

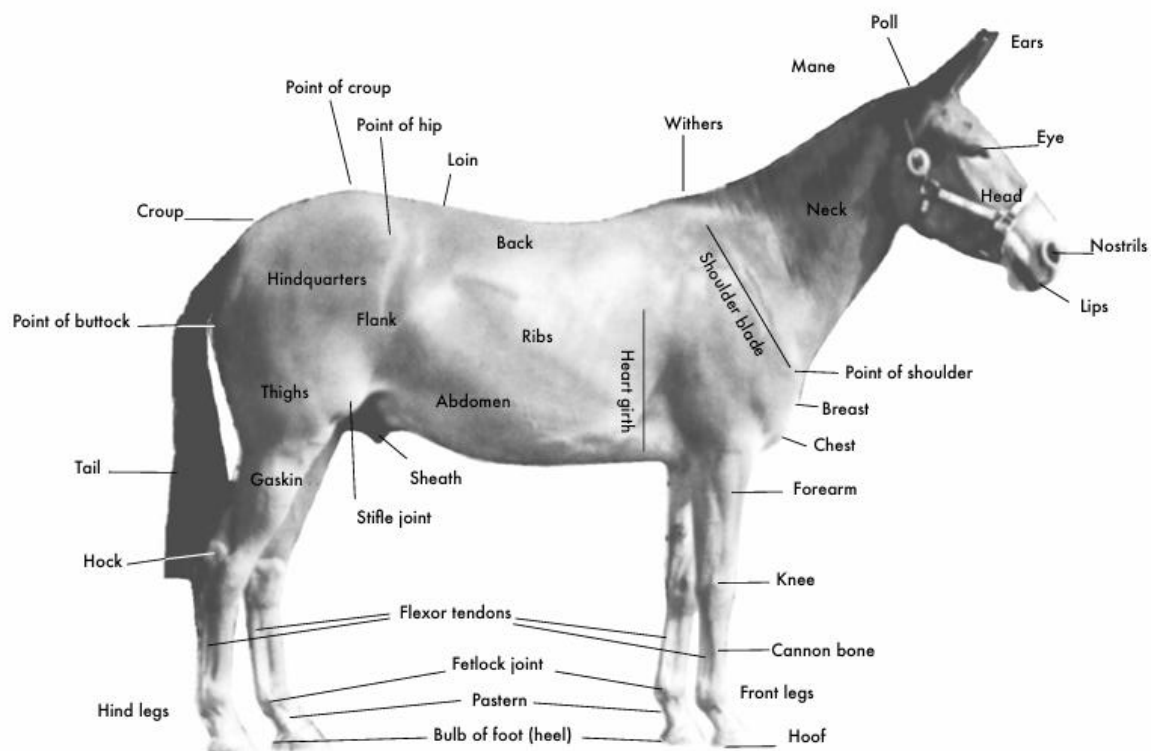
Standards of Conformation & Type - Mules

Introduction to Mules

- A mule is a cross between a female horse/pony and a male donkey
- A hinny is a cross between a female donkey and a male horse/pony
- Mules and hinnies may differ in appearance, size, and temperament
- In this summary, “mule” generally includes hinnies unless stated otherwise

General Principles of Assessment

- Each mule is unique and is judged by type rather than breed
- Type usually reflects the mare that foaled the mule
- Assessment should consider both general conformation and suitability to type
- Basic conformation standards are similar to those used for horses and donkeys



Overall Conformation

- A good mule should be more horse-like than donkey-like in body structure
- Mules should resemble a quality performance horse or pony, except for the ears
- Mules are generally somewhat narrower than horses
- Balanced, proportional conformation supports soundness and performance

Head and Neck

- Head and neck should be in good proportion to the body
- The mule's head does not have to be horse like to be correct but should show quality, definition and intelligence.
- Ideal features include a broad forehead, clear eyes, large nostrils, and correct bite
- Ears should be notably longer in comparison to a horse's or ponies' and narrower than a donkey's. They should be upright, well set and alert, clean cut, and in proportion to the mule.
- The neck should be long, muscular, well set, and refined at the throatlatch

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Body and Topline

- The topline should be smooth, strong, and proportional
- The back should be strong through the loins, not too long or too short
- Desirable features include a deep girth, well-sprung ribs, and a muscular chest
- The shoulder should be long and sloping to allow freer movement
- Hindquarters should be long, level, wide, and well muscled

Forelegs and Feet

- Forelegs should be straight, squarely placed, and proportionate to the animal
- Forearms should be broad and well muscled
- Knees, cannon bones, tendons, and fetlocks should be strong and clearly defined
- Pasterns should be strong and set at about 60 degrees
- Feet should be sound, tough, and correctly aligned with the pastern

Hindlegs and Hindquarters

- Hindlegs should be straight, squarely placed, and strong
- The croup, quarters, thighs, and gaskin should show strength and muscling
- Hocks should be low set, broad, clean, and well defined
- Rear pasterns should be medium length and set at about 65 degrees
- Excessive cow hocks or sickle hocks should be avoided

Coat, Colour, and Movement

- The coat should appear healthy and shiny in both summer and winter
- Mules come in a wide range of colours and may show donkey-like markings
- The mule should show movement that is straight, long, free, active, smooth and covers the ground well.
- Within the different breeds of horses and donkeys there are some that are specifically bred or naturally display, additional variations of gait.
- Mules can inherit these abilities and should not be penalised provided the gait is maintained in the balanced, rhythmic manner required of all gaits.
- The most common additional gaits are a pace gait at the walk or trot.

Temperament

- Mules should have a kind and friendly nature
- They should show presence and energy without losing gentleness
- Good temperament is an important part of overall quality
- Behaviour should support safe handling and effective performance

Types of Mules

- All mules are judged first on sound general conformation
- Saddle and carriage mules should show the quality expected of riding and driving animals
- Draft mules should be strong, broad, heavily muscled, and powerful
- Type reflects the mule's purpose, parentage, and overall style