Body Scores

What to look and feel?

- Fat forming a crest and thickening the neck; you should be able to see muscles and feel where the bones are.
- Fat covering the withers and backbone (the spinous processes of the spine). There should be barely any - you should be able to feel the bones underneath a supple covering of skin. Fat will build up either side of the spine until it is higher than the spine itself creating a 'gutter'.

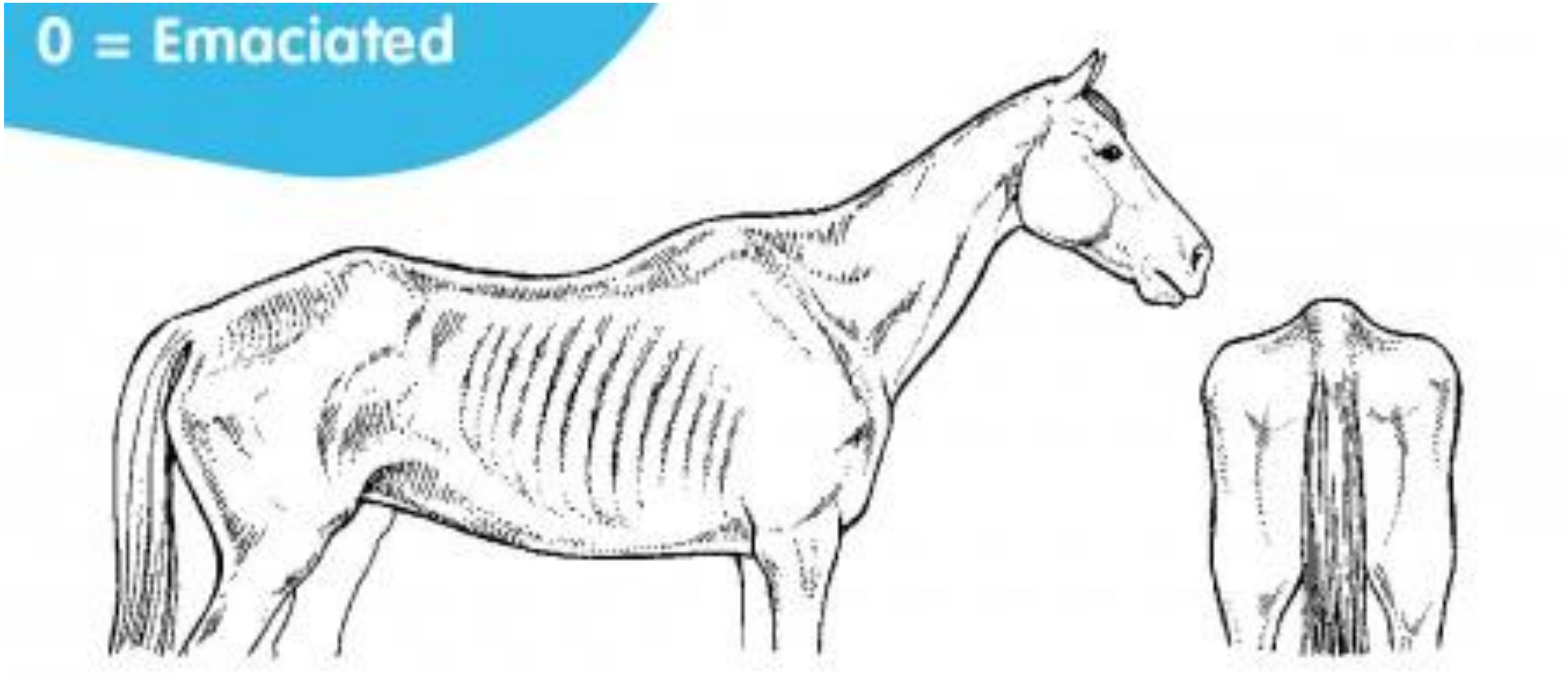
- Fat behind the shoulder and where the shoulder blends into the neck. There should be clear definition around the shoulder blade; fat will fill in the hollow in front of the shoulder and build up a pad behind the shoulder.

