



HIGHLAND PONIES AUSTRALIA

You can take a Highland anywhere - a pony for all the family.


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Highland Pony Breed Standards

HEIGHT: 13hh to 14.2hh (132cms - 148cms). Occasionally ponies fall outside this range and are not eligible to show in Highland Pony show classes in Australia.

HEAD: Small and short but wide across the forehead, broad muzzled with wide open nostrils. The measurement across the forehead, eye to eye, should be equivalent to the depth of the jaw. Eyes should be alert, kind, large, full and prominent, looking well forward to be clearly seen from the front. Ears should be wide set and erect, but not too large.

NECK AND SHOULDERS: Well arched and powerful, reasonable length of neck going from withers. Fine through the gullet carrying the head high and forward. A good sloping shoulder tapering to a distinct withers with a well-placed forearm.

BODY: Well-balanced and compact with deep chest and plenty of room for heart and lungs. Ribs well sprung.

Quarters and hind legs: Quarters should be broad and long with tail well set up running continuously from the croup to the tail set. Hind legs should be powerful with a well-developed thigh, strong second thigh and clean flat hocks.

LEGS: Flat hard bone, broad knees, short cannon bones and oblique pasterns. Feather hair at back of legs soft and silky. In the summer there should be only a tuft of straight hair at the heels, but in the winter the feather may go all the way up to the knees.

HOOFS: Hoofs should be large, open and broad shaped. They should be dark in colour and of thoroughly sound texture.

ACTION: The action of a Highland pony must be straight and free moving from the shoulders. There should not be high knee action, and movement should be true and straight, and dishing, straddling and wide hock movements are considered faults. The pony is expected to move at a workmanlike pace and cover the ground at walk with the hind hoof at least tracking up with the front one. Ideally the pony should be capable of coping with all types of ground conditions.

MANE, TAIL & COAT: Hair should be long and of a strong fibre. Summer coat should be short and sleek, but winter coats should have an outer layer of strong badger-like hair over a soft and dense undercoat giving protection against cold, wet climatic conditions.

COLOURS: Predominantly dun in a range of shades - mouse, yellow, grey and cream. Coat colour can also be grey, brown, black, bay and occasionally liver chestnut with silver mane and tail. Dun coloured ponies have a dorsal stripe and some show zebra markings on legs. Shoulder stripe often present. A small star is acceptable but other white markings are discouraged, as is white on hoofs. Foal coat often changes and many ponies change colour gradually as they grow older, especially those with grey hairs interspersed with the original colour. Others show a slight seasonal change in colour between winter and summer coats. Broken colours are not allowed.

Highland Pony Characteristics

The Highland Pony is one of the two native breeds of the Scottish Highlands and Islands. As a result, it has over many centuries adapted to the variable and often severe climatic and environmental conditions of Scotland. The winter coat consists of a layer of strong badger like hair over a soft dense undercoat which enables this breed of pony to live out in all weathers. This coat is shed in the spring to reveal a smooth summer coat. This essential hardiness is combined with a kindly nature and an even temperament.

Highland ponies are one of the most versatile of the British native breeds.

Highland ponies are powerful, well built animals with short, broad heads, cresty necks and compact muscular bodies.

Traditionally, highland ponies were used as all purpose utility animals by the Highland farmers and crofters. Their sure-footedness, willingness to work, docile nature, placid temperament and immense stamina make them ideal for work over rough, often inhospitable terrain.

They are also traditionally associated with deer-stalking being used to carry the carcass back after a hunt, and more recently they have found great favour as trekking and trail ride mounts.

Highlands make excellent family ponies, many being natural jumpers, and are very easily broken to harness.

Within Australia and Britain, Highlands are often used as trustworthy and dependable, sturdy mounts for people with disabilities.