

# Purebred Spanish



The Studbook for the Pure Spanish Horse (Pura Raza Espanola) was formed in 1973 with the entry of the original horses imported from Spain. All horse in this Studbook must trace back in an unbroken line to horses registered in the Stud Book of Spain. As of 2003, all horses must be microchipped, DNA tested and Parent Validated to enter this Studbook. All horses exhibited at AHAA National or State Championships and at Agricultural Shows throughout Australia must be registered in the Pure Spanish Stud Book of the AHAA.

The records of the Pure Spanish Studbook of the AHAA were used by Spanish Authorities to dual register some Pure Spanish Horses in the Stud Book of Spain. Horses dual registered in the Stud Book of Spain are commonly referred to as PRE (Pura Raza Espanola). In Australia there is no difference between these horses and those carrying registration in the Stud Book of the AHAA. They are all recognized in Australia as Pure Spanish Horses.

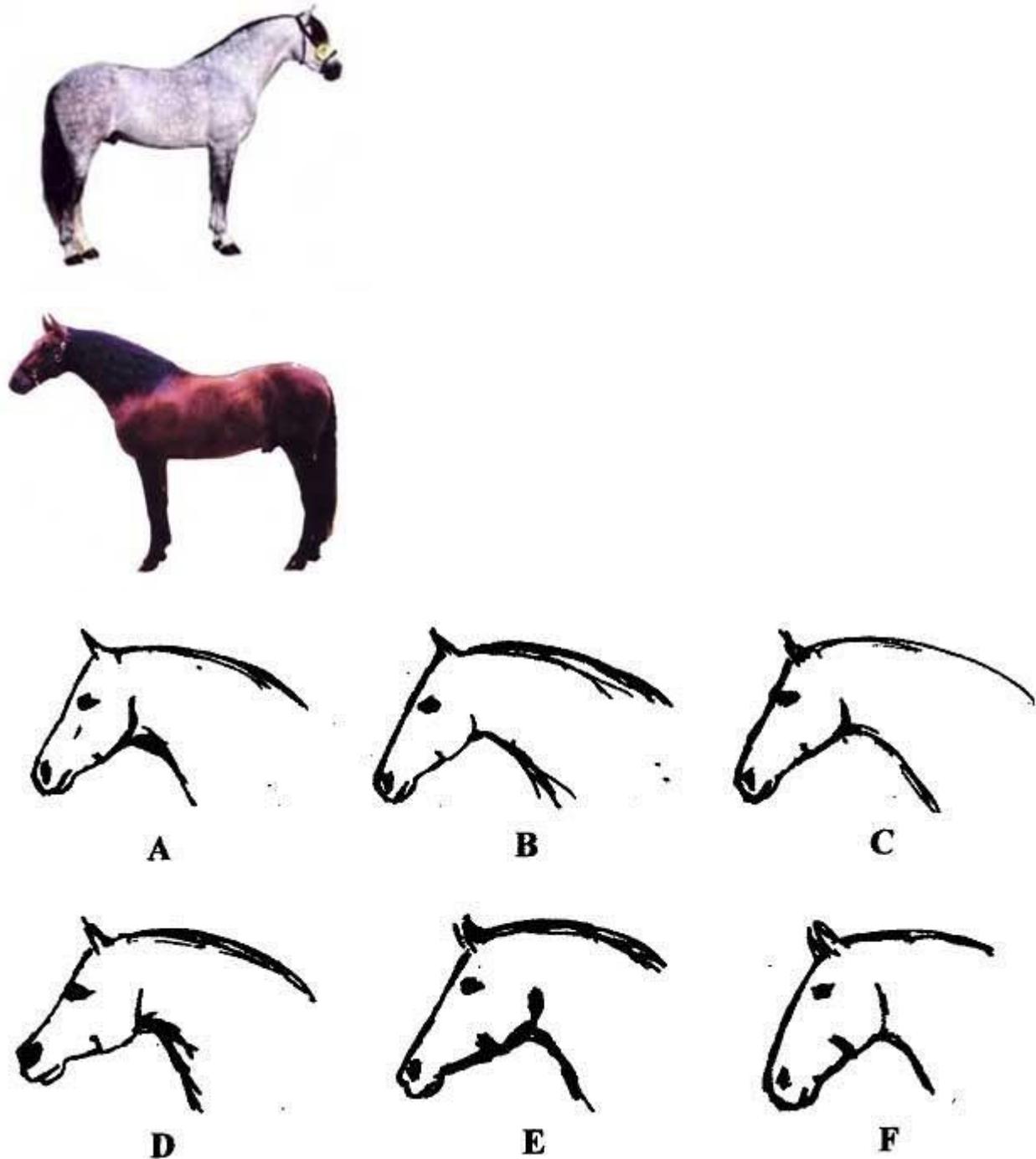
## PROTOTYPE

Overall, the model of the Spanish horse is an animal of great beauty and harmony, no matter the age of the horse. The average height of the horse is between 15.2 hands and 16.2 hands. The height, when measured at 3 years, should be a minimum of 15 hands for stallions and 14.3 hands for mares. Potential breeders should bear in mind that the mating of two horses of minimum height can and will produce horses of less than 14.3 hands.

The Spanish Horse, when viewed in profile, should present a series of curves, with no harsh or acute angles, exhibiting both strength and substance, while at no time becoming coarse. Handsome rather than pretty is the adjective that should be used. The horse should have great presence, but a calm and controlled disposition, and the coat should be fine, the mane and tail thick and silky, with clean legs and no feathering. The body is of balanced conformation, well proportioned with a straight or sub-convex profile, fluid, elastic movements, considerable elevation and extension, and acute facility for collection. The coat colours allowed are grey, bay, brown, black, chestnut and dilute (bucks skin, cremello, perlino or dun) with no broken colours allowed (eg. pinto, appaloosa).

The Pure Spanish horse has a great gift for learning a variety of competition styles, with a special talent for collection and for turning on the haunches. It responds easily to command and exhibits a rapid and intense understanding of the rider. Their principle function is as a

