

Think about the difference between a Poodle and a Rottweiler?

Dogs have major differences that distinguish them from each other, yet they still remain similar enough to be called a dog. It is also true for horses.

Breed - a group of animals of the same species that share common traits.

Major horse breeds:

A. Draft - These are large horses that usually stand taller than 16 hands at the withers (1 hand = 4 inches). These horses are very muscular and large boned, and generally used for work such as pulling heavy loads.

1. Belgian - usual color of chestnut with flaxen mane and tail
2. Shire - largest of all draft breeds
3. Clydesdale - a fairly light draft breed made famous by Budweiser
4. Percheron - usually black or gray, often crossed with lighter horses to make heavy riding horses.

B. Light horses - This is what most people envision when horse is mentioned. These are, by far, the most numerous in terms of population and breed. Light horses are generally used for riding and light carriage work.

The following belong in a subclass of regular light horses. These generally have only 3 gaits: walk, trot, and canter.

1. Quarter Horse - the most numerous breed in the U.S. made famous by cowboys and rodeos. Characterized by heavily muscled frame and angular face.
2. Appaloosa - a versatile breed developed by the Nez Percé Indians from Spanish stock. The breed was nearly wiped out by the U.S. Cavalry during the Indian Wars. Characterized by various patterns of spots.
3. Arabian - the most ancient of all purebred light horses. This breed originated in the deserts of Arabia. Characterized by a finely chiseled face and light bone. The Arabian is known for its endurance and density of bone, which makes it a popular cross on many breeds.
4. American Paint - this is a stock horse type (like Quarter Horses) that is characterized by its loud, splotted markings. These markings can be in any color.

5. Standard bred - this is a light racing horse that is known for its speed at a trot or a pace. These horses race pulling sulkies.
6. Thoroughbred - a popular breed originating in Europe. Thoroughbreds are used in a variety of sports although most commonly associated with racing.
7. Morgan - An American breed developed in New England. Characterized by flashy gaits, hardiness, and versatility.

The following belong in a subclass of Gaited horses. Gaited horses are also light riding horses; but in addition to walk, trot and canter, these horses also rack, and do other fancy footwork:

1. American Saddlebred - this breed is characterized by its flashy movements both front and rear and a very high head carriage.
 2. Tennessee Walking Horse - Developed by plantation owners in the south, the walking horse's movements are characterized by high steps in the front and long reaching strides in the rear.
 3. Missouri Fox Trotter - a gaited horse used mostly for pleasure.
 4. Paso Fino - A small Spanish horse originating in the Caribbean. The Paso Fino is notable for its Paso Gait, a rapid rhythmic gait that is so smooth people are seen riding them carrying full glasses of champagne.
- C. Ponies - Ponies are small horses whose height cannot exceed 14.2 hands.
1. Shetland - developed in the Shetland Isles, this is perhaps the most well known of Pony breeds. Shetland Ponies are extremely handy and, when well maintained, can live for 35 years.
 2. Welsh Ponies - this is a very light pony, originating in Wales and known for its refinement. Very popular in shows, the Welsh pony is very versatile.
 3. Hackney Pony - Noted for its flashy movements, the Hackney is most often seen pulling a carriage.