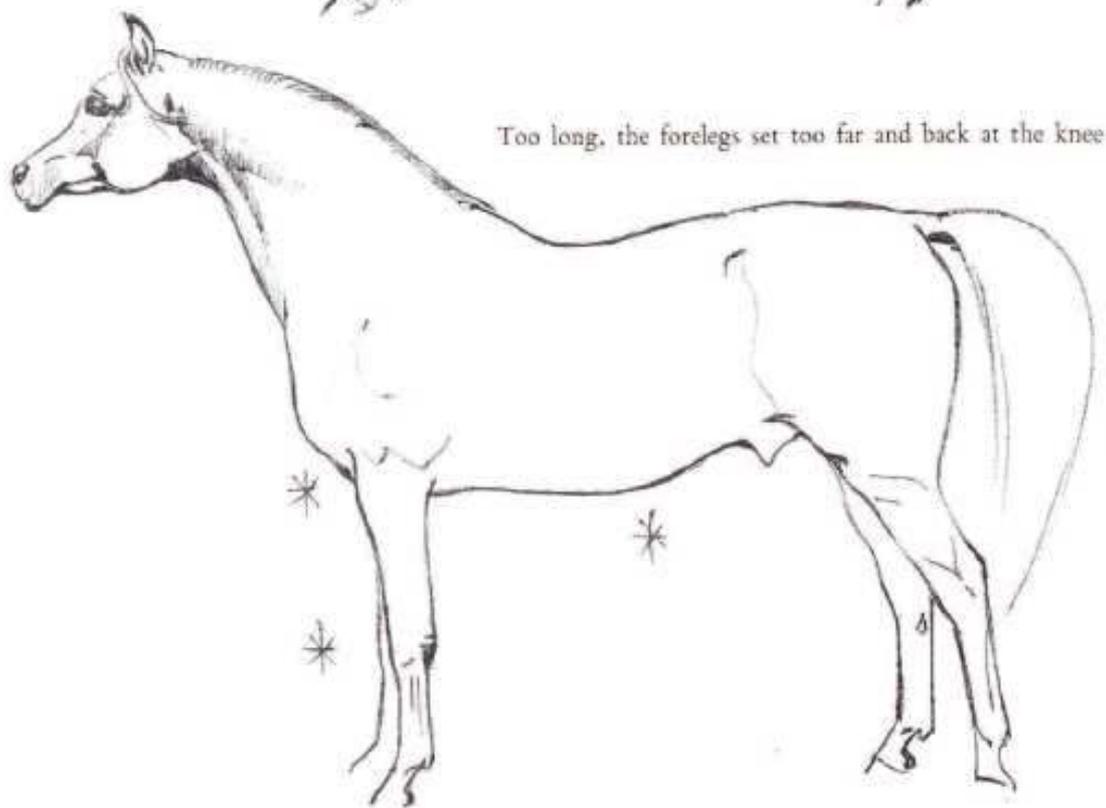
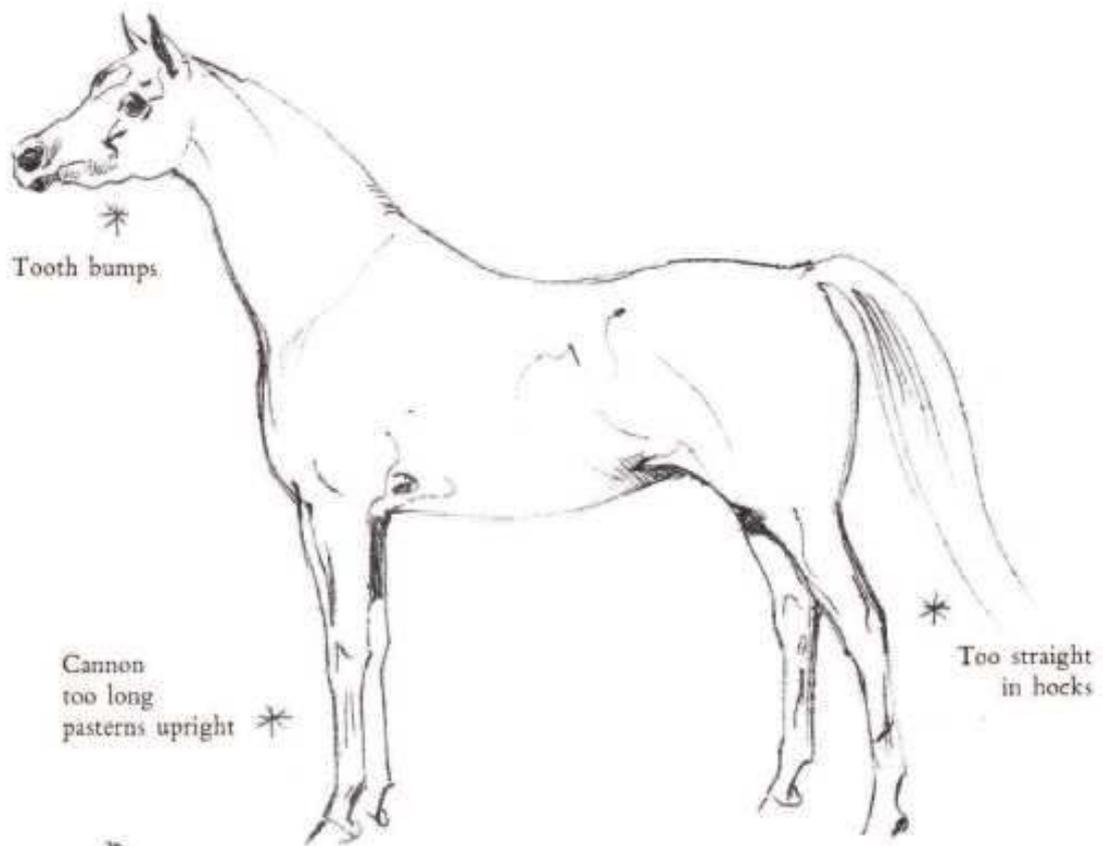
* Slack loin