riding horse, with great aptitude for High School performance, but they are excellent light harness horses, have a natural ability as stock horses, and a potential for show jumping where agility and a good leap are needed on tight courses.



The Head is of medium length, lean and rectangular, with a straight or sub-convex profile. The ears are of medium size, lively and flexible. The length of the ears has direct correlation to the length and convex nature of the head, (eg. smaller straighter profile medium; longer more convex profile larger) however too large, too small, or lop ears are undesirable. The forehead is of medium width and when in profile should be rounded or flat. The eyes are triangular or

almond shaped, with a subtle orbital arch which should not protrude in front of the forehead when in profile. The nose is smoothly curved outward & down to a tapered muzzle, with nostrils that are long, comma shaped and not prominent. The cheeks are of medium size, lean, not fleshy or coarse, with the back edge being straight rather than rounded. The examples of profiles drawn above would be classified as follows:

A. An example of sub concave profile with slightly rounded forehead and nose. Inc orrect

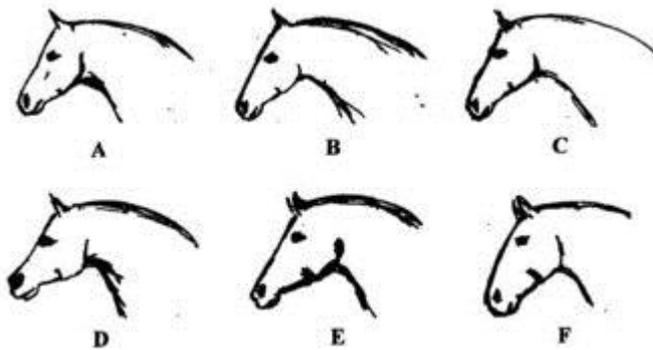
B. Straight or convex profile, more convex would be acceptable, tapering to excellent muzzle. Correct

C. The nose and muzzle are almost perfect but orbital arch protrudes in front of forehead. Marginal

D. Concave profile, large round nostrils, square muzzle, round cheek. Incorrect

E. Straight profile, but no tapering nose, small square muzzle, large round cheek. Incorrect

F. Convex profile but large fleshy muzzle, small mouth and coarse jaw line. Marginal



The neck of the Spanish horse is of medium length, describing a continuous curve on the upper edge the apex of that curve occurring in the middle of the neck. The lower edge of the neck should be either concave or straight, but never convex. The throat should be long, curving into the jaw rather than narrow and short, this making abrupt join with the head. The upper edge of the neck should be of greater length than the lower, and the neck must blend smoothly into the wither with no depression, known as hatchet stroke, and the lower edge should not be set too low, so it comes out of the chest at a clearly defined angle. The withers are wide and muscular and well defined, blending into a back that is well muscled, straight and uninterrupted. A sway back is a serious fault. The shoulders, as with any good riding horse, should be long and

sloping, and the angle can be determined when viewed from the side by drawing an imaginary line from the centre point of the wither to the point of the shoulder.

