



How to assign a cresty neck score to a horse/pony

This information is based on the original description of the use of a cresty neck score in Carter, R.A., Geor, R.J., Staniar, W.B., Cubitt, T.A., Harris, P.A., 2009. Apparent adiposity assessed by standardised scoring systems and morphometric measurements in horses and ponies. *Veterinary Journal* 179, 204-210.

Points to note:

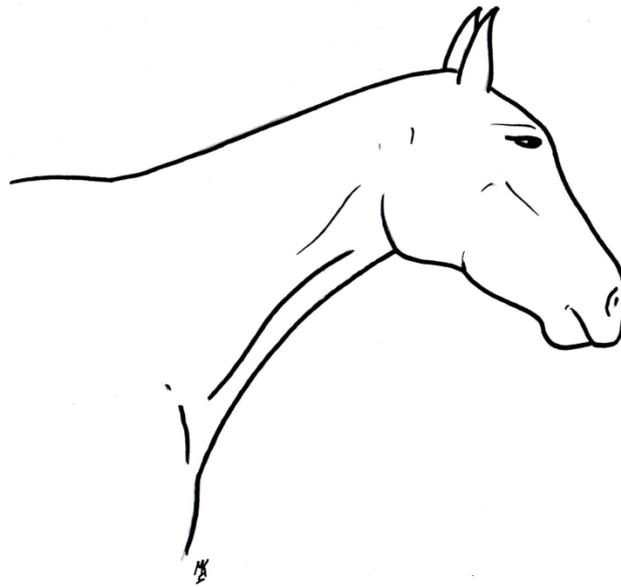
1. The cresty neck score is designed to assess the amount of fatty deposits in the horse's nuchal ligament area. This assessment is independent of body condition score.
2. It is recommended that you use a combination of palpation and visualisation to obtain the score.
3. The characteristics of different breeds may influence your score. For example, you are likely to score a Draught horse higher than a Thoroughbred when they may in fact have the same degree of fat deposits.

Table 1: Description of cresty neck scores on the 5 point scale described by Carter *et al.*, 2009

Score	Description	Example
0	No visual appearance of a crest (tissue apparent above the ligamentum nuchae). No palpable crest.	See appendix
1	No visual appearance of a crest, but slight filling felt with palpation.	See appendix
2	Noticeable appearance of a crest, but fat deposited fairly evenly from poll to withers. Crest easily cupped in one hand and bent from side to side.	See appendix
3	Crest enlarged and thickened, so fat is deposited more heavily in middle of the neck than toward poll and withers, giving a mounded appearance. Crest fills cupped hand and begins losing side to side flexibility.	See appendix
4	Crest grossly enlarged and thickened, and can no longer be cupped in one hand or easily bent from side to side. Crest may have wrinkles/creases perpendicular to topline.	See appendix
5	Crest is so large it permanently droops to one side.	See appendix

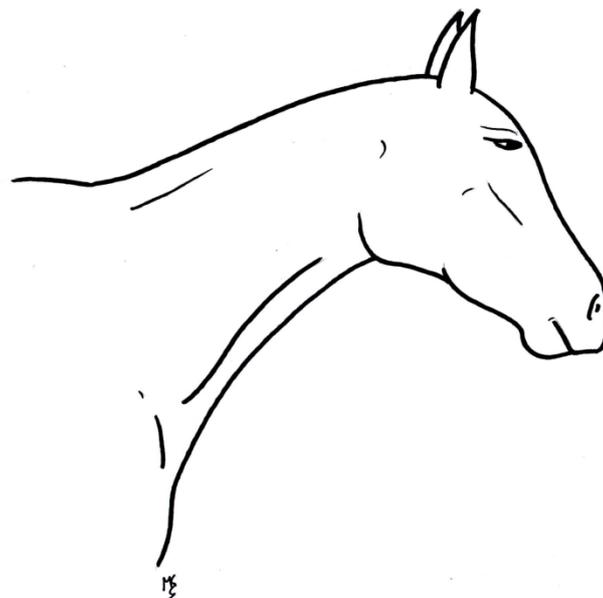
Appendix

Cresty neck score 0



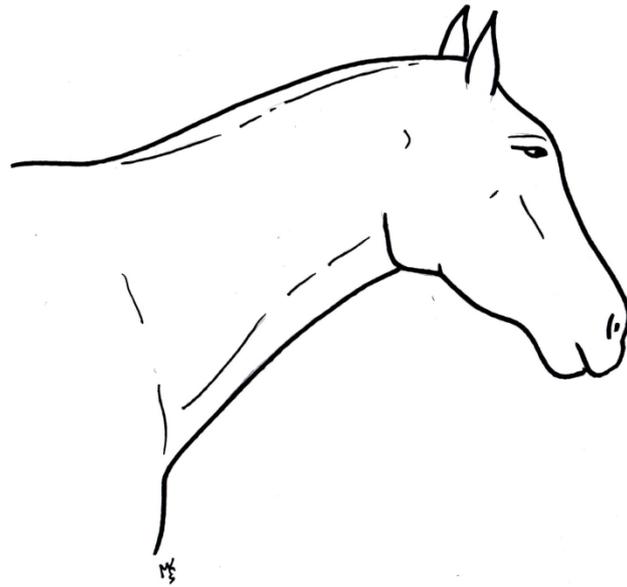
0.

