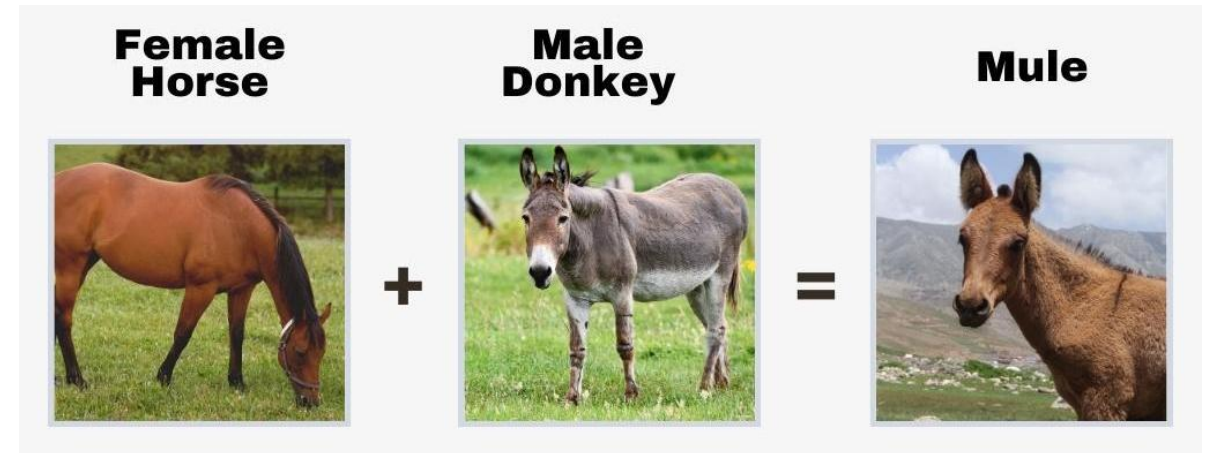


Standards of Conformation & Type for Mules



Introduction to Mules

- A mule is a cross between a female horse/pony and a male donkey
- A hinnie 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

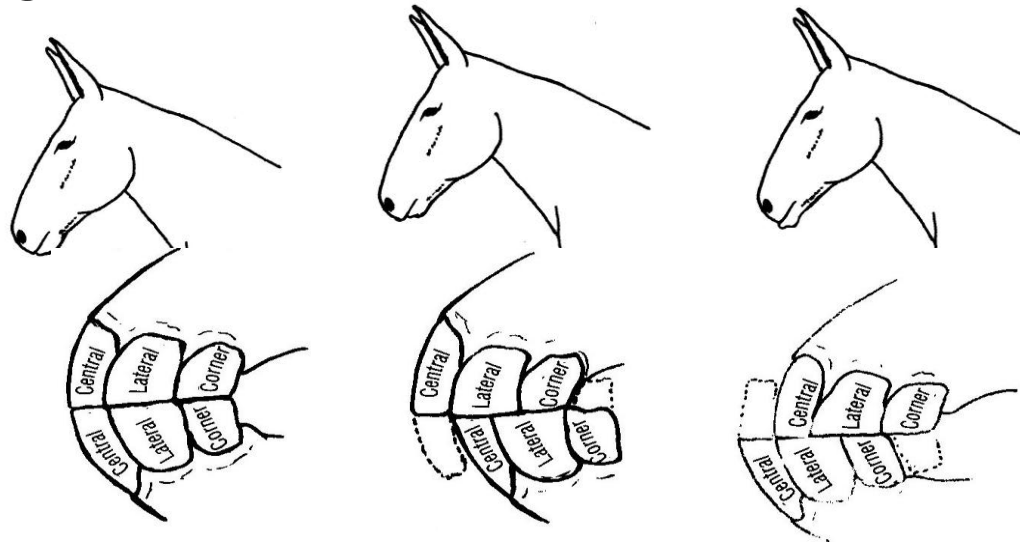
- Each mule is unique and is judged by type rather than breed
- Type usually reflects the mare that foaled the mule
- Assessment should consider both general conformation and suitability to type
- Basic conformation standards are similar to those used for horses and donkeys

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

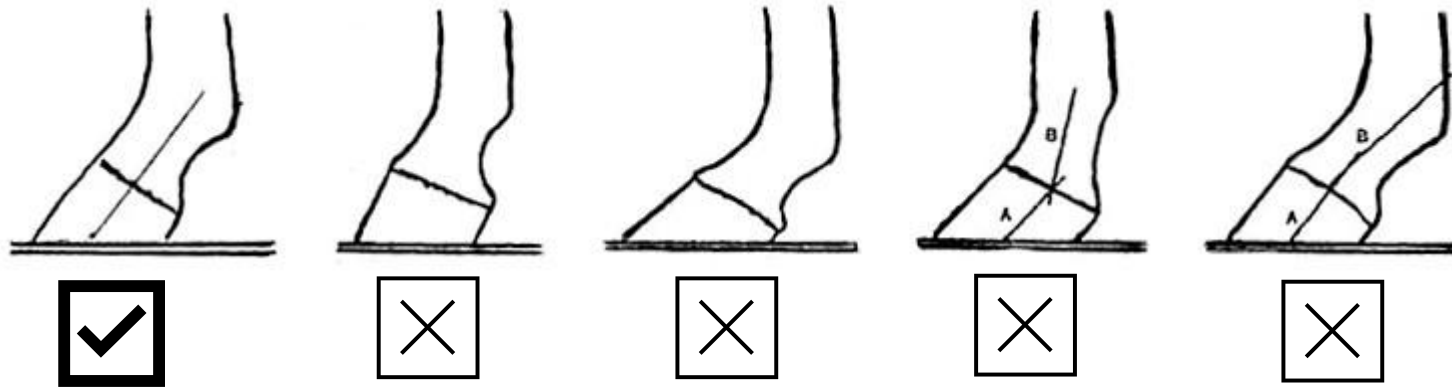
- Head and neck should be in good proportion to the body
- The mule's head does not have to be horse like to be correct but should show quality, definition and intelligence.
- Ideal features include a broad forehead, clear eyes, large nostrils, and correct bite
- Ears should be notably longer in comparison 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



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

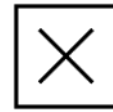
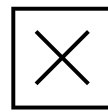
Forelegs and Feet



- 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



Hack Mule



Pony Mule