

Task 1: Research the animal; that is the focus of our class text. Using both the research pack provided as well as your own research to collate notes to use in your non-chronological report. Use the following sub-headings to help with your note taking.

Horses- Introduction

How do you look after horses?

What do horses eat?

Why were horses used during World War 1?

What were they used for?

Key words

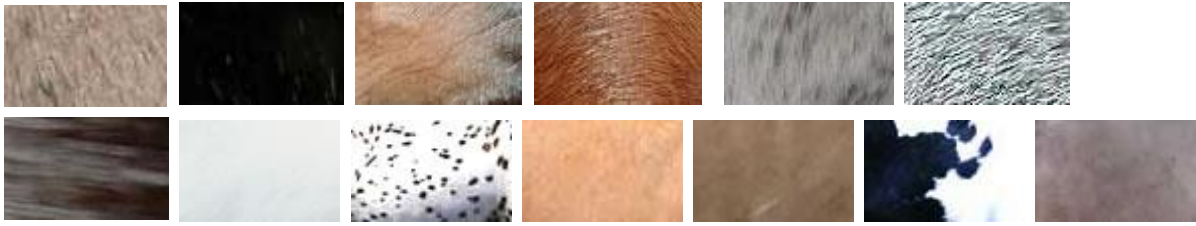
Horses

A **Horse** (*Equus caballus*) is a large odd-toed ungulate mammal, one of ten modern species of the genus *Equus*. *Equus* comes from the ancient Greek word meaning quickness. Horses are mammals in the same family as zebras, mules and donkeys.

Most breeds of horses are able to perform work such as carrying humans on their backs or be harnessed to pull objects such as carts or plows. However, horse breeds were developed to allow horses to be specialized for certain tasks. Lighter horses were bred for racing or riding, heavier horses for farming and other tasks requiring pulling power. Some horses, such as the miniature horse, can be kept as pets.

The horse plays a prominent role as a figure in the ideals of religion and art and plays an important role in transportation, agriculture and warfare. Horses also feature in stories about mythological creatures - like Pegasus for example.

Horses come in lots of different colours and shades - take a look at some of these colours below:



HORSE LIFE SPAN

Depending on breed, management and environment, the domestic horse today has a life expectancy of 25 to 30 years. It is uncommon, but a few horses live into their 40s and occasionally, beyond. The oldest verifiable record was 'Old Billy', a horse that lived in the 19th century to the age of 62. In modern times, Sugar Puff, who had been listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the worlds oldest then-living pony, died at age 56.

Regardless of a horses actual birthdate, for most competition purposes, horses are considered a year older on January 1 of each year in the northern hemisphere and August 1 in the southern hemisphere. The exception is endurance riding, where the minimum age to compete is based on the horses actual calendar age.

HORSE HOOVES

Horses that work or travel on hard roads need their feet (hooves) protected by metal shoes. Horses hooves, like our finger and toe nails, also grow continuously and need to be trimmed. To do this, the horses shoes need to be removed and their hooves trimmed every 4 - 6 weeks. After trimming their hooves new shoes are fitted. The person who cares for a horses feet is called a blacksmith.

HOW HORSES ARE MEASURED

Horses are measured by the width of a human hand - 4 inches or 10 centimetres. Measurement is taken from the ground up to the withers, the highest point on the horses shoulder.

Horses in World War 1 Key facts

Here are some facts about how horses were used in WW1.

- At the start of [World War 1](#) horses were mainly used in cavalry units. However, as the war progressed, it became clear that horses were incredibly vulnerable to machine guns and artillery fire. The days of the cavalry charge were over!
- On the Western Front, cavalry forces weren't used extensively for very long after the fighting started, but they were used for longer on the Eastern Front.
- The armies of the Ottoman Empire included cavalry throughout the war, as did the British Army, particularly in the Middle East.
- Horses were more commonly used for logistical support - they were able to move well through mud and rough ground to carry messages, pull supply wagons, and move medical staff and the wounded and artillery.
- As the war went on, horses became more and more difficult to replace. Their value, from a purely economic and strategic stand point, outweighed the value of a soldier.



- The conditions faced by the horses used in World War 1 were very harsh. Many died of starvation, disease and exhaustion and many others died as a result of artillery fire.
- In order to satisfy the need for horses, Britain purchased horses from Australia, Argentina, the US and Canada. They were also bought from British citizens.
- In one day during the Battle of Verdun more than 7000 horses were killed.

- Over 1 million horses and mules were used by the British Army during World War 1.
- More than 400,000 of them were killed.
- At the end of the war, many horses were put down because they were ill or too old. Many healthy horses were sold to slaughterhouses or to the local population.
- Due to quarantine restrictions, horses shipped from Australia during the war couldn't be returned. Of the 130000 horses, only 1, a horse called Sandy, returned.
- After World War 1, the use of horses in war became less widespread. Tanks replaced cavalry.
- Alfred Munnings, a war artist, working in France in 1918, produced many drawings and paintings featuring the role of horses in the conflict.
- [Michael Morpurgo](#) wrote about a cavalry horse in World War 1 in his 1982 book [War Horse](#). It has since been adapted for the screen and stage.