- Fat over the ribs - there should be a little fat between the ribs but not over them. This way you can feel but not see them.

- The definition of the bony points of the pelvis (croup and point of hip) - a healthy layer of fat under the skin will not cover up the bones; you should be able to see where they are and certainly feel them.
- From behind - the quarters should slope down away from the croup. An 'M' shape with a gutter along the backbone will be due to a large layer of fat. Fat builds up on the inner thighs too – lift up the tail to look.

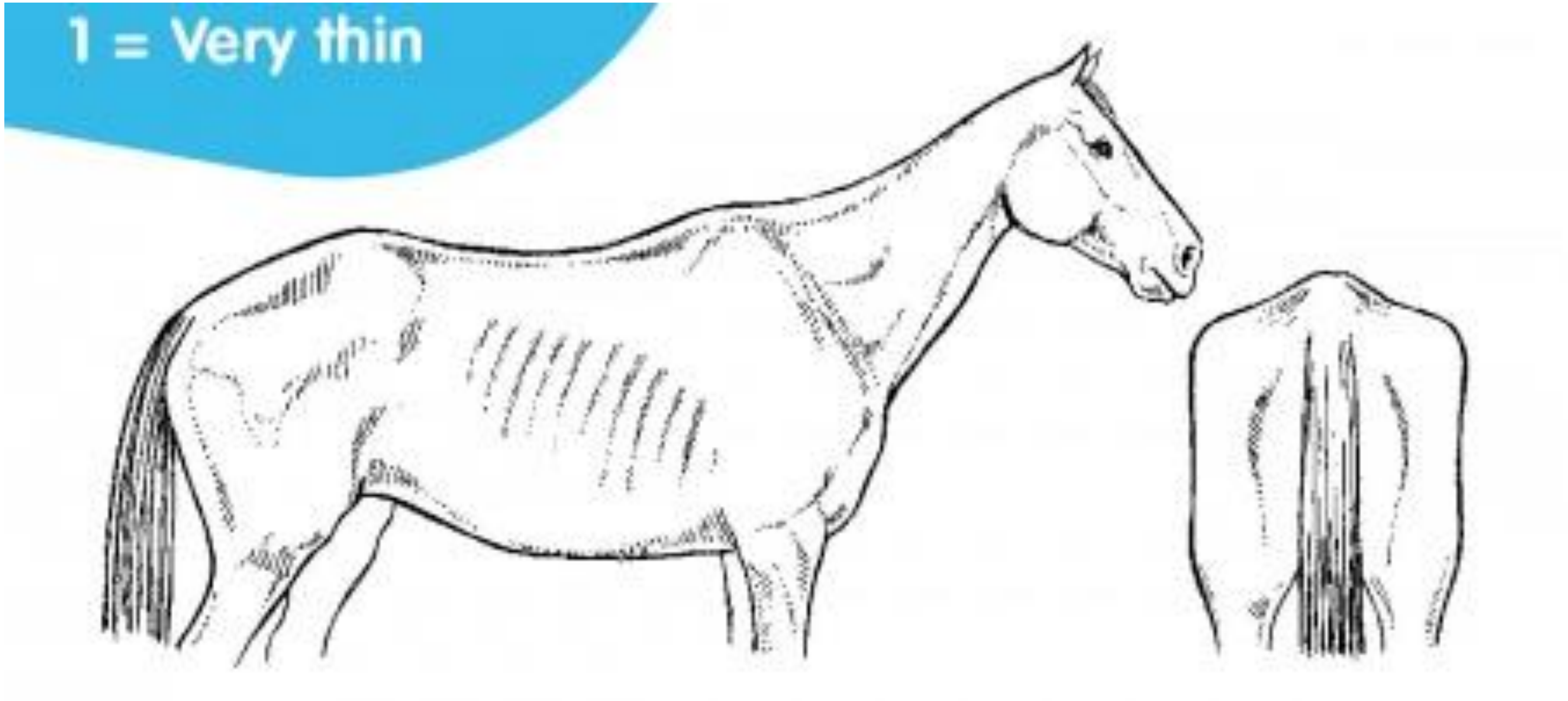
0 = emaciated

- No fatty tissue can be felt – skin tight over bones
- Shape of individual bones visible
- Marked ewe-neck
- Very prominent backbone and pelvis
- Very sunken rump
- Deep cavity under tail
- Large gap between thighs


