

A LAYMAN'S GUIDE to FOSH GAITED HORSES SHOWS

What is a Gaited Horse?

A Gaited horse is a horse whose intermediate gait is does not have suspension. Some gaited horses trot, but in competition with other gaited horses, they perform the intermediate gait common to the breed. Gaited horses are often referred to as soft gaited meaning the ride or gait is smooth and comfortable for the rider.

Breed Profile

Tennessee Walking Horse

A light horse breed founded in middle Tennessee, the Tennessee Walking Horse is a composition of Narragansett and Canadian Pacer, Standardbred, Thoroughbred, Morgan and American Saddlebred stock. Although originally bred as a utility horse, the TWH is a pleasure horse with an alert and willing attitude. They are calm, quiet, responsive, relaxed, obedient, willing, and smooth with good manners.

The **Flat Walk** is a bold, ground covering gait that is even and four beat where each foot leaves and strikes the ground independently and is accompanied by a vertical head nod that involves the whole neck and head. The **Running Walk** is natural and must not appear artificial. It is a smooth, gliding gait with the same footfall as the flat walk but an increase in speed and stride. Some TWH flop their ears or click their teeth in rhythm with the gait.

Missouri Fox Trotter

The Missouri Fox Trotter was developed in the rugged Ozark Mountains during the nineteenth century by settlers who needed smooth-riding, durable mounts that could travel at a comfortable, surefooted gait for long distances. Pioneers who crossed the Mississippi River to settle in the Ozarks came mostly from the hills and plantations of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia. They brought their finest possessions, including their best saddle stock whose breeding included Arabian, Morgan and plantation horses from the deep South. Later American Saddlebred, Tennessee Walking and Standardbred breeding was added. It became apparent that horses able to perform the easy, broken gait called the "fox trot" were the most useful in the rocky, forest-covered hills of the Ozarks, and selective breeding of the fox trot gait began.

The **Fox Trot** is basically a diagonal gait like the trot, but the horse appears to walk with its front legs and trot with his hind legs. Because of the back feet's sliding action, rather than the hard step of other breeds, the rider experiences little jarring action and is quite comfortable to sit for long periods of time without posting.

Racking Horse

Since the time America began, the Racking Horse has been legendary for its beauty, stamina and calm disposition. The popularity grew strong on the great southern plantations before the Civil War when it was realized it could be ridden comfortably for hours because of its smooth, natural gait. In 1975, an act of legislature declared the Racking Horse to be Alabama's State horse.

Considered a 'light' horse, the Racking Horse is attractive and gracefully built with a long sloping neck, full flanks, well boned, smooth legs, and finely textured hair. Colors may be black, bay, sorrel, chestnut, brown, gray, yellow, cremello, buckskin, dun, palomino, roan, champagne, and even spotted.

The "rack" of the Racking Horse is a bi-lateral four-beat gait which is neither a pace nor a trot. It is often called a "single-foot" because only one foot strikes the ground at a time. The rack is natural to the Racking Horse and is not to be confused with breeds where the "rack" is an artificially achieved gait resulting from special training.

Spotted Saddle Horse

The Spotted Saddle Horse can trace its roots back to the history of horses that escaped from ships as they crashed on our shorelines. These horses were often spotted, naturally gaited and possessed the strength and stamina necessary for war use. By the end of the Civil War, many imported "gaited" types of horses were present in the United States. Selective mating of these gaited horses with the spotted horses resulted in the production of the smooth-gaited, colorful horse that came to be known as the Spotted Saddle Horse.

Spotted Saddle Horses include a variety of gaited breeds that meet the color requirements of the respective color registries and which perform an intermediate gait other than a trot. Individual Spotted Saddle Horses perform gaits that are unique to their breeding, but all are a smooth and easy gait

Mountain Horses

Kentucky's native gaited Mountain Horses include Rocky Mountain Horse, Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse, Mountain Pleasure Horse and Kentucky Spotted Mountain horses. Although horses may be registered in more than one Mountain Registry, each breed is distinct with their own history and regulations. **United Mountain Horse Inc.** was formed in 2000 by some Mountain Horse breed associations. UMH is dedicated to promoting and exhibiting horses from all mountain Registries. UMH sanctions many Mountain Horse shows.