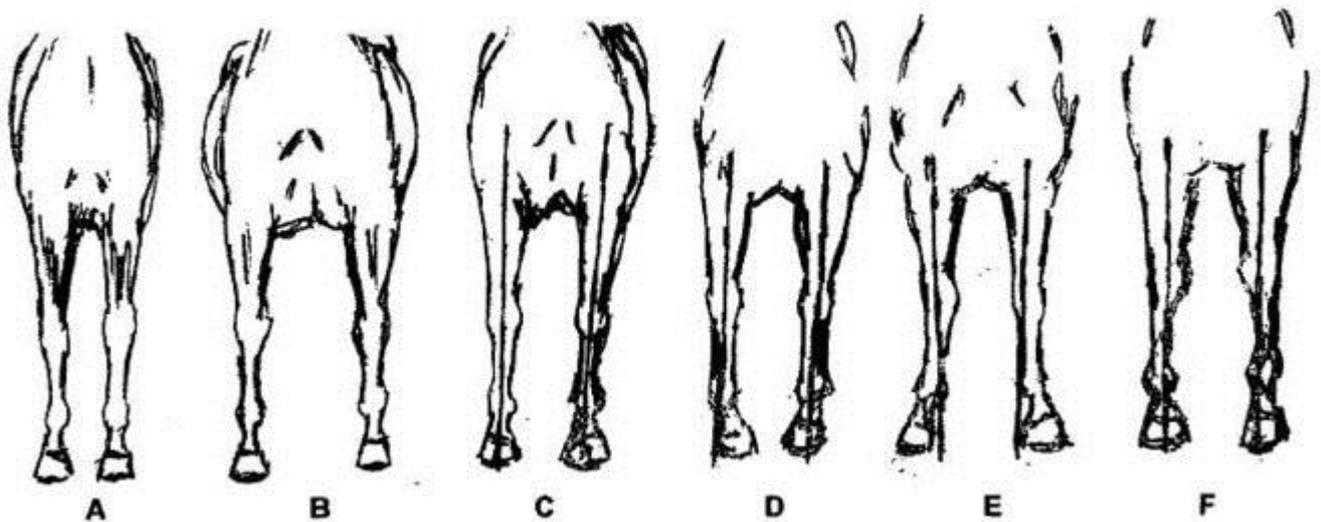
A. Good topline blending smoothly with wither, good throat, and concave lower line. Correct .

B. Same as A but this with a straight lower line. Correct.

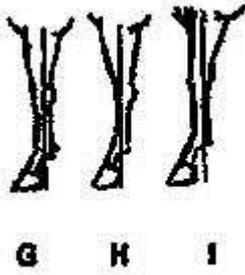
C. Swan or Ewe neck, convex lower line, large curve before wither. Incorrect.