0 = Emaciated

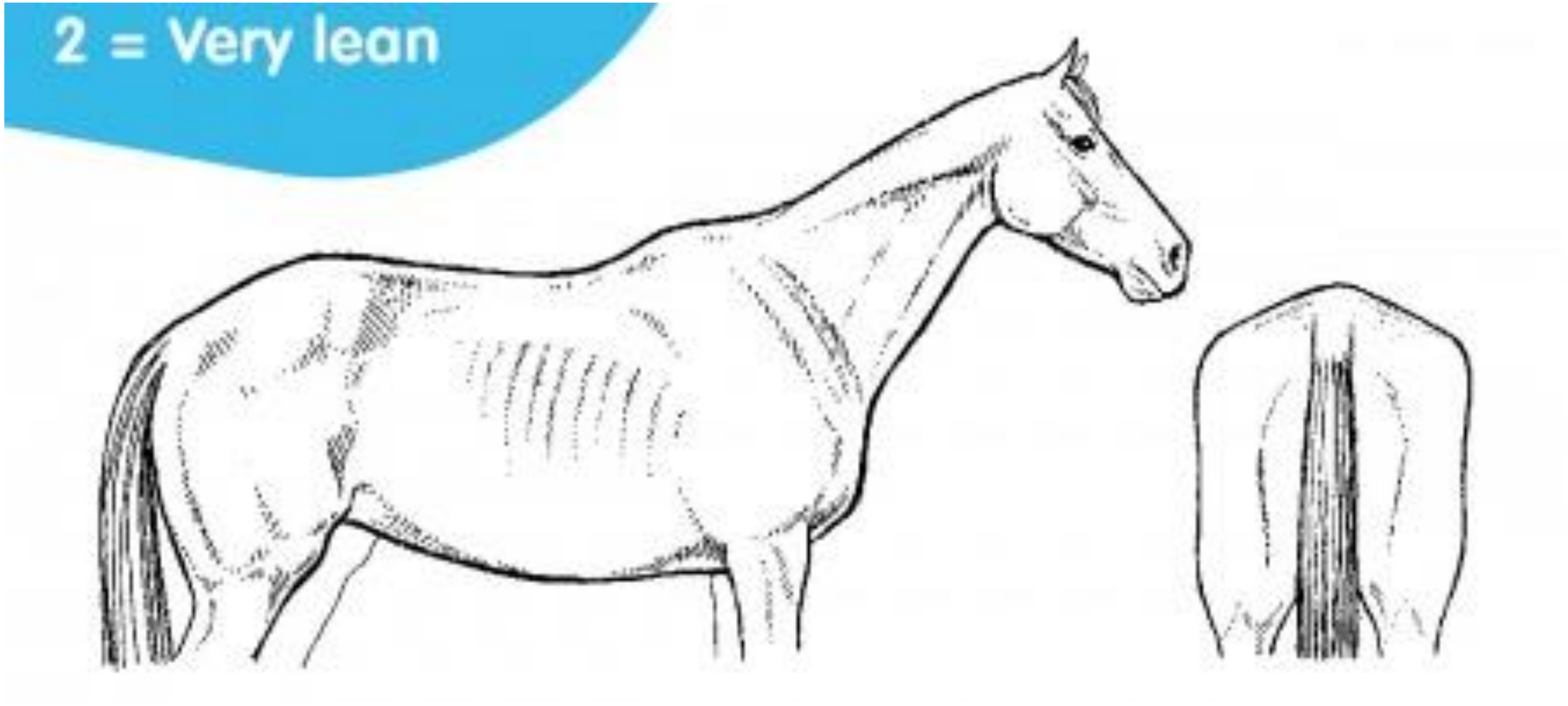
1 = very thin

- Barely any fatty tissue – shape of bones visible
- Narrow ewe-neck
- Ribs easily visible
- Prominent backbone, croup and tail head
- Sunken rump
- Cavity under tail
- Gap between thighs


