

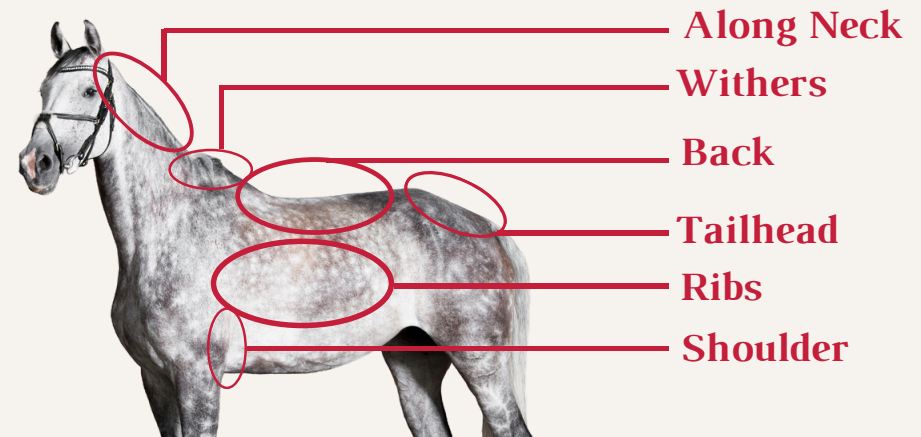
Equine Body Condition Scoring Flow Chart

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This tool was designed to assist individuals with applying principles from the Henneke Body Condition Scoring System to determine a horse's Body Condition Score (BCS). Body condition scoring is a standardized assessment of equine condition that evaluates the amount of fat cover on a horse's body.

How to Score

- Six areas are used (see figure at right)
- Visually assess the horse's body for defined features of each score.
- Palpate the horse's body for defined features of each score.
- Scores range from 1–9
 - BCS 1–3 are thin
 - BCS 4–6 are moderate
 - BCS 7–9 are overconditioned



