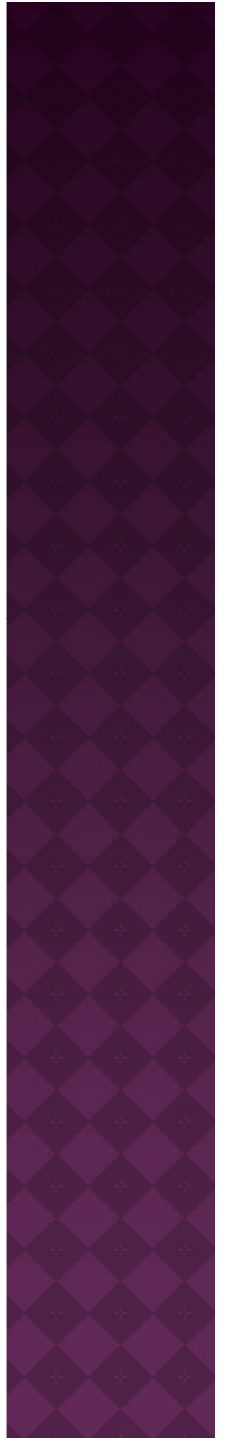


BODY CONDITION SCORING

By: Taylor Fabus
*Equine Graduate Assistant
Michigan State University*

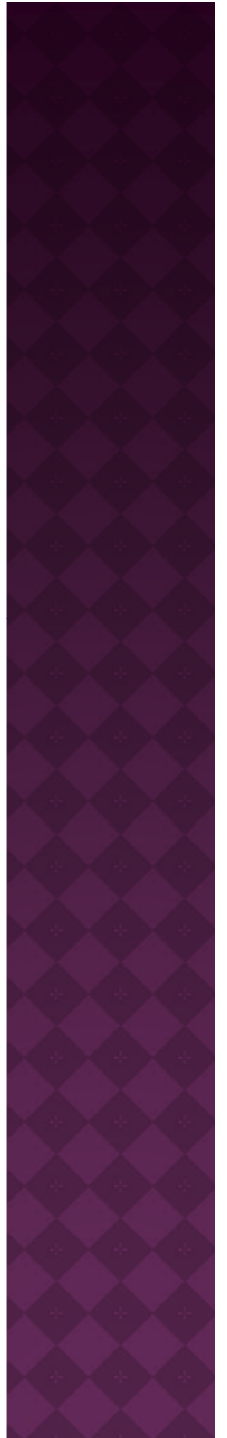
BODY CONDITION SCORING

- The following is a only brief description of the Body Condition Scoring system. If you have any questions or would like more information, feel free to contact me (Taylor Fabus) at tenlenta@msu.edu.



WHAT IS IT?