1 = Very thin

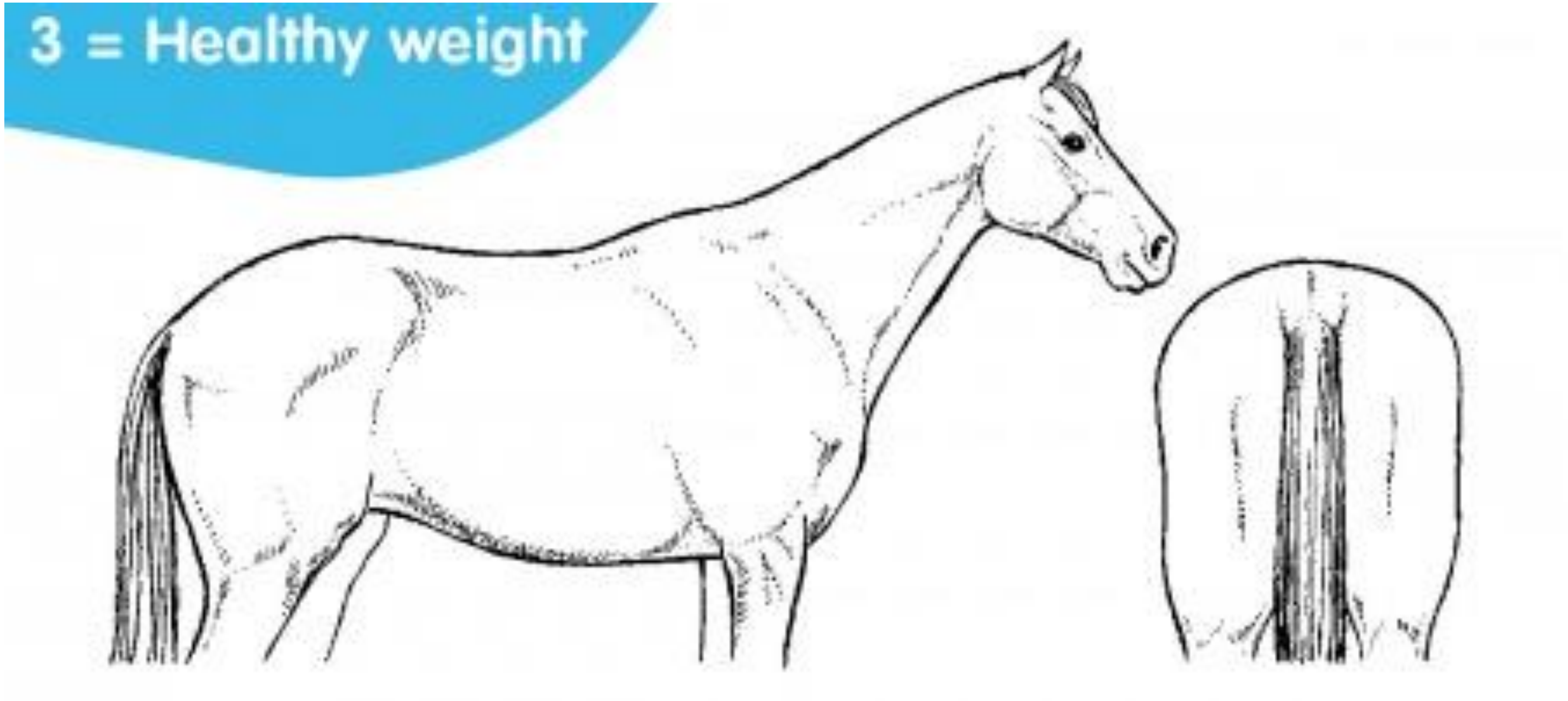
Very lean

- Very thin layer of fat under the skin
- Narrow neck – muscles sharply defined
- Backbone covered but still protruding
- Withers, shoulders and neck accentuated
- Ribs just visible
- Hip bones easily visible but rounded
- Rump sloping from backbone to point of hips, only rounded if very fit


