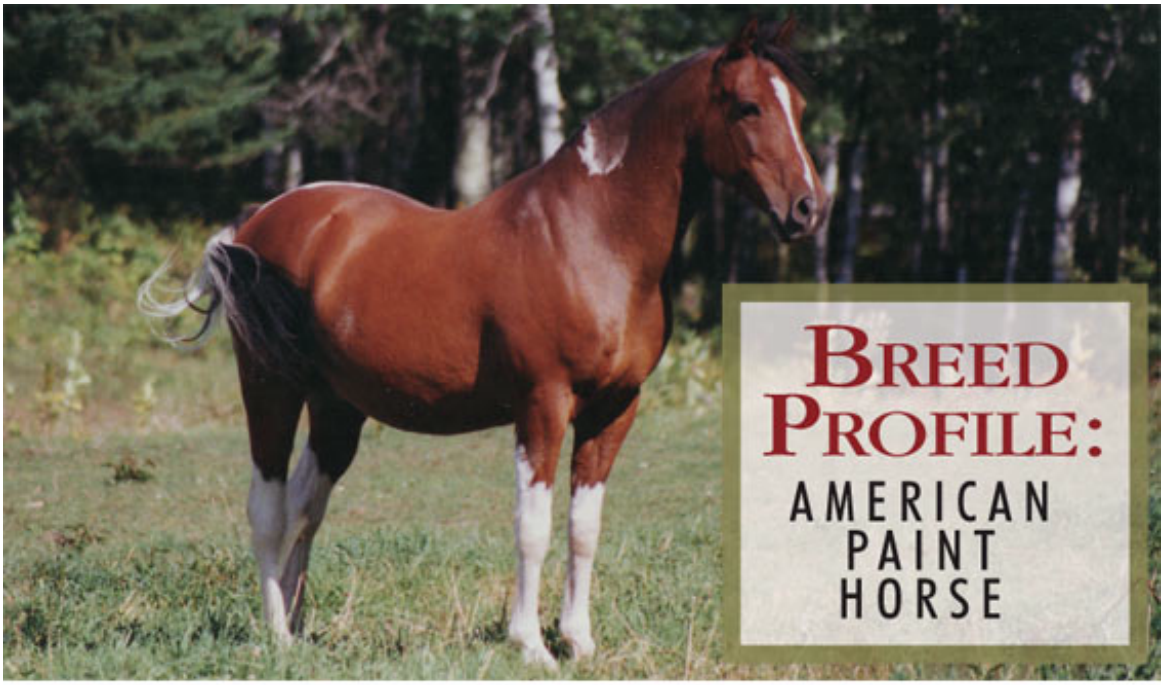
American Painted Horse

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



American Paint Horses are known for their unique, beautiful markings. But it is their history as favored mounts of the American West, their distinctive and well-muscled build, and their willing disposition that have made them icons of the horse world. In fact, with their unparalleled intelligence and versatility it is easy to see why Paints are favored for nearly every facet of farm life, competition, and pleasure riding.

Interesting Facts:

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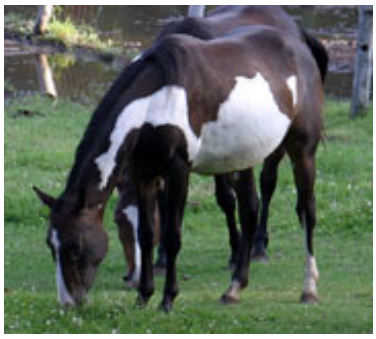
History & Origins:

American Paint Horses have a long and storied past. It is believed they descended from horses first brought to the New World in the early 1500s by Spanish conquistadors. Early Paints then joined the wild herds of Western America. They soon captured the fancy of American Indians, who revered the Paint's peculiar patterns and strong conformation. Eventually, Paints were used to forge the settlements and cattle ranches of the West. Though their colorful coat pattern is the breed's identity, modern Paints have strict bloodline requirements and a distinctive stock-type conformation. Registry with the American Paint Horse Association (APHA) requires a Paint's sire and dam be registered with either the APHA, the American Quarter Horse Association, or the Jockey Club (Thoroughbreds). In addition, at least one of their parents must be registered with the APHA. Today, Paints are consistently ranked as one of the most popular horses in the world, thanks to a combination of conformation, beauty, willing disposition, and intelligence.

Size:

The average Paint stands 14.2 to 16 hands (58" to 64") high. However, there are no height requirements for registration with the APHA.

Color & Markings:



American Paint Horses are, in part, defined by their colorful coat patterns. Their white coats are combined with various markings of black, bay, brown, chestnut, dun, red dun, grullo, sorrel, palomino, buckskin, gray, blue roan, bay roan, red roan, perlino, or cremello. These markings can be found anywhere on the body, in any size or shape. However, Paint Horse color combinations and patterns fall into three basic patterns - tobiano, overo, or tovero. A tobiano has a solid colored and possibly marked head, four at least partially white legs, and oftentimes a two-color tail. Also, the white usually crosses the topline. An overo features bold head markings, scattered and irregular body

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	features bold head markings, scattered and irregular body patches, between one and four dark legs, and a usually singly-colored tail. The white usually does not cross the topline. A tovero is any combination of tobiano and overo patterns. It usually features varying-sized spots at the chest, flank, and tail base with dark pigmentation around the ears and mouth, as well as at least one blue eye.
Physical Appearance:	Paint Horses are built for versatility and maneuverability. As such, they are well-balanced and muscular with a broad chest, powerful hindquarters, and a low center of gravity. However, Paints also display a refined sense of beauty about the head and neck.
Temperament:	In addition to striking beauty and athleticism, Paints are intelligent, calm, and willing. Because of this, most of are easily trained, handled, and kept. They are equally composed under saddle, in the competition ring, and on the riding trail, which makes them an ideal horse for most riders.
Unique Characteristics:	American Paint Horses are a unique combination of beauty, strength, and grace. When combined with their intelligence and willingness to please, it is easy to see why Paints are so popular the world over. Their versatility suits them for dressage, driving, jumping, ranch work, showing, and English, western, or trail riding. Add the unique and colorful coat combination of each horse into the mix and the result is a truly individual horse poised to please any enthusiast.

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