

THE BRITISH RIDING PONY

Breed Description

The British Riding Pony is a breed, established over a hundred years ago, originally by the Polo Pony Stud Book Society in 1893. However, a few years later it became the National Pony Society and to this day it is the custodian of the Stud Book. The Stud Book was formed to encourage the breeding, registration and improvement of both Riding ponies and at that time all the native breeds too, though they now have their own stud books.

The foundation blood lines of all the British Riding Ponies were Polo Ponies, Thoroughbreds, Arabs and the British Native Breeds (mostly Welsh or Dartmoor). An increasing number of the ponies now being registered with the NPS are the progeny of British Riding Pony sires and dams and through many generations of selective breeding a very high standard has been achieved.

British Riding Ponies are of three categories or types – Show Ponies, Show Hunter Ponies and Sports/Competition Ponies. The Sports Ponies result from cross breeding with Sport Horses or Ponies.

All types have outstanding quality while retaining the pony characteristics of good temperament, hardiness, soundness and surefootedness. They provide an ideal mount for today's competitive riders and are successful in a wide variety of equine competitions and disciplines.

The British Riding Pony is much respected and sought after world wide and some of the best blood lines have been exported, predominantly to Australia, New Zealand and America.

Item	Show Pony	Show Hunter Pony	Sports/Competition Pony
General Description	The Show Pony should have elegance, quality and refinement but be of true pony character. Show Ponies should have a long, low, sweeping, floating action from the shoulder and cover the ground with effortless ease. The Show Pony should look like a scaled down version of the show hack	The Show Hunter Pony should combine quality with bone and substance. It must display a workman-like appearance while still retaining show-ring quality. It should be sure footed and have a strong, effective action and be capable of giving a good day's hunting. It should resemble a scaled down version of the Middleweight Hunter.	The Sports Pony should have the structure, quality, bone, substance and movement expected of a really high class competition animal for dressage, jumping or eventing whilst retaining pony characteristics. Sports Ponies should have an athletic action and purposeful way of going.
Height	Up to 148 cms	Up to 153 cms	Up to 158 cms
Colour	All colours are allowed	All colours are allowed	All colours are allowed
Head	An alert intelligent outlook. A slightly dished / chiseled outline, refined under the throat-line is preferred. The head should be well set on the neck, having good flexion at the poll.	A good honest head with a good width of forehead, still showing pony characteristics but size in proportion to the body. The head should be well set on the neck.	An alert intelligent outlook with a good width of forehead. The head should be well set on the neck, having good flexion at the poll.
Eyes	Bold, intelligent.	Bold, intelligent.	Bold, intelligent.
Ears	Neat and small	Neat and in proportion to the head	Alert, need not be small.

Item	Show Pony	Show Hunter Pony	Sports/Competition Pony
Neck & Shoulder	Long sweeping refined neck set on to a well laid back shoulder giving a good length of rein and a good prominent riding wither.	Plenty of length in front of the saddle with a sloping shoulder, a good length of rein and a good prominent riding wither. The neck should be long but not swan-like and may be deep as it comes out of the shoulder.	Long yet strong neck set on to a well laid back shoulder giving a good length of rein and a good prominent riding wither.
Body	Good depth of girth, deep heart room. The wither just be clearly defined and the back strong, not long, with enough scope to carry a saddle. A good length of quarter and a well set on tail, carried gaily.	Substantial body with a frame and limbs in proportion to it. The wither must be clearly defined and the back strong, not long, with enough scope to carry a saddle. A good length of quarter and the tail should be carried in a relaxed position such that, when viewed from behind at the walk, it swings like a pendulum from side to side.	Good depth of girth, deep heart room. The wither must be clearly defined and the back strong, not long, with enough scope to carry a saddle. A good length of quarter.

Item	Show Pony	Show Hunter Pony	Sports/Competition Pony
Limbs	Limbs with quality bone in proportion to the body. Good broad, flat knees; short flat cannon bones and fetlock joints large enough to stand ridden work. Fore limbs neither back of the knee nor over at the knee. The hind legs to have a strong second thigh and good, clean hocks. The pastern should be sloping. Show Ponies should have open feet.	Plenty of good strong quality hard bone which shows no sign of roundness. Sufficient substance to carry a deep and compact body. Joints should be large in size and flat in aspect. Fore limbs neither back of the knee nor over at the knee. Show Hunter Ponies should have strong second thighs, clean hocks, and an open foot. All of the above provide hardy limbs suitable for workmanlike use.	Sufficient quality bone in proportion to the body, flat knees, strong second thighs, clean hocks, sloping pasterns and an open foot. Fore limbs neither back of the knee nor over at the knee and upright pasterns should be penalized. All of the above are required for a variety of competition work.

Item	Show Pony	Show Hunter Pony	Sports/Competition Pony
Action	Free, low to the ground, flowing, extravagant action, straight from the shoulder. A good length of stride and engagement of the hocks. All movement should be balanced, straight and true.	Correct and workmanlike movement with good engagement of the hind quarters but without the extravagance of the Show Pony in front. The movement should come from the shoulder and not the elbow and have slightly more knee elevation than the Show Pony. This type of action suits the rough terrain of the hunting field.	Free, athletic, straight movement from the shoulder. A good length of stride and engagement of the hocks. Good natural balance and rhythmical movement showing plenty of impulsion. Versatile impression overall.
Performance	The show pony should demonstrate a light and obedient way of going with easy transitions through its paces. While the gallop is not an essential, the show pony should show an extension in canter.	The show hunter pony should be forward going and workmanlike in its attitude, remaining obedient with easy transitions. The gallop is important and should show a change of rhythm to four time, a lowering of the body and a lengthening of the stride. It should come easily back to hand as it comes back to canter.	Depending on the discipline for which it is destined, the sports/competition pony must demonstrate athletic ability and obedience at all times with elevated paces in front and strong action behind. If required it must be able to perform a dressage test or over jumps.