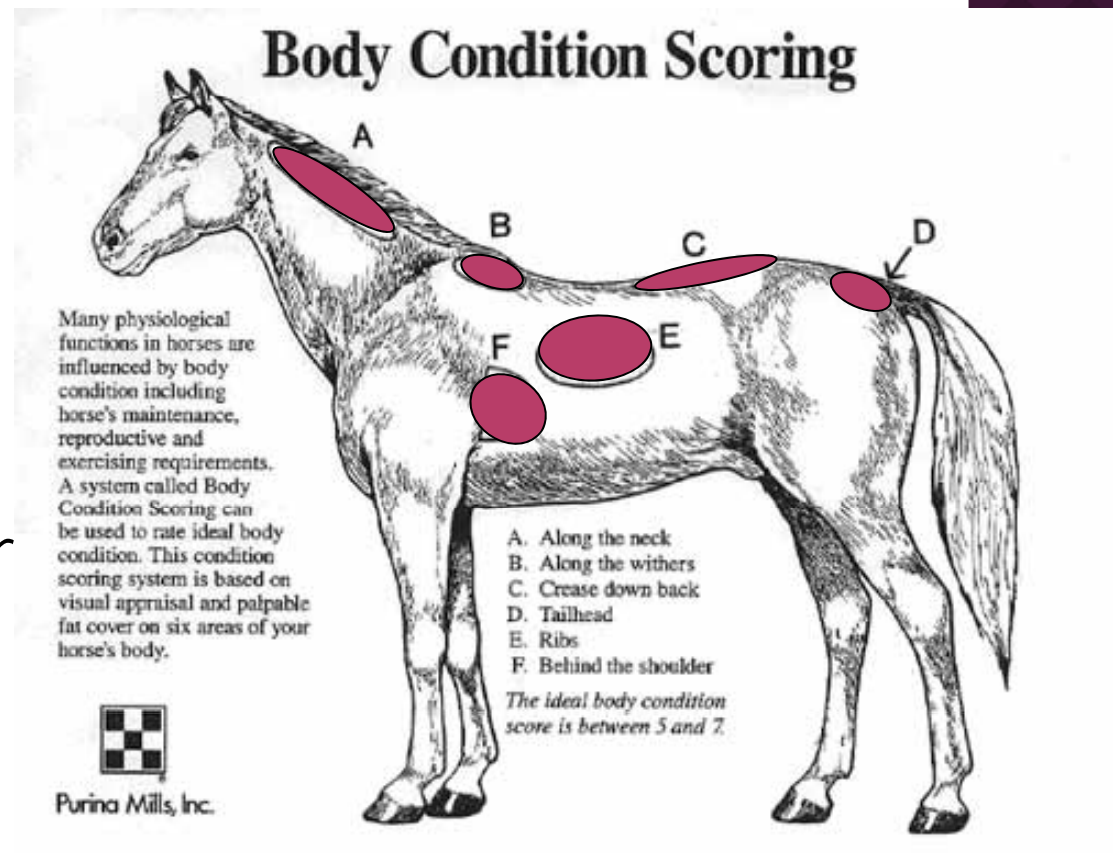
- ◉ *The Body Condition Scoring (BCS) system is designed to assess relative body fat without the use of scales, gadgets, calculators or anything other than your hands, eyes and a little experience. Horses are assigned a number on a scale of 1 to 9; 1 being a very emaciated and thin animal, and 9 being an extremely obese animal. This scale is independent of breed, discipline or age of a horse.*



BODY CONDITION SCORING

● Body Condition Scoring 6 Sites for BCS

- A. Neck
- B. Withers
- C. Back
- D. Tail head
- E. Ribs & Mid-barrel
- F. Behind the Shoulder



BODY CONDITION SCORING

- 1. **Poor:** Animal extremely emaciated; spine and bone structure noticeable, no fatty tissue can be felt
- 2. **Very Thin:** Animal emaciated; hip joints appear rounded but easily seen; lower pelvic bones not distinguishable
- 3. **Thin:** Slight fat cover over ribs; spine and ribs easily seen, but individual vertebrae cannot be identified visually; hips are rounded

BODY CONDITION SCORING

- ◉ 4. **Moderately Thin:** Slight ridge along back; faint outline of ribs; withers, shoulders, and neck not obviously thin
- ◉ 5. **Moderate:** Back is flat; ribs **felt but not easily seen**; fat around tail head beginning to feel spongy; shoulders and neck blend **smoothly** into body
- ◉ 6. **Moderately Fleshy:** Slight **crease down back**; fat over ribs and tail head spongy; slight fat along the side of withers, behind shoulders, and along sides of neck

BODY CONDITION SCORING

- ◉ 7. **Fleshy**: Slight crease down back; ribs can be felt but not seen, noticeable filling between ribs with fat; fat around **tail head**: fat deposited along withers, behind shoulders, and along neck
- ◉ 8. **Fat**: Crease down back; difficult to feel ribs; fat around tail head very soft; noticeable **thickening of neck**; fat deposited along inner thighs
- ◉ 9. **Extremely Fat**: **Obvious crease** down back; **patchy** fat appearing over ribs: bulging fat around tail head, along withers, behind shoulders, and along neck; fat along **inner thighs may rub** together; flank filled with fat

LET'S PRACTICE!!