2 = Very lean

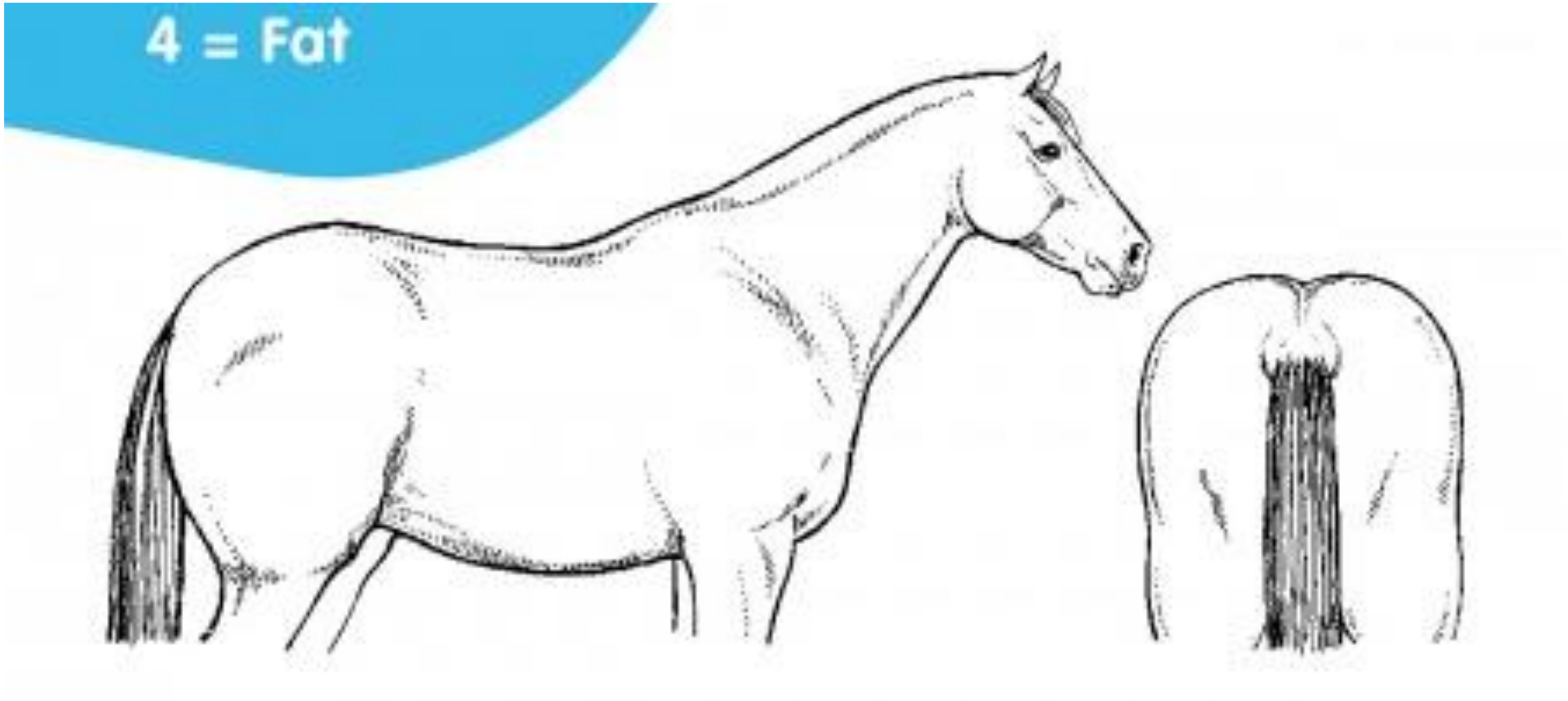
Healthy Weight

- Thin layer of fat under the skin
- Muscles on neck less defined
- Shoulders and neck blend smoothly into body
- Back is flat or forms only a slight ridge
- Ribs not visible but easily felt
- Rump beginning to appear rounded
- Hip bones just visible