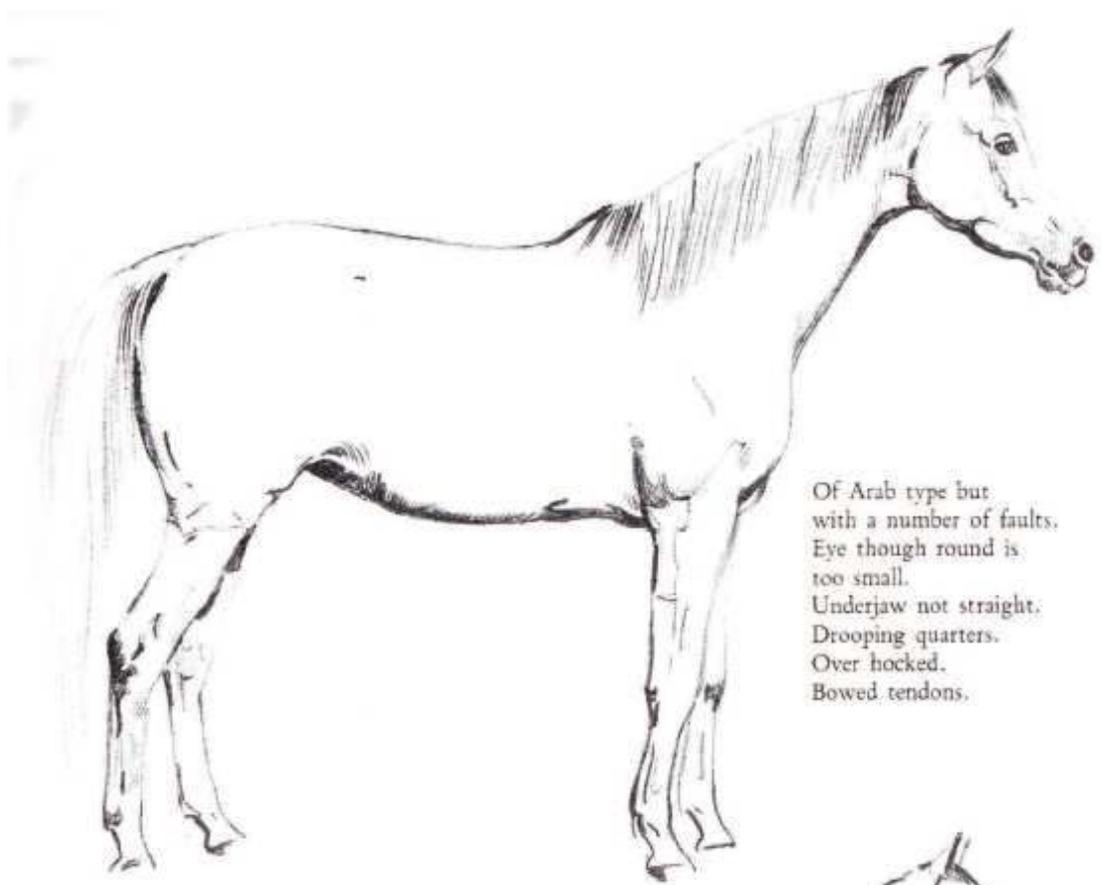
* Underslung neck

Hocks out behind

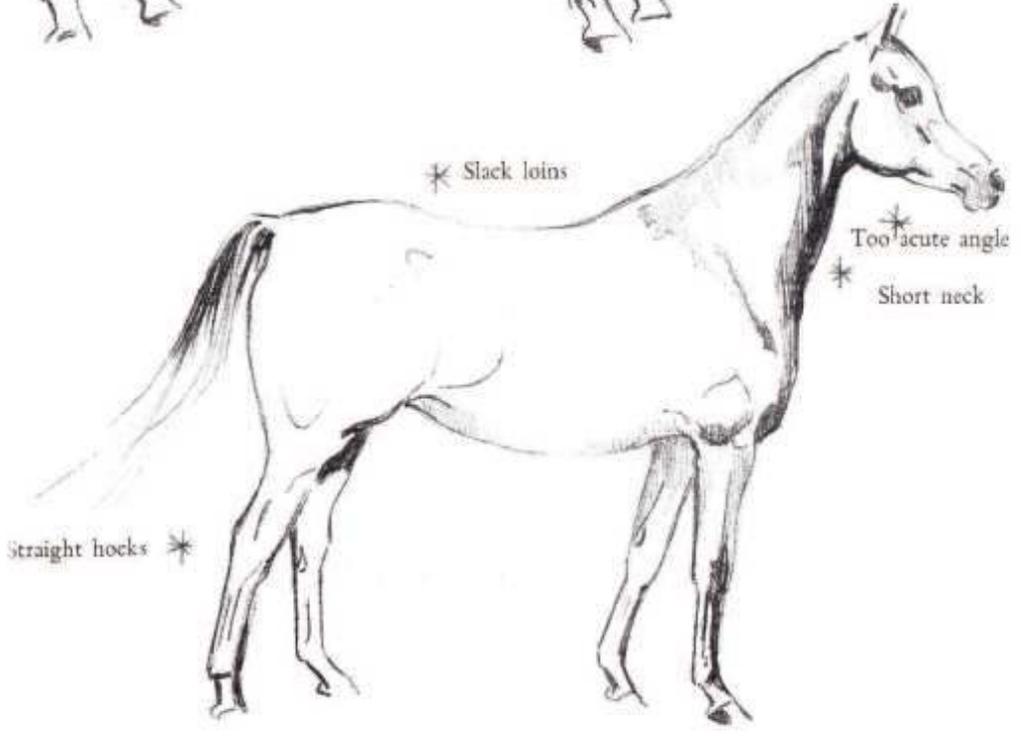








Of Arab type but
with a number of faults.
Eye though round is
too small.
Underjaw not straight.
Drooping quarters.
Over hocked.
Bowed tendons.



* Slack loins

* Too acute angle
* Short neck

Straight hocks *

Unsoundness and Blemishes

Arabians, being of a sound constitution are fortunately free from many hereditary unsoundness. Some however do occur and are the result of faults in conformation and these may be termed defects.

Defects

Bog Spavin: A distension of the hock joint which results in a soft swelling at the front and slightly to the inside of the hock. It can cause stiffness and lameness and is more commonly found in horses with very straight hocks or in older horses.

Bone Spavin: A disease of the hock joint resulting in a bony enlargement on the inside of the lower hock which may cause lameness and lack of flexion in the joint.

Brushing: Striking the opposite leg, which can cause injury. Poor conformation or bad shoeing are the most usual causes.

Curb: A sprain which produces a swelling below the point of the hock, which looks bowed. The result may at first be lameness which normally disappears later.

Ringbone: Bony enlargement affecting the pastern bones and joints. The contributory factors may be hereditary or possibly rheumatic in nature. The result is lameness and a stiffness of the hoints owing to a fusion between the bones.