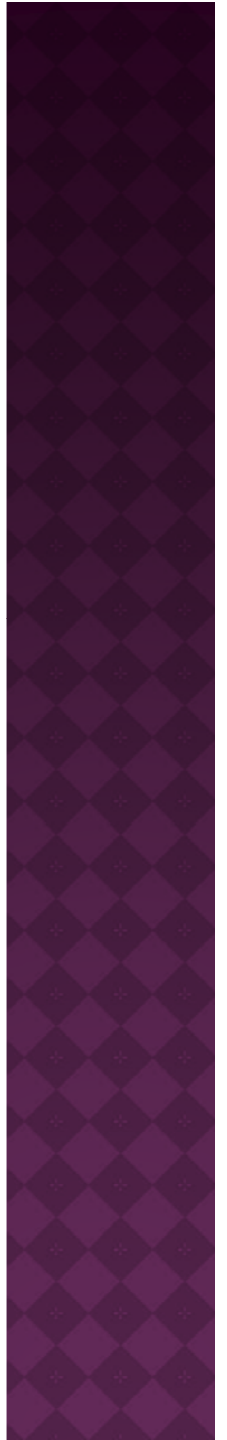
BODY CONDITION SCORING



BODY CONDITION SCORING



- A. 1
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5

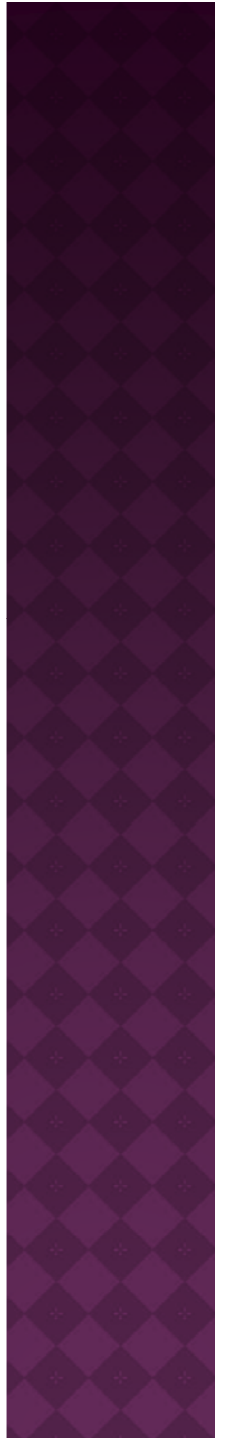


ANSWER



This horse would be assigned a BCS between a 3 & 4*. This horse's ribs have slight fat cover, its hips are rounded, there is a slight ridge along back, but horse is not offensively thin.

**Understand that it is impossible to accurately assign a BCS score without seeing and feeling the animal in person.*



BODY CONDITION SCORING



BODY CONDITION SCORING



- A. 1
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5



ANSWER



This horse would be assigned a BCS between a 1 & 2*. This horse's spine and bone structure are very noticeable and animal appears emaciated.

**Understand that it is impossible to accurately assign a BCS score without seeing and feeling the animal in person.*

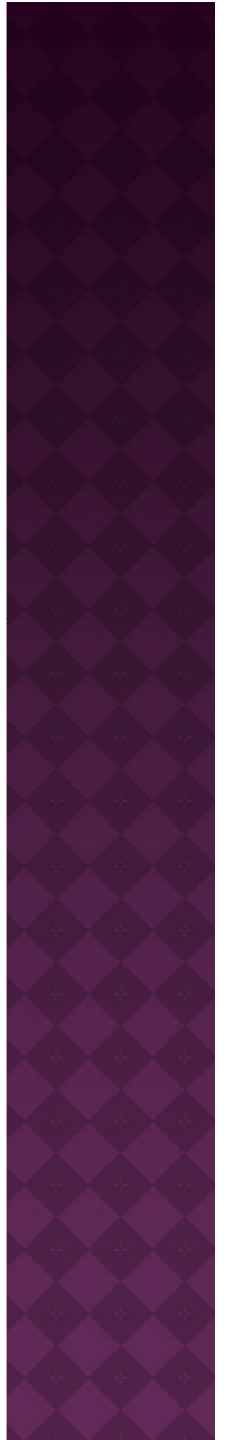
BODY CONDITION SCORING



BODY CONDITION SCORING



- A. 5
- B. 6
- C. 7
- D. 8
- E. 9



ANSWER



This horse would be assigned a BCS between a 8 & 9*. This horse has a crease down back, fat around tail head, a noticeable thickening of neck as well as fat deposited along inner thighs.

**Understand that it is impossible to accurately assign a BCS score without seeing and feeling the animal in person.*

QUESTIONS?

- ◉ If you have any questions feel free to contact me (Taylor Fabus) at tenlenta@msu.edu.



Taylor and her buddy "Magnet" (*who by the way would have a BCS of approximately 5*) ☺