Cresty neck score 1



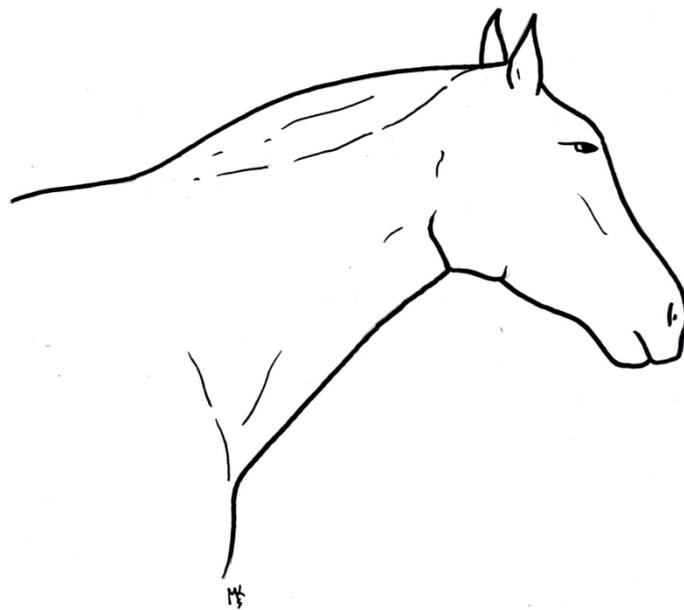
1.

Cresty neck score 2



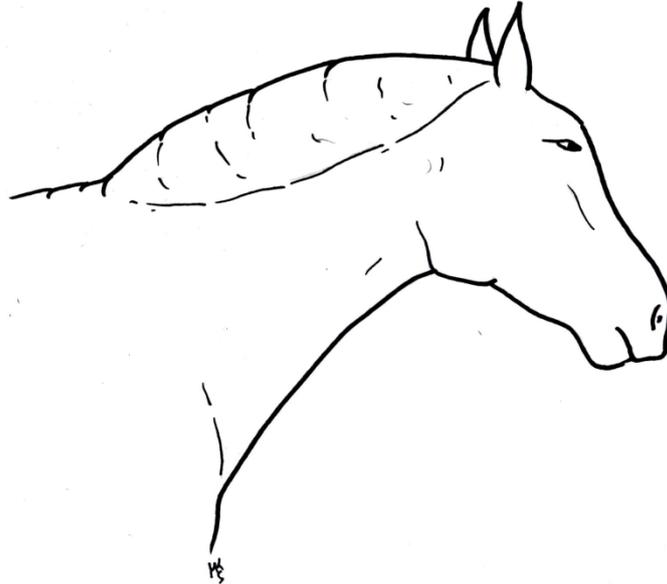
2.

Cresty neck score 3



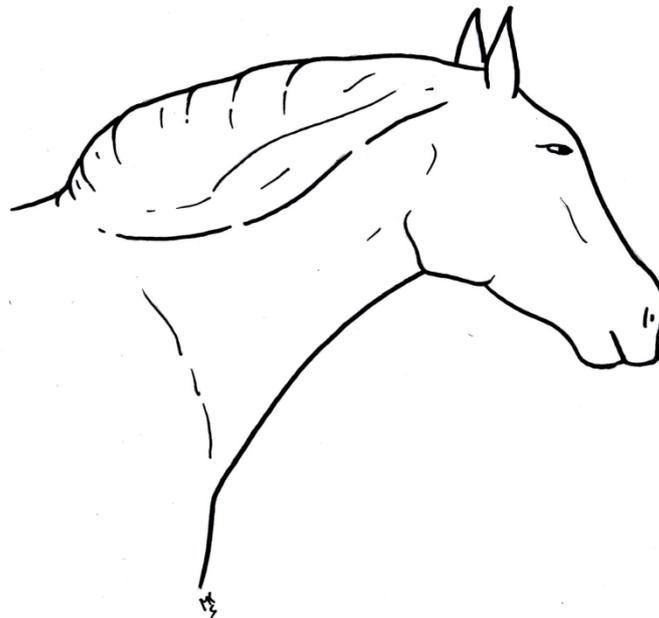
3.

Cresty neck score 4



4.

Cresty neck score 5



5.