

# Horse Breeds

## Why horses as characters matter

Travel is a distinct part of RPGs. Often times, player's mounts are all but forgotten in scuffles or when left at the mouth of a dungeon. We think that is a shame. Horses should be as special as magic items, having names and distinct appearances. They should almost be an NPC's of their own, with personalities, quirks, and good and bad behaviour.

Whenever your players are looking for a new steed or pack buddy, you can follow this guide. The first step is to figure out which breeds would be for sale in the region. You can use this guide to pick a distinct breed and roll for two random traits and a distinguishing feature. Or if you find a horse in the wild, you can roll a d20 to find out which breed it is.

We have a lot of love for non-horse mounts too (war dogs, reptiles, dire chickens...) and we plan on making rules for those as well, but these are all strictly horses.

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## Horse Breeds:

*Choose or roll 1d20 for a random breed.*

### Tinkers (Draft Horse)

Black and white with fluffy socks, stomping around with their strong and massive frames, Tinkers are a breed of

workhorses. Most well known for being used by the nomadic Freefolk to pull their carriages and carts.

- +2 strength and has triple the normal encumbrance limit (includes barding)

- They are stoic and will continue what they are doing regardless of happenings around them

### Meadowsteed (Riding Horse)

Meadowsteeds are a lean breed, bred specifically for fast travel over open planes. They always have a mixture of two or more colors woven through their hair.

+ When running in a straight path, Meadowsteeds can move 70 ft

- Their lean bodies lowers their carrying capacity to 400 lbs.

### Hestur (Riding Horse)

A small breed that knows how to traverse rougher terrain and keep speed. They are feisty creatures with quite some temperament for their condensed postures.

+ They ignore difficult terrain if their pace is "slow" (Special Travel Pace. Pg. 242-243 DMG)

- Smaller legs, horses base speed is 45.

### Vultanna (Draft Horse)

Vultanna horses don't come from a place with fields and foliage. And when there were no plants to eat, they turned to what was available: other creatures. Vultanna horses only eat meat- including other horses. Their front teeth are sharp, and their mouths open wider than normal horses, giving them an unsettling grin.

+ Vultanna horses gain a bite attack. +6 to hit. Reach 5 ft. *Hit:* (1d8+4) piercing damage

- Vultanna horses eat only meat. The fresher, the better. They are fickle, and will bite or eat any other creature they are not afraid of when hungry. If not properly fed, they've been known to chew through ropes- even chains- to free themselves to go hunting at night... or to eat their riders.

## **Dartmoor (Pony)**

A pony breed known for its ease and understanding. Often used to teach children how to ride, these ponies are active and think for themselves. They truly cooperate with their rider.

+ They navigate themselves very well through wilderness, giving the rider a +1 to non combat checks while in the wilderness

- Don't let them overeat. If they do, they will get grumpy and difficult (removing the +1)

## **Appaloosa (Riding Horse)**

These spotted horses, quirky and intelligent, and quite lovely on the eyes. Famous for their spotty fur in strange patterns. These horses are wild ones, wild and free.

+ Appaloosa get +2 to Intelligence and may learn a trick

- Prone to curiousness and escaping

## **Harlequin (Riding Horse)**

Headstrong and independent, harlequin horses know how to take care of themselves. Their coats have a shiny, almost mirror-like quality. This offers a minor reflection of the shapes and colors around them, allowing them to blend into their environments.

+ Naturally bred to survive in the wild, riders and their harlequin mount can attempt a stealth check while riding, but only add ½ their proficiency bonus to the check. They do so with disadvantage and only when the horse is at a walking pace or still. Without the rider, Harlequins get a +6 to stealth checks.

- They are not very domesticated and are prone to wandering off if unattended or unhappy

## **Ironbreed (Draft Horse)**

Bred to be even more useful in melee combat than an average horse, ironbreed horses are narrow with slender legs. This gives them the necessary ability to maneuver or change directions quickly, even when in tight spaces or flanked.

+ Ironbreed horses can move forward, to the side, turn around to move the opposite way, and change direction without taking any extra movement to slow or turn

- They can run normal speed, but they tire easily. When running for long periods at full speed, ironbreeds gain a level of exhaustion twice as quickly as a normal draft horse

## **Haflinger (Riding Horse)**

Haflingers are very tolerant breed with distinct personalities unique to each horse. Over time, they tend to mirror the caretaker's personality. Blond horses with white manes and tails, they are relatively small but extremely feisty.