Rocky Mountain Horse

There is little written documentation of the history of the Rocky Mountain Horse. The Rocky Mountain Horse originated in the United States in the late 1800s, in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains of eastern Kentucky. During the late 1800s and early 1900s, horses were not a luxury, but a necessity. The rural inhabitants of eastern Kentucky considered these saddle horses to be horses for all seasons - sure-footed, easy-gaited and worked hard, every day. They were not owned by wealthy people, received no special care, and most of the weak ones did not survive.

The Rocky Mountain Horse Association's (RMHA) rendition of breed history states a gaited colt was brought from the Rocky Mountain region of the United States to the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains around 1890. Oral history indicated he was chocolate-colored with flaxen mane and tail, and possessed a superior gait. Sam Tuttle, considered the man most responsible for the survival of the Rocky Mountain Horse, primarily used a stallion named TOBE who passed on his gait and disposition.

The Rocky Mountain Horse naturally moves in a relaxed, smooth ambling gait. It is a lateral gait with four distinct hoof beats producing near equal rhythm. Although the speed varies, the rhythm is constant. The RMHA **MUST** perform 3 distinct gaits: **Trail Walk** (calm, relaxed natural walk, on a loose rein), **Show Walk** (even four beat lateral gait executed in a slow, smooth rhythmic fashion) and **Rocky Mountain Pleasure Gait** (even four beat lateral gait with a moderate but noticeable increase in speed.)

Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse and Kentucky Spotted Mountain Horse

Like all Mountain Horses, Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horses and Kentucky Spotted Mountain Horses have a gentle temperament, a willing disposition and a smooth, comfortable, natural and distinct four beat gait under saddle. There are 2 size categories: horses 14.2 hands or larger at maturity are Class A, and horses from 11 to 14.1 hands at maturity are Class B. They are of

medium bone reflecting their heritage as an all round utility horse. Horses registered as Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horses may be any solid body color but possess limited white markings. Horses with significant white markings known as (tobiano, overo, sabino etc) are registered as Kentucky Spotted Mountain Horses.

All gaits are natural, evenly timed, consistent, smooth and four beat with moderate speed. The natural four beat gait of the KMSHA/SMHA horse ranges from what is technically referred to as a “**stepped rack**” with minimal lift and suspension, to a true rack when performed with speed and animation. The gait has traditionally been described as a “saddle gait” or “single foot.” Execution of the gait may demonstrate power and stride with little or no head nod and minimal hock action. Some KMSHA/SMHA horses execute the gait with a small degree of termino(winging out form either side of the forelegs), which is not in itself to be penalized, so long as it is not the result of conformational deficiency or causes the gait not to be one of forward

Gaited Morgans

Few horseman have not heard the story of the stocky, stylish little stallion, Figure, destined to become known by this owner's name, Justin Morgan. General Stonewall Jackson's favorite horse, a Morgan, called Little Sorrel, or Fancy, was a ground covering, smooth gaited, "pacer" -- most likely a singlefooter. Many Morgan breeders are surprised to find new foals gaiting in the paddock. Due to the **mysteries of the genetic code of gait**, non-gaited mares and stallions routinely produce gaiting offspring. Unofficial breed estimates state that from **10 to 20 percent of all Morgans** perform some sort of intermediate gait! The gaits produced range from a true singlefoot, to a high action rack to a form of a running walk.

Paso Fino Horse

The Paso Fino's journey to the Americas began more than 500 years ago with the importation of Andalusians, Spanish Barbs from North Africa, and smooth-gaited Spanish Jennets to the "New World" by Spanish Conquistadors. Horses were selectively bred for stamina, smooth gait and beauty. Awareness of the Paso Fino didn't spread to the USA until after WWII.

The Paso Fino is born with a unique gait unique - smooth, rhythmic, purposeful, straight, balanced in flexion and synchronous front to rear, resulting in comfort and smoothness for the rider. It is an evenly-spaced four-beat lateral gait with each foot contacting the ground independently in a regular sequence at precise intervals.