3 = Healthy weight

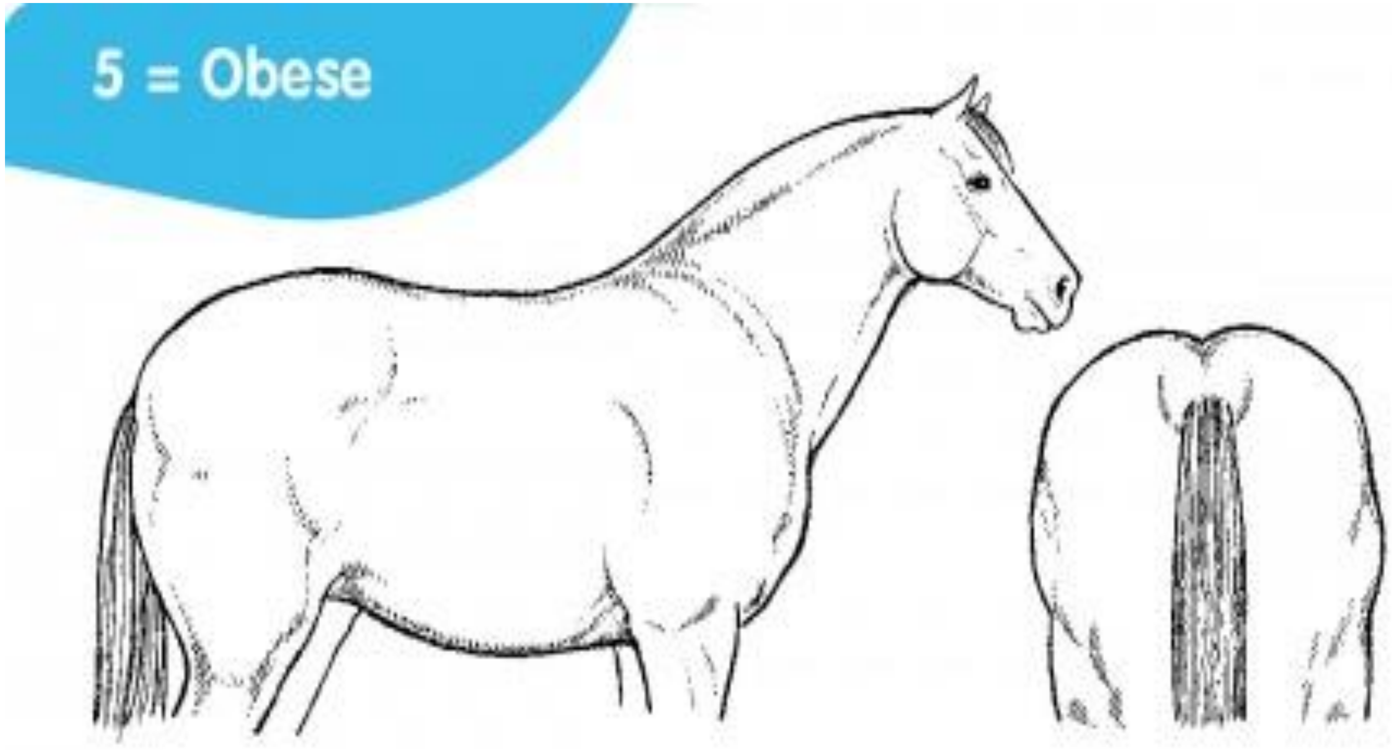
Fat

- Muscles hard to determine
- Spongy fat developing on crest
- Fat behind shoulders
- Ribs and pelvis difficult to feel
- Rump well rounded – apple shaped from behind
- Spongy fat around tail head
- Gutter along back


4 = Fat

Obese

- Blocky, bloated appearance
- Muscles not visible
- Pronounced crest with hard fat
- Pads of fat; ribs cannot be felt
- Deep gutter along back and rump
- Lumps of fat around tail head
- Very bulging apple shaped rump
- Inner thighs pressing together


5 = Obese