Sidebones: Ossification of the lateral cartilages which develop in the region of the heel. Whilst forming it usually causes lameness, but once formed the animal may be sound and free from pain although it is characterised by an uneven stride. Sidebones are serious in a young horse, but in old age all cartilage tends to ossify to a certain extent. It may be caused by confusion of the walls of the hoof and possibly by a vitamin D deficiency as a foal. It is more commonly found in the fore feet and in horses with contracted boxy feet.

Splints: Bony enlargement which occur on the splint bones as the result of inflammation in the bone. It is most common in the limbs of youngstock as after 6 years of age the fusion between the cannon bone and splint bones is usually complete. Splints are also more commonly found in the front legs and to the inside of the limbs. It is usually caused by extra strain resulting in the inflammation and formation of the splint and lameness normally occurs. If the splint is placed high up or far back it is more serious as it may interfere with joints or tendons.

Sprained tendons: Usually caused by strain when the flexor tendons become inflamed and painful, resulting in lameness.

Stringhalt: The jerky movement of one or both hind legs when the horse is walking, more rarely seen at a trot. A condition caused by the contraction of the flexor muscles of the hock. It is an unsoundness and incurable.

Thoroughpin: A bursal swelling of the deep flexor tendon which causes puffiness on either side of the hock. The swelling is the result of a sprain or strain to the tendon. Usually no lameness results.

Windgalls: Swelling of the tendon sheaths above the fetlock. Very common in old horses and rarely causing lameness. The result of sustained strains on the tendons and of the fetlock joint.

Apart from the unsoundnesses listed above lameness may be caused by any of the following:

- Bruised sole and corns.
- Pricked foot.
- Laminitis – the inflammation of the sensitive laminae of the hoof probably caused by a reaction to overweight conditions.
- Trush – inflammation of the frog which causes the foot to smell and discharge.
- Cracked heels – an infection known as Necrosis, which can appear where other injuries to the skin occur e.g. joint-ill.
- Capped hocks, elbows or knees – a swelling which may be caused by a blow or regular contact with a hard object. The swelling may recur or become permanent.

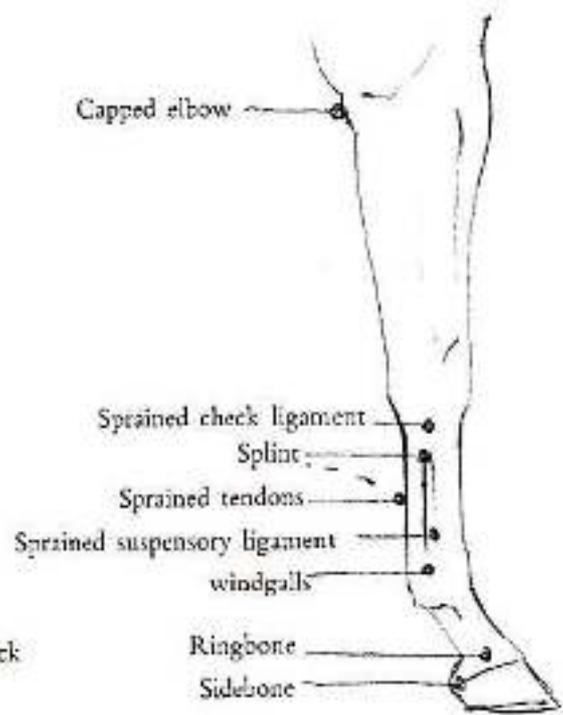
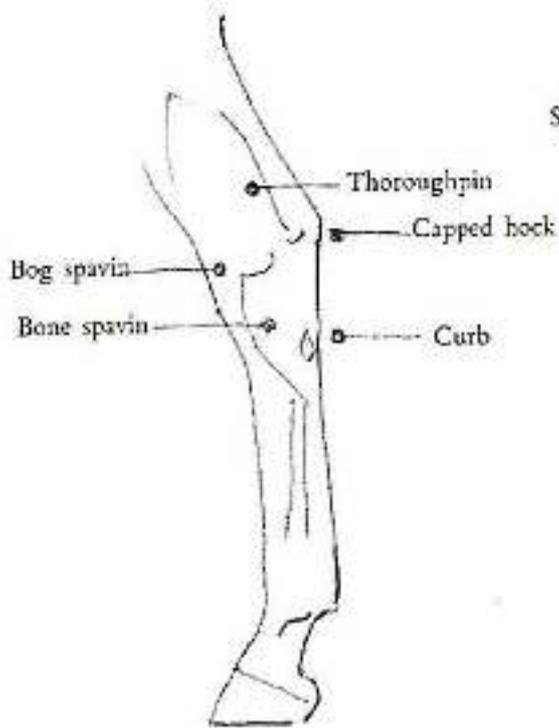
Other Defects

Blindness: It may occur from a great variety of causes both congenital or acquired.

