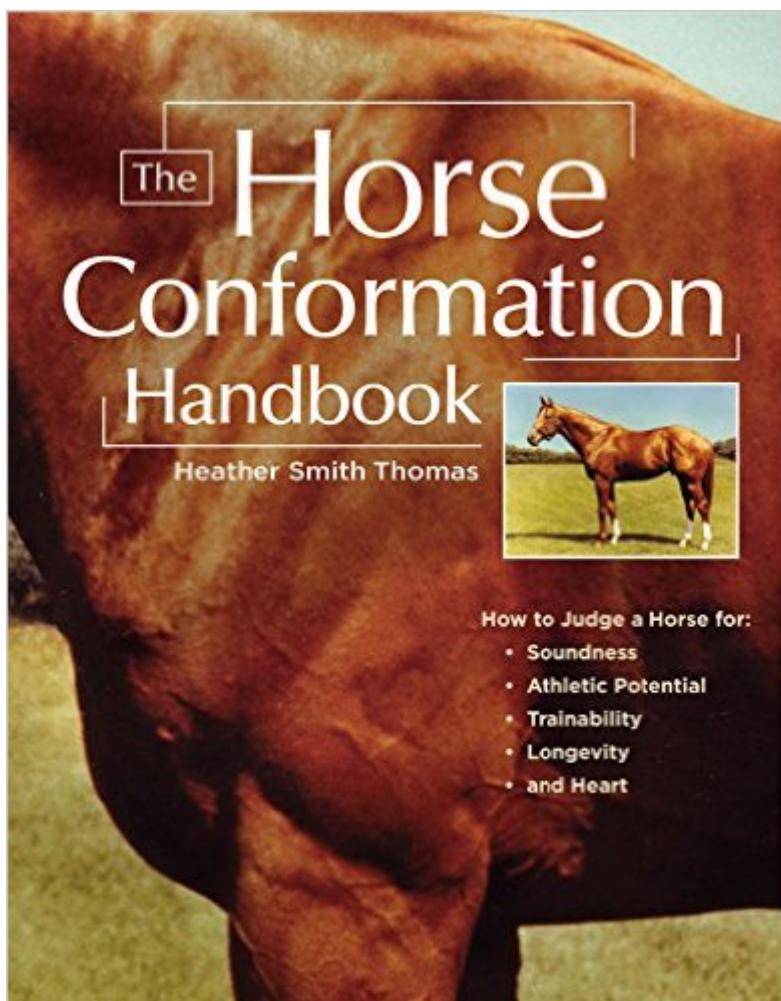


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# The Horse Conformation Handbook



## Synopsis

Horses with good conformation move fluidly, experience less wear and tear on joints, and are more apt to stay fit. Explaining how conformation relates to structure and function, Heather Smith Thomas shows you how to identify a horse's desirable attributes and potential faults. You'll learn to train your eye to see past an animal's physical beauty and recognize proper balance, leg angles, and height as you confidently select horses that have superior durability, trainability, and athletic potential.

## Book Information

Paperback: 400 pages

Publisher: Storey Publishing, LLC (March 15, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1580175589

ISBN-13: 978-1580175586

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.9 x 10.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars (See all reviews) (53 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #358,054 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #314 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Pets & Animal Care > Horses > Riding #321 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Individual Sports > Horses > Equestrian #493 in Books > Science & Math > Agricultural Sciences > Animal Husbandry

## Customer Reviews

At first glance this looks like it might be a very impressive book. It is. However, there were a couple of areas which are of significant interest to me, and I'm afraid to say the explanations in the book disagreed with my opinion and explanation of them drastically. By and large I'll say the book is very, very good, and is worth having, but it leaves me wondering if the author might have made other errors than the ones I picked up in my first two pages of reading... I hope & guess not. I'm talking specifically about where the draught/draft horses are mentioned. She tends to group all draught/draft breeds together too often, without recognising that the clydesdale was developed to have certain features totally different from the average of other farm draft breeds. I.e. a good sloping shoulder is VERY important, whereas she says it's OK for the draughts to have a straighter more upright shoulder. She calls the 'close behind' stance or hock set of the clydesdale, 'cow hocked' which it is NOT! In a cow-hocked animal, the canons go outward from the hock to the ground, but in

a clydesdale the canon is vertical. This supports the hock properly and is correct. She says the draft breeds are generally longer bodied and short legged, with the body being deeper from wither to belly, than the leg length from belly to ground. WRONG! In a mature clydesdale, they should be equal in height/depth, and a 'long body' or back is detrimental.

This book is one of the most excellent to have if you want to understand conformation, and there are only a handful on the subject even worth having. I am usually disappointed with the quality and quantity of information in books on this subject and only rarely do I find one that is actually worth buying and this is one of them. It rivals the quality of Dr. Deb Bennett's "Principles of Conformation", usually regarded as the industry's standard on this subject, and it touches on some things that Bennett's books do not. I recommend both equally as they compliment each other very well. This author is a very experienced horse woman and author who has written several books on equines and many, many articles for various magazines. I've been familiar with her work for years and she is a thorough author. This book hits on equine anatomy and it does a good job of it. You have to have a handle on anatomy before you can understand conformation and this book takes the pains to explain the skeleton, the muscles, and even equine teeth before it really delves into explaining faults, and it does really delve into faults and it explains and illustrates them well. The Book is divided into 3 parts: Part 1. Anatomy and Principles of Conformation 2. Basic Anatomy 3. Head and Neck Conformation 4. The Teeth 5. Chest Conformation 6. Back Conformation 7. Foreleg Conformation 8. Hindquarter Conformation 9. Foot Conformation Part II. Evaluating a Horse 10. Body Proportions 11. Body Angles 12. Height 13. How a Horse Moves 14. Athletic Ability 15. Type 16. Soundness 17.

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