D. Straight or pyramid neck with curve sharply occurring at poll, resulting in tight throat. Marginal.

E. Topline displaying hatchet stroke in front of wither, convex lower edge, tight throat. Incorrect.

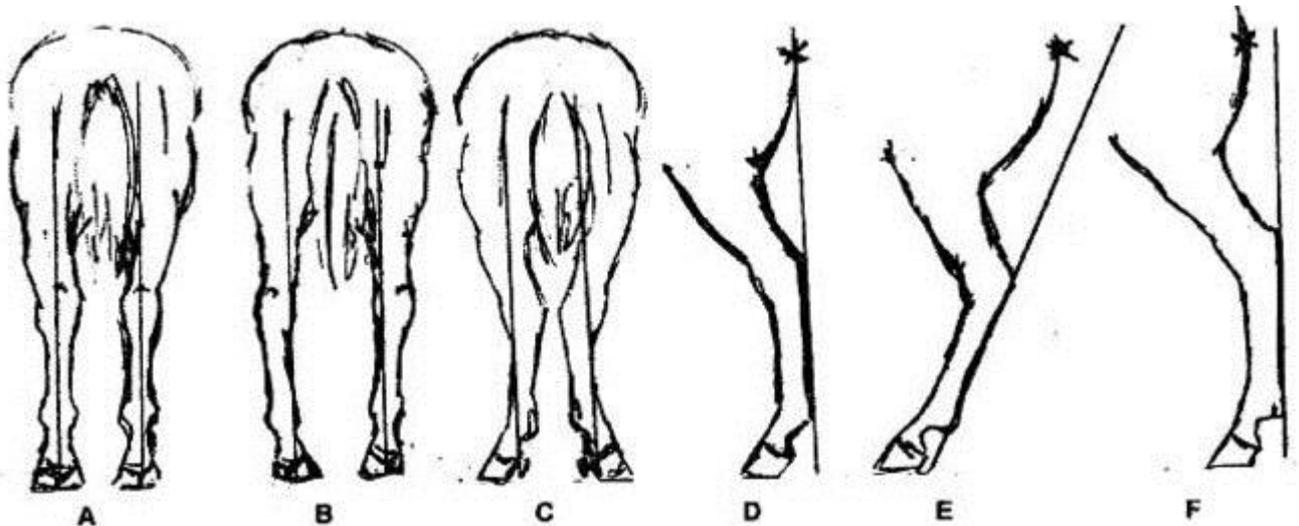


The Spanish horse is substantial and robust, but not Mr Universe. The chest, when viewed from the front, should be broad with a decent width between the forelegs; the ribs well sprung and just visible on either side of the shoulders. The forelegs should be well developed with good bone, with all joints being dry and lean, not bulging or fleshy. The medium length pastern should have an angle of approx. 47 degrees. The hooves are dense, strong, with a slightly deeper heel than many breeds, and should never be broad and flat with weak heels. When viewed from the front, an imaginary line dropped from the point of the shoulder to the ground should dissect the leg into two equal halves. Similarly, when viewed from the side, a line should be dropped from the middle of the foreleg to the middle of the fetlock touching the ground just behind the heel.



The drawn examples would be classified:

- A. Narrow chest and flat ribs
- B. Chest too wide and barrel ribs
- C. Correct chest, ribcage and legs
- D. Knees bowed and pigeon toed
- E. Knock kneed and toed out
- F. Offset cannon bones
- G. Line dissects knee, cannon & fetlock - Correct
- H. Calf kneed
- I. Over at knee





**H**

The buttocks are of medium length, gradually following the roundness marked by the croup. The thigh should be muscular, descending to a large gaskin, and then to a broad clean hock, set on at an angle of around 100 degrees. A straight hock is undesirable in the Spanish horse. The cannon bone, tendons and fetlock should be broad and clean and the pastern should have an angle of around 52 degrees. The hind hoof is less rounded and narrower than the front hoof. When viewed from behind an imaginary line is drawn from the point of the buttock dropping vertically to the ground. And then, from the side imagine a line continuing up from the back of the cannon bone towards the buttocks.

The diagrams tell the story:

A. Correct line dissects hock, cannon, fetlock, and hoof.

B. Bow legged and toed in

C. Cow hocked.

D. Correct line clearly meets point of buttock. (G & H are also correct The horse can be standing under himself or stretched out the line still meets the point of the buttock)

E. Sickle hocked will lack strength and extensions may suffer

F. Camped out will find it difficult to bring the hind leg under the body for true collection.



**A**



**B**



**C**



**D**



**E**

The hindquarter of the Spanish horse is probably the most important aspect of this breed. Coming out of a straight back the loin should be short, wide and well muscled, either horizontal or slightly arched and join in a smooth curved line to the croup. The croup is of moderate size, long and wide, but slightly longer than it is wide. The whole progression from back to tail should be of a continuous smooth line, with no projections, lumps or bumps. The tail begins about midway on the slope of the croup (commencing at the same height as the hip bone) and remains close to the body, sloping with the angle of the croup. The hip is set quite low in regard to the spine, and it is this that is the secret of the horses ability to lower his quarters and lift his forehead with the ease he does. The impression given from all angles should be a series of uninterrupted curves.

