

AKHAL-TEKE BREED STANDARD

Overall Impression: The Akhal-Teke is an elegant, exotic animal exuding grace, power and athleticism. The comparison in appearance to a cheetah or fine greyhound is not inaccurate. While degrees of "type" are allowed and even encouraged, all examples of the breed should carry the distinct characteristics that differentiate the Akhal-Teke from other horses. In judging or grading these animals, basic soundness is of primary importance, followed by the presence of "type".

Head & Neck: Head shall be long and narrow, with most of the length being from the eyes to the muzzle. Ears are long, slim and set forward. Overall, the head is dry, with large nostrils and thin lips. Eyes often are "hooded" and "oriental" in appearance. The Akhal-Teke has a refined throatlatch, flexible poll and long, slim neck, set high out of the shoulder.

Faults: Severe overshot or undershot jaw, common or coarse head, thick throatlatch, thick neck, low neck set.

General Conformation: The Akhal-Teke is meant to be a medium-sized horse, ranging in size from 14.3h to 16h. Extremes in either direction are not desirable. In general, the Akhal-Teke gives the impression of length, without showing weakness or frailty. The back is long, but strong, with a level top-line. Withers are prominent and attached to a well set-in shoulder. Shoulders should be nicely sloped and extremely free-moving. The hip angle is wide and gives the appearance of strength. Tail set is low. When viewed from the front, the chest is narrow, although the heart girth is deep. The skin of the Akhal-Teke is very thin, with their coat and hair being quite fine. Often the breed shows a sparse mane & tail, little or no forelock and the absence of feathering on the fetlocks. Any color is acceptable, as is any combination of white markings. The characteristic "metallic gleam" is a desirable feature. Overall, the Akhal-Teke should give the impression of lithe athleticism without excessive musculature.

Faults: Extreme heaviness or reediness. Excessively long back, especially when coupled with weak loin connection. Extreme downhill conformation. mono or cryptorchidism. Thick, coarse or overly muscular appearance.

Legs/Feet: The Akhal-Teke is a true desert horse, and as such, should possess extreme stamina and hardiness. The presence of adequately dense bone is one such indicator of these traits. Akhal-Tekes have short cannon bones and low-set hocks, while the forearm and gaskins are long and smoothly muscled. Legs are dry, with tendons well defined. Joints are large. Knees should be flat. Pasterns should be long and display an identical angle to the hoof and shoulder. Hooves are small, round and extremely hard.

Faults: Any and all limb formations that could contribute to future unsoundness, including but not limited to: bench knees, calf knees, off-set cannon bones, sickle hocks, wide at the hocks, lack of bone, small joints, pigeon-toed or toed-in stance. Horses shall be penalized according to severity of the fault.

Temperament: Thousands of years of selective breeding have left their mark not only on their physical appearance and efficiency, but also on their behavior. These horses are not only sensible but also very sensitive.