+ Tolerant to unfamiliar or strange maneuvers. The rider gets a +2 when performing these checks

- Stubborn and aggressive, any attempt tried more than once in short succession adds +2 to the DC

## **Shire (Draft Horse)**

They are a large, strong breed, full of calm power and controlled energy. Perfect worker horses, with lovely socks. They generally tend to be dark coloured with lighter extremities.

+ They don't spook easily (advantage versus fear), and ignore the effects of the first exhaustion level

- They eat double the amount any other horse would

## **Friesian (Riding Horse)**

Friesian are dark, powerful horses with a tall frame, commanding presence, and a loving personality. They are black as the night, trustworthy, proud, and caring.

+ Excellent warhorse, can be trained for 20% less. They also add +1 to the rider's intimidation check when present.

- Mischievous at times, can be difficult to handle outside of danger (-2 to Handle Animal checks outside of combat).

## **Oskaru (Riding Horse)**

Oskaru horses have leaner legs and thicker knee joints than normal horses. While this was once a natural trait, selective breeding with particular horses made them powerful and agile jumpers, though they haven't lost their wild and independent personalities.

+ You have advantage on ride checks when performing a jump

- Oskaru horses will regularly disobey the rider in order to perform a jump. Requires a handle animal check to keep it on the right path

## **Gradamentis (Draft Horse)**

Whether touched by subtle magic or somehow natural leaders, gradamentis can sometimes influence the horses around them. A telltale sign a horse has this power is if the back third of its head is slightly larger than it should be.

+ When desired, you can make a handle animal check with disadvantage. Whatever task you have your horse perform, all horses within 20 ft must make a wisdom save against your handle animal check. If they fail, they perform that action as well

- Granamentis can understand the feelings of creatures around them. If the rider ever has negative feelings about the gradamentis, it will know and possibly refuse to obey its rider. They've also been known to hold a grudge

## **Garibald (Riding Horse)**

Garibald are a freewheeling and adventurous Breed. This slight, sinewy breed is an adept explorer and survivor. Fiercely independent and deeply intelligent, the Garibald will be sure to take you for a ride.

+ The Garibald makes Survival Checks to find Food or Water at a +5 Modifier. It also has a 14 Passive Perception, and if it detects danger, will emit a distinct but subtle rumbling sound.

- Every morning the Garibald will run at least one mile in a random primary direction. It requires a DC 12 Survival check to track. If restrained it will make an athletics or sleight of hand check once per night with a +2 modifier.

## **Akhal Teke (Riding Horse)**

Akhal Teke are golden horses from extreme environments and tribal conditions. They are extremely bonded to their riders, and vice versa their riders

shower them in rich gifts. They are lean and mean, often encased in jewelry that they enjoy wearing.

+ If necessary, they will act independently to preserve themselves or their owner. These horses are also fiercely loyal, defying whomever or whatever they can to be with their owner.

- They need to be adored and appreciated. They want expensive gifts, to sleep inside your tent, and to eat your food. If they do not feel appreciated, the rider can only use 1/2 their proficiency bonus when making checks with the horse until it changes its attitude.

## **Uantic (Pony)**

Uantic are an intelligent, social, and playful breed. They can be trained to perform non-combat tricks, though they will never be as proficient as a humanoid. You could teach one how to blow into a harmonica and hit a few bars, though it could not learn a whole song. It can put a brush in its mouth and paint a few lines that resemble an image.

+ Uantic can learn the very basics of a novelty (tap a cowbell in rhythm, play the shell game, do limited math, etc.)

- If it has been a day since they played, they will get bored and fight against their rider's commands until they play with them.

## **Lutalica (Riding Horse)**

All horses are born with the desire to run. These horses want more than to just run, they have a drive to explore. Their long legs allow them to run with ease and navigate new terrain.

+ Lutalica give their riders a +1 morale bonus to checks involving the horse for 24 hours after they enter a new location. These horses also gain advantage on saves against poison.

- Their bodies require a variety of food. If they eat the same feed two days in a row, they will suffer from irritable bowels and sluggishness.

## **Hisan (Riding Horse)**

Furious hotheads, they are bred for speed and sport. They are lean creatures, full of energy, and natural dancers.

+ Hisan breeds receive +2 to dexterity and can dash

- They are hot heads and expensive (They cost twice as much as a warhorse)

## **Telephorse (Riding Horse)**

This strange extra dimensional breed does not run. Instead, they travel by teleporting from one place to another in an instant. They will only teleport to a location they can see. These horses never walk unless it's necessary, opting to teleport even a few feet away to a new patch of grass. Their overly long manes flutter and fall after each teleportation.