“Sweetitch Eczema”: A condition of the skin which occurs during the summer months, probably caused by an allergic reaction to midges, which results in the horse rubbing its mane, withers and base of tail to try and alleviate the irritation.

Other defects are the result of accidents, which is no fault. These may be termed blemishes. Cuts, scars, “broken” knees, treads and over-reaches. For a more comprehensive list of defects and blemishes turn to a modern “Veterinary Dictionary”.

Sites of . . .



Bad Conformation and Defects can result in the following

Head:

- Narrowness between the cheek bones – allows little room for the throat.
- Overshot or undershot mouth – difficulty in feeding.

Neck, Shoulder and Withers:

- Thick throat – greater difficulty in flexing.
- Upside-down neck – difficulty in correct flexion.
- Upright shoulder – can cause concussion and shortens the stride.
- Low withers – fails to keep a saddle in place.

Back, Body and Quarters:

- Slack loin and sway back – a weak back.
- Slab sided – can cause difficulties in keeping saddle and girth in place.

Legs and Feet:

- Back at knee – a serious weakness.
- Offset cannon bone – a serious weakness.
- Turned out toes – a lesser fault but can cause uneven wear of feet.
- Broken angle of hoof and pastern – a weakness.
- Narrow in front or behind – can cause brushing.
- Upright pasterns – can cause concussion with subsequent problems.
- Excessively sloping pasterns – can cause strain through weakness.
- Tied in below knee of hock – a weakness.
- Split-up behind – often associated with weak gaskins and narrowness behind.
- Boxy feet – can cause concussion.

Judging systems - overview

1) POINTS SYSTEMS

- a. Points System (ECAHO)
- b. Points System (AHA)
- c. Points System (AHO)
- d. Points System (Swiss)
- e. Points System leading to medals (Sweden) no longer in use

2) COMPARATIVE

- f. Comparative (One judge)
- g. Comparative (Three or more judges)

It is generally agreed there is no such thing as the perfect system, each has advantages and disadvantages, but whichever system is used its success depends on the competence of the judges using it, their honesty and integrity.

REVIEW OF JUDGING SYSTEMS

The aim of all systems currently in use except the Swiss, which is discussed separately, is to:

- A) Place horses in some sort of ranking from first to last. First being the best in the class.
- B) The Points Systems aims to assess and rate the standard of excellence of a horse against the ideal of the breed standard.
- C) Comparative system as the name suggests just compares one horse against another.

A brief general review of the systems follows listing various advantages and disadvantages these are not exhaustive and no doubt others can be added, nor are they in any specific order:

THE POINTS SYSTEMS

The points system in various forms attempts to place horses in order of merit by a panel of judges who score them against an ideal of the breed standard. This now appears to be the judging system of choice in most major showing countries of the World.

Advantages of the Points System

1. Audience participation: The audience which consists largely of owners, breeders or breed aficionados feel that they can follow the thoughts of judges better through the display of points given, and there is a perception that judging will be more transparent, open and honest.
2. A panel decides rather than an individual. With more and more money and prestige involved this spreads the load of responsibility for reaching a result especially at the higher levels. It can be seen that in most sports nowadays a panel ranks the competitors using a points system.
3. If correctly carried out competitors should be able to learn the good and bad points of their horse from their scores, which should help them to assess their horse for the future.

Disadvantages of the Points System

1. The usual system used today is the 20 point system, but most judges only use a maximum of 5 points. The actual class ranking may be correct but the difference in marks between the good and the bad horses misleads everyone about the standard of the lower horse. Also

standards vary from show to show and judges will often be kinder at a small show, giving a false idea of the horse's actual standard.

