

Thoroughbred

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BREED PROFILE: THOROUGHBRED HORSE

The fastest of all horses, Thoroughbreds are known as the royalty of horse racing. In fact, these strong, graceful bundles of energy have fascinated horse enthusiasts since their racing debut centuries ago. But Thoroughbreds have also shown their versatility in nearly every equestrian competitive event. From show jumping to steeplechase, dressage to hunting, and Olympic events to everyday trail rides, Thoroughbreds have come to represent the spirit and beauty of all horses for both equine enthusiast and everyday admirer.

Interesting Facts:

History & Origins:

Modern Thoroughbreds trace their roots to three foundation stallions in 17th Century Britain. These three stallions - the Darley Arabian, Godolphin Arabian, and Byerly Turk, each named for their owners - were imported into England to breed with select, native racing stock. The result was a strong, fast horse that could work extended distances. This powerful, yet graceful, breed quickly became the favored race horse in England, America and, eventually, around the world.

Size:

Stands 15 to over 17 hands (60" to over 68") high.

Color & Markings:

Thoroughbreds exhibit a range of solid coat colors. The most prominent colors include bay, brown or dark bay, chestnut, black, and gray. Less common colors include roan, palomino and, very rarely, white. Thoroughbreds may be marked with stars, blazes, stockings, or socks; however, white markings generally do not appear on the horse's body.

Physical Appearance:	Bred for stamina, athleticism, and speed, Thoroughbreds are the embodiment of physical strength. They have well chiseled heads with widely spaced, intelligent eyes. Their necks are long, withers high, and chests deep. Their well defined stature continues through an evenly curved back, lean, muscular body, and clean, long legs. In fact, due to their physical stature, Thoroughbreds have been used throughout their relatively short history to add speed and refinement to the stock of many horse breeds.
Temperament:	Thoroughbreds are "hot-blooded" racehorses bred to be spirited and bold. As such, few suit riders without the experience and confidence necessary to channel this breed's energy. However, for the intermediate to advanced rider, the smooth, flowing, and powerful gait of a Thoroughbred often proves to be the ultimate - and incomparable - ride.
Unique Characteristics:	The strong physique of Thoroughbreds allows them to reach speeds up to 40 miles per hour. But this elegant breed also exhibits a profound amount of grace and courage under saddle. As a result, they are suited for a variety of disciplines beyond the racetrack, including eventing, show jumping, dressage, barrel racing, and polo. Their versatility and intelligence also makes them the preferred mounts of police departments, recreational riders, and horse enthusiasts the world over.