The Paso Fino gait is performed at three speeds with varying degrees of collection:

Classic Fino (full collection, with rapid footfall and little forward motion), **Paso Corto** (full to moderate collection with moderate speed, unhurried, medium stride); **Paso Largo** (fastest speed, minimal collection, longer stride)

Peruvian Paso

The judicious fusion of several Old World breeds (Spanish Jennet, African Barb and Andalusian) provided the foundation for the Peruvian horse. Once established, the Peruvian Paso was maintained in its native country as a closed population, isolated by geography and the dedication of its creators. It is of medium size, between 14.1 and 15.2 hands, with a powerful build. He has an abundant mane, curly or straight hair and may be solid colored (chestnut, black, brown, bay, buckskin, palomino, gray, roan or dun). Peruvian Paso are shown without shoes.

The Peruvian Paso exhibits action typified by lift combined with "termino," a movement of the front legs similar to the loose outward rolling of a swimmer's arms in the crawl.

The **Paso llano** is an equally spaced, four beat gait. The **Sobreandando** is usually faster and slightly more lateral than the Paso llano.

Mardalargo Marchador

The Mangalarga Marchador is a beautiful horse, exhibiting classic Spanish conformation and charm. Originating in Brazil, no other breeds have been tossed into the Mangalarga Marchador. The Spanish Jennets have died out, and the Marchador is probably the purest surviving remnant of that breed. The gait is remarkably fast and smooth - a gait in which the horse moves its feet alternately laterally and diagonally with moments in which triple support can be verified. Due to the triple support, the marcha gives a very comfortable ride with little friction. The Mangalarga Marchador neither trots nor paces, and naturally goes from the marching gait into a canter.

If the horse marches on level ground at a normal rhythm, the tracks of the two hind feet will cover or pass slightly beyond the tracks of the front feet. When the horse places the feet diagonally and with moments of triple support, the gait is called **marcha batida**. If the horse moves the feet laterally and separately and also has moments of triple support, it is called **marcha picada**. The reason for so much preoccupation with the marcha is that this gait is unique in the world.

Florida Cracker

The Florida Cracker Horse, like the cattle breed of the same name, traces its ancestry to Spanish stock brought to Florida in the 1500's. The Spanish left some of their cattle, horses and hogs to make room for their collected treasures. The genetic heritage of the Cracker Horse is derived from the Iberian Horse of early sixteenth century Spain and includes blood of the North African Barb, Spanish Sorraia and Spanish Jennet (gaited). Its genetic base is generally the same as that of the Spanish Mustang, Paso Fino, Peruvian Paso, Criolla and other breeds developed from the horses originally introduced by the Spanish into the Caribbean Islands, Cuba and North, Central and South America.

The free roaming Cracker Horses evolved over a long period of time by natural selection. They were molded and tempered by nature and a challenging environment into horses that ultimately were to have a large part in the emergence of Florida as a ranching and general agriculture state. Florida cowmen were nicknamed "Crackers" because of the sound made by their cow whip cracking the air. This name was also given to the small agile Spanish Horse essential for working Spanish cattle. Over the years, Cracker Horses have been known by a variety of names: Chicksaw Pony, Seminole Pony, Marsh Tackie, Prairie Pony, Florida Horse, Florida Cow Pony, Grass Gut and others. The efforts of a few ranching families have saved the Cracker Horse has been kept from extinction.

Spanish Jennet Horse Society

The Spanish Jennet Horse Society is recreating the rare and exclusive horses that courageously glided through the reclamation of Spain, as well as the discovery and exploration of the New World. The Spanish Jennet was a horse of beauty, style and refinement, blessed with stamina, smooth gait and splashed with a rainbow of colors and a multitude of patterns. In the Middle Ages, the Spanish Jennet Horse (Pinto Paso or Paso Tiger Horse), reflected his lofty Spanish heritage in his crisp, smooth gait, his proud and elegant carriage, and his brilliant colors and flashy patterns of Pintado and Atigrado. Today a registered Spanish Jennet Horse is a predicable reflection of his historic predecessor.

The Spanish Jennet sports an exotic patterned coat in full spectrum of the usual colors of horses, however, the grey gene is not allowed. The Spanish Jennet is heir to the stylish smooth gait and distinctive conformation of the modern day Paso Horses.