2. The Points System sets out to establish a Standard horse through a mathematical formula, yet reducing a subjective judgement to a precise and consistent number is almost impossible.
3. Today most judges actually assess the horses in a class comparatively on the initial walk round then accommodate their marks accordingly, not according to the ideal standard.
4. Too many judges don't really judge. They leave it to other members of the panel to decide the result for them by just giving 17, 18, or 19 for every horse. They are free-wheeling.
5. Unfortunately one unscrupulous judge, particularly in a panel of 3, can manipulate the results by political marking.
6. A major problem is that the points system favours presentation. More and more judges are judging presentation not the horse. The majority of the category marks are applied while the horse is 'stood up'. Training to obtain the so called 'hard stand up' is one of the main causes of abuse in the show horse.
7. Once the marks are written down, the judge is committed to those marks.
8. A panel of judges produces a collective result, which can mean a really good average horse winning over a spectacular horse with some relatively minor fault.
9. All of the 5 categories: type, head and neck, body and topline, legs and movement are all supposed to carry an equal weight yet the way the marks are awarded Type and in particular Movement have an overwhelming influence on the results over correct conformation.
10. Even within the 5 categories marks are uneven. For example a horse with a pretty head and poor short neck will rarely get below 18, yet a fantastic neck with a slightly plain face will rarely get above 17. Therefore Head and Neck are not equal.
11. The points system divides the horse up into separate bits. It could be argued that this ensures that the judge looks at all parts of the horse, but separating the parts also leads to isolated judgements. For example: looking at the Body alone, it may appear rather long, but if that horse also has a long neck, and so is proportionate and symmetrical, is this wrong? Likewise, a shortish neck with a very close-coupled body should surely be acceptable.
12. Marks for Movement are now mainly based on the trot but frequently little or no true movement is shown and few judges take into account head and tail carriage and lightness of movement.
13. The half points system is liked because it provides extra marks at the top of the scale but this exacerbates the narrowing of total marks and so is misleading regarding a realistic standard for each horse.
14. The confusion for the outsider, which happens frequently, when the highest scorer of the show does not feature in a championship!
15. The knocking off of highest and lowest scores is NOT popular with judges and whilst the idea is to stop judges making political scores it also unfairly affects judges who want to penalize a fault or award a particularly good point as they see it. In the end it encourages judges to play safe to no good purpose.
16. High costs as a minimum of three judges is required, 'A' shows and Title Shows require five or more commonly seven judges.
17. Time - it can take nearly twice as long to judge classes using points as with comparative judging, this also affects costs for organisers and competitors.

THE COMPARATIVE SYSTEM

The comparative systems ranks horses from first to last by comparing one against another, there is no comparison against an ideal.

The Comparative System can operate in a number of ways.

1. The traditional British system with one judge

2. As above with 2 or 3 judges, discarded by the USA in favour of points
3. Top 10: with 3 or more judges - as used for the Middle Eastern Championships.

Advantages of the system using one judge

1. Lower costs as judging can be carried out by one judge, as in the traditional system. Scorers and computers are not necessary.
2. More classes can be included in one day because judging is quicker.
3. Judges in general appreciate having sole responsibility for their judgements.
4. In the single judge system the judge can change his or her mind right up to the last minute.
5. The judge has the advantage of being able to see two horses of almost equal merit side by side before making a final decision.
6. Much of the initial judging is done as the horses walk around the arena therefore there is less emphasis on the 'stand up'
7. Only one handler per horse which takes the edge off large numbers from one owner in a class.

Disadvantages

1. The perception that with one judge, he or she may show favour to certain exhibitors or types of horse.
2. The inability of the audience to follow the judges reasoning without scores – lack of audience participation.
3. With comparative judging it is just "my horse was better than your horse" on that day whereas a score card correctly used can provide an educative reason for a horse's placing.
4. When more than one judge is judging a class comparatively as in the old US system, ranking large classes without being able to put them into your own preliminary order is difficult, it may work for the top few and bottom few horses but the judging of the middle level horses may lack clarity and be open to abuse. It takes considerable experience and confidence to cope with this system.
5. It works well in Championships or Top Tens where numbers are limited and judgement has already been made in the qualifying classes. Judges have already seen the horses and possibly scored the horses

THE SWISS SYSTEM

The Swiss system is not approved by ECAHO, but it has been used successfully for almost 20 years as a tool to help and inform breeders about their horses. The complete rules and sample score sheets are attached. This system is unique and with a slightly different aim of grading horses for education, there is no first to last placing. Horses are marked out of 10 across 11 categories and graded, gold, silver, or bronze according to their scores. Only horses gain more points are classed as Gold and recommended as breeding horses.

