



Breed Standard & Points of the Horse

A scale of points for the breed has been carefully drawn up and this has been amended when necessary, to meet modern requirements. For instance, years ago, a great characteristic of the Shire was the wealth of hair, or feathers, on the legs. Today the demand is for a cleaner legged horse, with straight fine, silky hair.

The Standard of points laid down by the Council is as follows:

STALLIONS

COLOUR	Black, brown, bay or grey. No good stallion should be splashed with large white patches over the body. He must not be roan or chestnut.
HEIGHT	17 hands (173 cms) high at maturity. Average about 17.2 hands (178 cms).
HEAD	Long and lean, neither too large nor too small, with long neck in proportion to the body. Large jaw bone should be avoided.
EYES	Large, well set and docile in expression. Wall eyes not acceptable.
NOSE	Slightly Roman nostrils thin and wide; lips together.
EARS	Long, lean, sharp and sensitive.
THROAT	Clean cut and lean.
SHOULDER	Deep and oblique, wide enough to support the collar.
NECK	Long, slightly arched, well set on to give the horse a commanding appearance.
GIRTH	The girth varies from 6 ft (183 cms) to 8 ft (244 cms) in stallions of from 16.2 (168 cms) to 18 hands (183 cms).
BACK	Short, strong and muscular. Should not be dipped or roached.



LOINS	Standing well up, denoting good constitution (must not be flat).
FORE-END	Wide across the chest, with legs well under the body and well enveloped in muscle, or action is impeded.
HIND- QUARTERS	Long and sweeping, wide and full of muscle, well let down towards the thighs.
RIBS	Round, deep and well sprung, not flat.
FORELEGS	Should be as straight as possible down to pastern.
HINDLEGS	Hocks should be not too far back and in line with the hind-quarters with ample width broadside and narrow in front. "Puffy" and "sickle" hocks should be avoided. The leg sinews should be clean cut and hard like fine cords to touch and clear of short cannon bone.
BONE MEASUREMENT	Of flatbone 11 inches (28 cms) is ample, although occasionally 12½ inches (32 cms) is recorded – flat bone is heavier and stronger than spongy bone. Hocks must be broad, deep and flat and set at the correct angle for leverage.
FEET	Deep, solid and wide, with thick open walls. Coronets should be hard and sinewy with substance.
HAIR	Not too much, fine straight and silky.

A good Shire Stallion should stand from 17.0 hands (173 cms) upwards, and weigh from 18 cwt (900 Kg) to 22 cwt (1100 Kg) when matured, without being overdone in condition.

He should possess a masculine head and a good crest with sloping, not upright, shoulders running well into the back, which should be short and well coupled with the loins. The tail should be well set up and not what is known as "gooserumped".

Both head and tail should be carried erect. The ribs should be well sprung, not flat sided, with good middle which generally denotes good constitution. A Stallion should have good feet and joints; the feet should be wide and big around the top of the coronets with sufficient length in the pasterns.



When in motion, he should go with force using both knees and hocks, which latter should be kept close together, he should go straight and true before and behind.

A good Stallion should have strong character.

MODIFICATION OR VARIATION OF STALLION STANDARD OF POINTS FOR MARES

COLOUR	Black, brown, bay, grey, roan.
HEIGHT	16 hands (163 cms) upwards.
HEAD	Long and lean, neither too large nor too small, long neck in proportion to the body, of feminine appearance.
EYES	Large, well set and docile in expression. Wall eyes are acceptable except for animals Grade A and B register.
NECK	Long and slightly arched and not of masculine appearance.
GIRTH	5 ft (152 cms) to 7 ft (214 cms) (matured) according to size and age of animal.
BACK	Strong and in some instances longer than a male.
LEGS	Short, with short cannons.
BONE	9 (23 cms) to 11 inches (28 cms) of flat bone, with clean cut
MEASUREMENT	sinews.

A Mare should be on the quality side, long and deep with free action, of a feminine and matronly appearance, standing from 16 hands (163 cms) and upwards on short legs.

She should have plenty of room to carry her foal.



MODIFICATIONS OR VARIATION OF STALLION STANDARD OF POINTS FOR GELDINGS

COLOUR	As for Mares.
HEIGHT	16.2 (168 cms) hands and upwards.
GIRTH	From 6 ft (183 cms) to 7 ft 6 ins (229 cms).
BONE	10 (23 cms) to 11 inches (26 cms) under knee, slightly more
MEASUREMENT	underhock and broadside on, of flat hard quality.

A Gelding should be upstanding, thick, well-balanced, very active and a gay mover.

He should be full of courage and should look like and be able to do a full day's work.

Geldings weigh from 17 (850 Kgs) to 22 cwt (1100 Kgs).