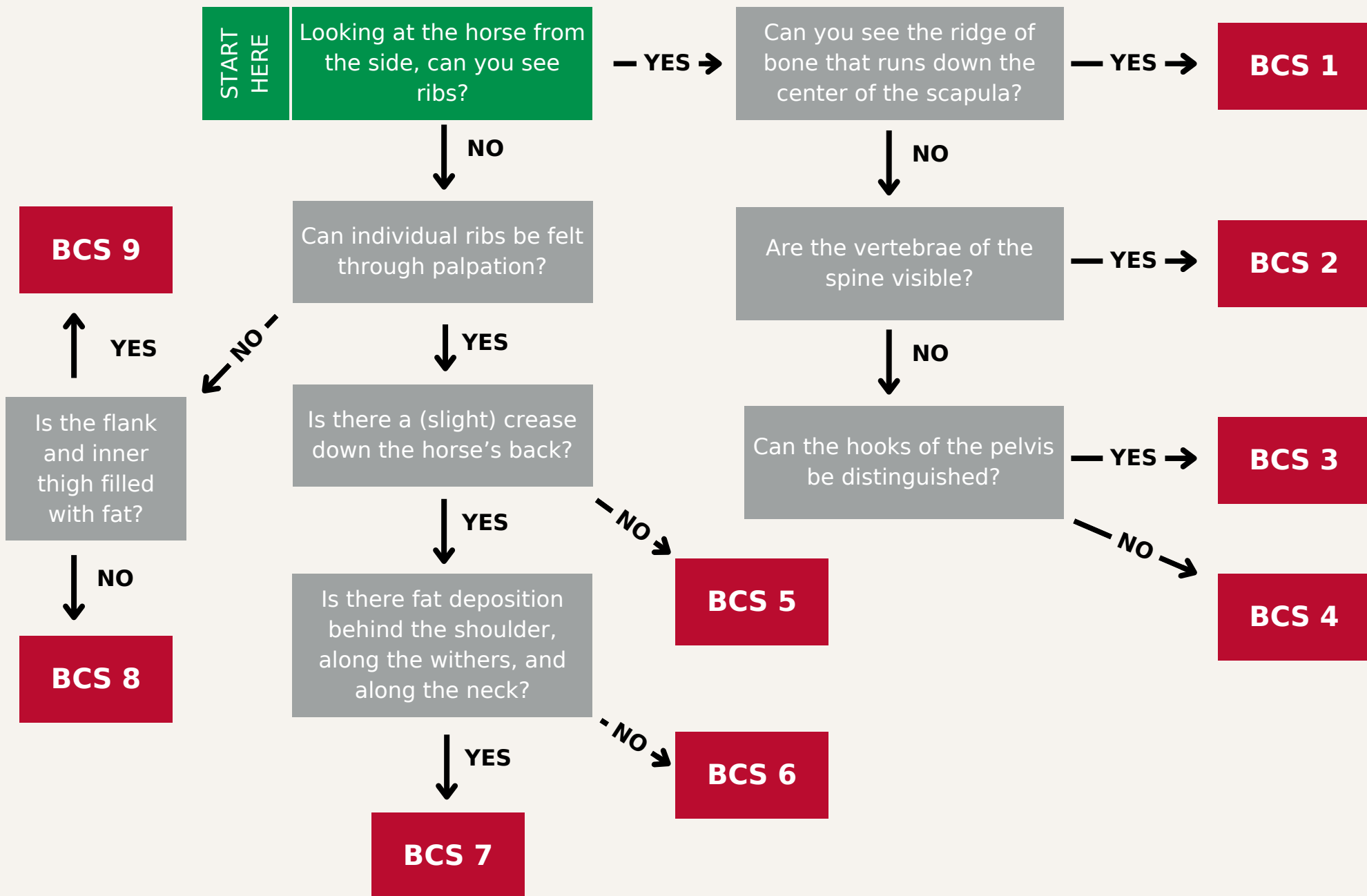
Flow Chart Instructions

- 1) Begin at the green box marked “Start Here” in the upper left-hand corner.
- 2) Answer each question with a “yes” or “no” and follow the arrow to the next question.
- 3) Progressing through the questions will assist you in evaluating and assigning an appropriate BCS.
- 4) Reference the “Equine BCS Accuracy Check” to check the accuracy of the flowchart score.

Additional Resources:

1. [Evaluating Body Composition of Horses](#) by Mastellar, S. L., Share, E., & Zynda, H. from the University of Ohio Extension.
2. [HorseBCS App for iOS and Android](#) by Extension Horses & HorseQuest.
3. [Henneke Body Condition Score Worksheet](#) by the United States Bureau of Land Management

Equine Body Condition Scoring Flow Chart



BCS 1-4 Suggested Score Accuracy Check

	BCS 1	BCS 2	BCS 3	BCS 4
Neck	Bone easily noticeable	Bone faintly discernable	Neck accentuated	Neck not obviously thin
Withers	Bone easily noticeable	Bone faintly discernable	Withers accentuated	Withers not obviously thin
Shoulder	Bone easily noticeable	Bone faintly discernable	Shoulder accentuated	Shoulder not obviously thin
Ribs	Ribs project prominently	Ribs prominent	Slight fat, ribs easily discernable	Faint outline of ribs visible
Back	Spinous processes prominent	Slight fat at base of spinous processes	Fat halfway built on spinous processes	Peaked appearance along the back
Tailhead	Bone structures prominent	Bone structures prominent	Individual vertebrae are not visible	Fat can be felt, hook bones not visible

BCS 1



BCS 2



BCS 3



BCS 4



Adapted from the Henneke Body Condition Scale*

*Henneke, D.R., Potter, G.D., Kreider, J. L. and Yeates, B.F. (1983), Relationship between condition score, physical measurements and body fat percentage in mares. Equine Veterinary Journal, 15: 371-372.

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BCS 5-9 Suggested Score Accuracy Check

	BCS 5	BCS 6	BCS 7	BCS 8	BCS 9
Neck	Neck blends smoothly into body	Fat beginning to be deposited	Fat deposited along neck	Noticeable thickening of the neck	Bulging fat
Withers	Withers rounded	Fat beginning to be deposited	Fat deposited along withers	Areas along withers filled with fat	Bulging fat
Shoulder	Shoulder blends smoothly	Fat beginning to be deposited	Fat deposited behind shoulder	Area behind shoulder filled with fat	Bulging fat
Ribs	Ribs not seen but easily felt	Fat over ribs feels spongy	Individual ribs can still be felt	Difficult to feel ribs	Patchy fat over ribs
Back	Back is level	Slight groove down back	Groove down back	Crease down back	Obvious crease down back, flank filled with fat
Tailhead	Tailhead fat is beginning to feel spongy	Tailhead fat feels soft	Tailhead fat is soft	Tailhead fat is very soft	Bulging fat

BCS 5



BCS 6



BCS 8



BCS 9



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