

SPANISH BARB HORSE ASSOCIATION

Breed Standard



The breed standard for the Spanish Barb, just as the standard for any breed, is a criterion by which the individuals of the breed are judged. The standard also serves as a basis of comparison by which horses are measured for either acceptance and placement, or rejection, in relation to being numbered within the Registry. Every aspect of the breed standard has been designed to promote the IDEAL for the breed, an ideal by which the goal of complete restoration, in quality and excellence, will be attained.

The overall appearance of the Spanish Barb is one of balance, smoothness and depth of neck and body, roundness of hip, of short, clean legs and a well set, distinctively refined head.

Standard height of the Spanish Barb is 13.3 to 14.3 hands. A few individuals may mature slightly under or over but will not represent the norm.

All colors are found within the breed: dun, grulla, chestnut, black, bay, roan and paint (overo, tobiano and sabino), as well as color variants.

The head is distinctively Spanish in type: lean, refined and well formed, averaging 19-22 inches from the poll to any imaginary line across the top of the nostrils, with a broad, flat forehead. The profile is straight or slightly convex. The ears are short to medium, curved inward and slightly back at the tips, measuring from 5 to 5 ½ inches in stallions and ½ inch longer in mares. The eyes are set well forward on the head are primarily brown but blue eyes occur occasionally. A prominent bone structure above the eye is characteristic. The muzzle is refined, short and tapered, being set off by a shallow mouth and firm lips. The nostrils are crescent shaped and of ample size for air intake when enlarged during exertion.

The chest is strong, medium in width and sufficiently muscles inside the forearm to form an arch. The ribs are well-sprung, never slab-sided and the heart girth is deep, varying from 67 to 74 inches in circumference, depending on the height and overall size of the horse. The shoulder is well-angled and in balance with the back and heart girth.

The back is short and strong, in proportion to the length of the shoulder, forelegs and depth of girth. The loin is short, straight, strong and full. The croup is round and sufficiently full in width and length to be in balance with the body. The hindquarters are not heavily muscled. The flank is deep. The tail set is medium to low.

The legs are straight, strong and well formed with long muscling in the forearms and thighs, and with short, clean cannons. The bone is dense. The circumference of the front cannons average 7 ¼ to 7-7/8 inches. During the summer the feathering is either lacking or curled tightly against the lower leg. The joints are well developed, strong and free of excess flesh. Chestnuts on the front legs should be small, smooth and not protruding. Chestnuts, when they appear on the hind legs, should be extremely small and flush with the leg. Ergots are either lacking, very small or appear more as a callous. The pasterns are strong, medium in length and slope and have good flexibility which contributes to the smoothness of the gaits. The hooves are ample and well-shaped, with an excellent frog formation and thick walls which are extremely hard.

Under normal conditions the mane, forelock and tail are quite long and full. An exceptionally full mane will sometimes fall naturally on both sides of the neck.

The classic style characteristic to the Spanish Barb and all Iberian/Barb descended breeds is displayed by their natural carriage, action, intelligence and temperament under saddle. These somewhat elusive traits remain an important part of their heritage and appeal and are basic to the successful restoration of the breed.