Advantages

- 1) Judges are expected to use the whole range of points from 1 – 10 and they are encouraged to give reasons for their marks especially for a particularly high or low score.
- 2) Judges cannot easily hide behind scores.
- 3) Horses are briefly shown loose, so their true natural balance can be seen unaffected by a handler.
- 4) Judges can confer.
- 5) Competitors are expected to collect their score cards to understand their scores.

Disadvantages

- 1) Unfortunately this system is too time consuming to be realistic for normal show timetables 8 – 10 mins per horse.
- 2) It is not very audience friendly as the results are slow in coming forth.
- 3) It can really only work with a relatively small number of horses per class.
- 4) Some judges feel it is too slow and the results could be obtained by normal judging.

MEDAL SYSTEM

Used originally in Sweden

Any horse gaining 85+ points awarded Gold

75+ points Silver

65+ points Bronze

The advantage of the medal system is that it clearly reflects the quality of the horses – not just their placing (e.g.: in one year, the Yearling Colt Class had no gold or silver winners. The first placed colt was only bronze. Later, in an excellent mare class the first 8 mares received golds.).

It takes away some of the pressure to win at all costs.

These days with the very high levels in some classes and many ties, it might be fairer to award a number of medals which would reflect this equality, there is large perceived difference between being 1st and 5th.

Judging - Major and Minor Faults

* in front of Category name indicates a conformation category

<i>Category</i>	<i>Major Fault</i>	<i>Minor Fault</i>
* Head	Overshot jaw (parrot mouth) Undershot jaw (monkey mouth) Convex head (Roman nose) Small eye (pug eyes) Human eye (purebred only) Glass/blue eyes (purebred only) Cataract/cloudy eye Course muzzle Course, meaty features Lop ears or cow ears	Narrow eye set Excessive length to head Large coarse ears Wide set ears (sheep eared) Excessively close set ears Long head Narrow head
* Neck and Shoulder	Low set Swan neck Ewe shaped Poor hinge Thick throat Excessive heavy neck Straight shoulder Flat withers (mutton withers)	Straight neck Short neck Excessive crest
* Back, Loin and Hip	High croup Long coupling – long back Low in the back (sway back) Shallow Body Rafter hips Short croup Short hip Steep sloping hip	Hernia
* Legs and Feet <i>FRONT LEGS</i>	Calf knees (sheep knees) Bench knees (offset knees) Bow legs (bandy legged) Knock knees (knee narrow) Straight or short pasterns Coon footed (excessive sloped pasterns) Tied in knees (tied in tendons) Toes out (splay footed) Long cannons (high knees) Base narrow (stands close) Base wide (stands wide)	Toe in (pigeon toed) Buck knees (knee sprung) Capped elbow

<p>* Legs and Feet</p> <p><i>REAR LEGS</i></p>	<p>Post legged Bow legged (bandy hocked) Long cannons (high hocks) Straight or short pasterns Coon footed. Strands wide (base wide) Camped out Stands close (base narrow) Curb</p>	<p>Stands under (sickle hocks) Toes out Cow hocked Capped hock Bog spavin Thoroughpin</p>
<p>* Legs and Feet</p> <p><i>ANY LEG</i></p>	<p>Club foot Dished foot Contracted narrow feet (mule foot) Splints cause from faulty conformation Rig or side bones Epiphysitis Bowed tendons Ossolets Founder (laminitis)</p>	<p>Broken axis of pastern and hoof Feet out of balance Wind puffs (joint capsules hygromas) Splints with no faulty conformation</p>
<p>Arabian Type</p>	<p>No tail carriage Wry tail</p>	<p>Low set tail</p>
<p>Movement</p>	<p>Irregular strides Stubby movement Choppy stride Short stride Wings in</p>	<p>Lacks coordination Paddles out</p>

What to consider during the judging:

As Judge, you are not only responsible for giving the correct marks but you should also observe whether the horse is presented in accordance with the rules for welfare of the animals. The following situations may occur in the ring. In case of any doubts concerning certain horse, you should consult the DC (via the Ringmaster).