Show Terminology

Affiliated and Sanctioned

A FOSH **affiliated** show uses a DQP provided by the FOSH HIO

A FOSH **sanctioned** uses the IJA rules as the standard for judging.

Age

- Juvenile, Junior or Youth Exhibitors who have not turned 18th as of January 1st ..
- Horses become one year older on January 1st,

Amateur

A person who is 18 or over and is not considered a professional horseman.

DQP

(Designated Qualified Persons) USDA trained inspectors hired to enforce the Horse Protection Act.

Excused, Eliminated or Disqualified The entry is removed from the ring for rule infraction by the judge or the exhibitor.

Horse Protection Act (HPA)

The Horse Protection Act was enacted by Congress in 1970 in response to public concerns about soring of horses. Responsibility for enforcement of the HPA was given to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)

HIO

Horse Inspection Organization

In Hand

Horses are led rather than ridden. Classes may be **Halter** or Bella Forma where horses are judged on movement and conformation or **Model** where horses are judged on conformation. In

Showmanship, the handler is judged on their ability to "show" the horse

Junior Horse

A horse that is 5 and under.

Keg Shoe

Unaltered factory made shoe made of consistent material.

Lite Shod Shoe

May be manufactured or man made, but is no larger than ¾ inch wide and 3/8 inch thick.

Novice horse or rider

Horse or rider who have not won three blue ribbons.

Professionals

Those who are paid to train or ride horses, or buy, sell or deal in horses on a full time basis.

Shoes

Used for the protection of the hoof. They may be manufactured or handmade. **Caulks** or **turnbacks** - raised portions on the heel of the shoe. **Trailers** - any portion of the heel of the shoe that turns away from the shoe.

Soring

The practice of inflicting pain on the limbs of a horse for the purpose of accentuating its gait. This practice is abusive to the horse and unfair to ethical trainers.

The 1 Inch Shoe

May be manufactured or man made, but is no larger than 1 inch wide and ½ inch thick.

USDA

United States Department of Agriculture.

Working Trail Pleasure

Horses are suitable for use on trails that cover a variety of terrain.

TYPES OF CLASSES

Amateur Owned and Trained

Amateur owners and riders only: no professional training 120 days prior to the event.

Bred By and/ or Bred In Classes

Horses bred, trained, shown and owned by the exhibitor or a member of the immediate family

Country Pleasure

Horses that are suitable, safe and comfortable for an all day ride in the country.

Equitation

Equitation is the art of riding and cases are often called “good seat and hands”. The rider is judged rather than the horse. Usually Saddle Seat (English) or Stock Seat (Western) .

FOSH SOUND PRINCIPLES

The basic philosophy for any FOSH event including humane treatment and training, sound horses, natural way or going, shoeing for the protection of the foot, and adherence to the Horse Protection Act

OGB

Open Gaited Breed Classes - any Gaited Breed may enter and compete.

Open Classes

Horses of any age, size or sex, and with no limiting qualifications are eligible to enter.

Owners Class

Horses exhibited by the owner or a member of the immediate family

Pleasure Classes

Horses are a pleasure to ride. They are alert, willing, calm, responsive, and smooth with good manners. Classes may be English, Western, Classic, Trail Pleasure,

Sound

A horse healthy in body and mind.

Trail Pleasure

Horses are suitable for use on groomed trails or bridle paths.

Versatility

A variety of classes including Trail Obstacle, Reining, Water Glass, Dressage, Over Fences, Barrel Racing, Pole Bending, Western Riding, Pleasure Driving etc.

Way of Going

The way a horse moves.

WHAT THE JUDGE IS LOOKING FOR – a general perspective

FOSH shows and IJA judges reward natural Pleasure gaited horses. Movement is forward going and appears natural for the conformation of the horse. Any artificial way of going, lack of forward movement or “laboring” will be penalized or eliminated. Horses are evaluated on way of going and how well they horse fits the description of the ideal horse for the class. All horses are pleasure horses and demonstrate the qualities of a pleasure horse. All gaits performed are as specified for the specific breed.