A. Correct hip set low & directly in line with tail set. Smooth line from back to tail no bumps.

B. Tail set too high will reduce horses ability to lower.

C. Tail set too low and the croup is too sloping. This may give the illusion that the horse is lowering, but the relationship between hip, pelvic girdle and stifle is unchanged, so it may restrict movement.

D. Hip & tail setting about right, but the length from the flank to the point of the buttock is too short, which will result in a lack of power, and will compromise the ability to lower.

E. Flat croup, & though the hip & tail are set on the same line the setting is far to high serious defect.



**A**



**B**



**C**



**D**

When viewed from behind the hindquarters should again be a continuous curve with no bumps or angular lines. Concave lines from backbone to hipbone denote weakness, and as indicated by the dotted lines in the above drawings, the relationship of the low set hip and tail to spine is clear. A split croup is another defect, because whilst giving the impression of a low set hip from the side (because of the mound of flesh sitting above it) it can be seen quite clearly as a high set hip and tail in relation to the spine. The deeper the split in the croup, the greater the defect.

A. Weak, mule hips concave lines from spine to hip

B. Correct continuous round line from one hip to another good low hip and tail setting both in line.

C. Split Croup not a Spanish characteristic - hip & tail set to high in relation to spine.

D. Hip and tail set too high - in fact, the same setting as for C, but the split croup appears to be lower, and certainly would from the side. Both C and D could be acceptable hindquarters for many breeds, but are not correct for a Spanish horse.



**A**



**B**



**C**

The movement of Spanish horse is very specific and for purposes here is being divided into front and hind, however when viewed as a whole they should never appear disconnected or disjointed. The horse should give the impression of moving uphill and forward, with the foreleg rising with bent knee to an almost horizontal position. The lower part of the limb then swinging forward with good extension, descending to the ground in an arc, with the toe pointing downwards and landing toe first, never the heel. The movement should be straight with no deviation either inwards or outwards. However, equal weighting should be given to elevation, extension and straightness. A horse that moves with great elevation and extension should be very highly marked, but a horse that sweeps the leg through with little or no knee bend, even with good extension and straight action should be heavily penalised. This is not Spanish

movement. A horse that has very high knee action but no extension, resulting in a choppy action, should also be penalised, as this flashy action quite often results in stilted action in canter. This action is quite often seen in specialised harness breeds. The Diagrams above are:

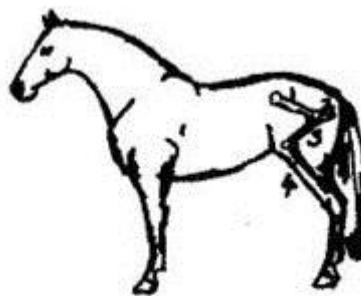
A. Good elevation but the position of the other foreleg suggests that it has reached the limit of its extension, and is about to descend vertically to the ground.

B. Good elevation and extension and is descending with the toe first if the movement is straight it is excellent.

C. Incorrect leg sweeping through with little or no knee bend, with the foot about to land heel first.



**D**



**E**



**F**

The hind leg is often said to have a good hock action, and this is a very misleading statement. The hock should actually stay quite low when the foot leaves the ground, the bend in the hock joint coming when the cannon bone lifts, and reaches forward under the body, again landing toe first, taking the weight of the body and moving it forward. What is quite often thought to be a good hock action is where the horse actually bends the stifle joint to lift the hock up and back. The stifle joint is a relatively fixed joint in that it has limited motion up or down, and can only be rotated in conjunction with the ilium, ischium and the femur, from which the fibula swings like a pendulum. A horse with this action will have to either bring the foot to ground at a point not much further forward than the stifle, with all the movement happening out the back ; or physically raise his hindquarters to allow the leg to pass underneath his body, effectively moving on to the forehand. Neither result has any place in the movement of the Spanish Horse. The diagrams above are:

D. Correct movement - hock swinging forward and lower limb reaching forward under the body.

E. Diagram showing placement of - 1. Ilium 2. Ischium 3. Femur 4. Fibula

F. Incorrect movement hock swinging up, out and behind the horse.