- poor manners, undue stress, or inhumane treatment
- excessive use of the whip or actions that may disturb other entries
- excessive amounts of oil, grease or other substances
- a horse that appears to be intimidated by its handler
- a horse with a cut or abrasion showing clear evidence of fresh blood in the mouth, nose, chin, shoulder, barrel, flank or hip area
- unsoundness
- horse that shows aggression or discontent towards its handler or any person in the ring
- any contact of the horse with a whip
- horse possesses a whip mark (welt) on any portion of the horse
- removal of eyelashes
- changing of the natural colour of the mane and / or tail
- balding the area around the eyes or proximal to the muzzle and nostrils
- product applied to a horse's hoof to hide or conceal a conformation defect
- non-transparent products on the hooves of horses
- unruly horse or one whose action threaten to endanger the handler, other exhibitors or their entries
- handler who exhibits inappropriate or dangerous behaviours or whose actions would in any way threaten the safety of any exhibitor, their entries or the safety of class officials

Evaluation of the horse





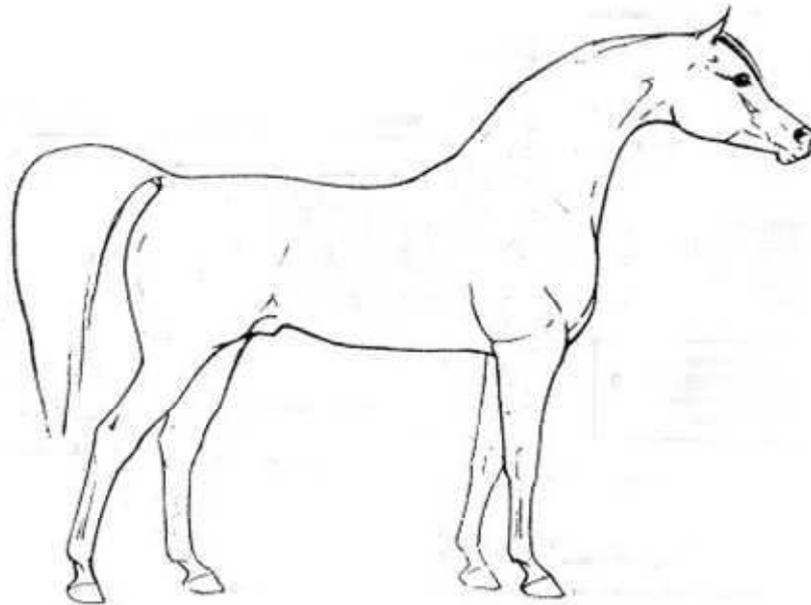






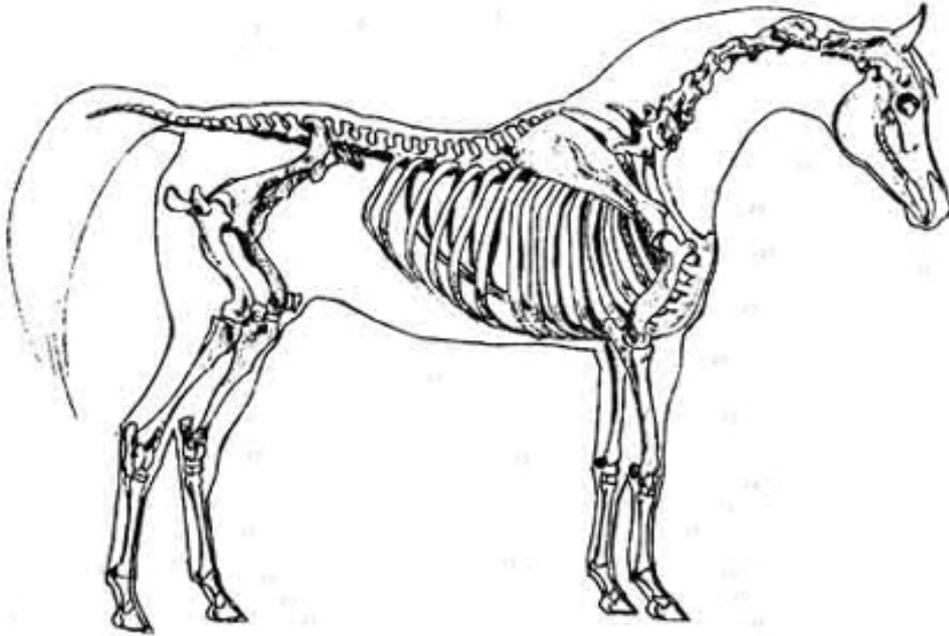
Test yourself

Mark the numbered sites of defects



1) Capped elbow
2) Curb
3) Thoroughpin
4) Windgalls
5) Sprained tendons

Mark the numbered points of the skeleton



1) Scapula
2) Lumbar vertebrae
3) Os calcis
4) Ischium
5) Radius

NOTES