+ A telephorse can teleport up to 60 feet in a round

- Since it can only teleport once per turn, if it teleports into the air, it will hit the ground before it can teleport again. It cannot teleport if it is in an anti-magic area. It can choose to teleport things on it (including the rider and saddle) or leave them behind, making them extremely difficult to capture and train

## **Shetlander (Pony)**

Imagine a full-blown, full-blooded horse. Now condense that into a pony. That is what a Shetlander is. They are tiny but they know no boundaries to what is not possible for them. Mostly used to pull carts or entertain children, only halflings actually use them to ride.

+ Nothing can keep them, whenever in danger it has +2 on any check to get away

- Uses the stats of a pony

## Traits

When picking a horse, take some time to get to know its personality. Some horses might be more or less favorable based on their behaviour. Roll 1d20 three times, once for a boon, once for a bane, and once for a distinct physical marker, all based on the tables below.

### Boons

*Each horse has something special.*

1. Brave: +1 to fear saves
2. Quick: +1 on dexterity saves
3. Jumpy: +1 to jump attempts
4. Fast Learner: -10% time to learn a trick or train as a warhorse
5. Quiet: Never makes a peep unless instructed
6. Energetic: +10 ft. speed when in gallop, natural leader of a herd.
7. Careful: riders needs no save when travelling through difficult terrain at half speed
8. Healthy as a horse: +5 base speed
9. Observant: +1 to notice checks
10. Attentive: Will adapt quickly based on the behavior of the rider when conditions change
11. Loyal: Faithfully returns to the rider, and will not take a stranger on its back unless asked to do so by said rider
12. Kindhearted: Will protect you if you fall off of it
13. Daring: +2 on never attempted checks
14. Calm: Gives other horses within 30 feet a +1 to following its lead
15. Playful: Willingly obeys and protects those who play with it
16. Steadfast: Can run for an hour longer without getting exhausted
17. Gorgeous: +1 charisma for the rider when near the horse
18. Prepared: +1 to rider's initiative

19. Clever: +1 intelligence, can learn a trick

20. Intimidating: It's size and posture gives the rider +1 to intimidate checks while mounted

## Banes

*Not all traits are desirable.*

1. Skiddish: -1 against fear saves
2. Slow: -1 to dexterity saves
3. Weak knees: -1 to jump attempts
4. Big eater: Eats twice as much as a normal horse (triple if the breed already has this trait)
5. Nervous: Whinnies loudly whenever nervous
6. Lazy: Stops working whenever the rider is off or not nearby, never wants to lead
7. Bully: Actively moves to attack downed creatures
8. Cripple: -5 base speed
9. Oblivious: -1 to notice checks
10. Stoic: Will continue last command regardless of conditions of the rider
11. Fat: Gets exhausted easier than other horses
12. Aquaphobe: Hates water, will work against rider when moving too close to it
13. Coward: Will run away when you fail an attempt to calm it down
14. Aggressive: Causes -1 to checks of other horses within 30 ft.
15. Allergic: The horse is allergic to insect bites. The rider will lose control of the horse if it is attacked by a monstrous insect.
16. Restless: Can't stand still
17. Smelly: -2 charisma on rider during travel days.
18. Overly trusting: Willing to trust almost anything that hasn't hurt it yet. -1 to any checks sensing danger
19. Stupid: -2 intelligence, cannot learn any tricks.
20. Destructive: Will destroy equipment when left alone

# Distinct physical features:

*What makes this horse look different?*

1. It has no mane, only a long scar across the top of its neck
2. It has one odd eye (lazy, different colour, etc.)
3. It has a strange whinny
4. It has an oddly shaped set of spots
5. It has a chip out of its ear/tail/mane
6. It's mane/tail have two different colours
7. It has different coloured feet
8. It has a nervous twitch
9. It is one solid color (mane, fur, hooves, tail), even if its breed calls for multiple colors
10. It snorts loudly quite often
11. It has a distinct pattern in its fur
12. It has a single identifying mark in its fur
13. It never walks properly. Instead, it dressages
14. One leg is shorter than the others, giving it an odd gallop
15. It has a brand on its back leg
16. It has over-sized haunches
17. It never stands completely still
18. It mimics laughter when it hears it
19. It has longer hair than most horses
20. It's fur is rough and patchy

And last, but more important than most things, your horses need names! Let the players figure it out, or have predetermined names when they are not wild. Horse names are generally based on those things that make them unique, whether ironic or not. Luckily you just generated at least three identifying features!

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*Thanks for being you.*