

DOMESTIC PONY

updated March 2017



Range	Worldwide (domesticated)
Habitat	Original habitats were cool, temperate grasslands, steppes, and savannas, but also semi-deserts, swamps, marshes, and woodlands
Diet (wild)	Grasses
Diet (captivity)	Hay and grains
Description	Height: less than 58 inches (14.2 hands); weight: 500–800 pounds. Compared to other horses, ponies often exhibit thicker manes, tails and overall coat, as well as proportionally shorter legs, wider bodies, thicker necks, and shorter heads with broader foreheads. Coats vary in color, from white to black and including reds, browns, and yellows, as well as a wide variety of patterns.
Lifespan	50 years
Reproduction	A female gives birth to a single offspring after a gestation period of 11 months. Foals are born in the spring, precocial and well-developed, usually able to stand within an hour of birth and walk within four to five hours. It takes females four to five years, and males six to seven years, to reach full reproductive maturity. Young males are labeled colts; young females are fillies.
Behavior	Ponies are generally considered intelligent and friendly, though sometimes they also are described as stubborn or cunning. The differences in opinion are often the result of an individual pony's degree or proper training. The eyes and ears of horses are especially suited for detecting danger. The flexible ears rotate 180 degrees independently of one another listening for the slightest sound of a predator. The eyes are situated high and on the sides of the head enabling horses to detect motion on either side of their body or from behind. Their nostrils, muzzles and cheeks have whiskers that are used to perceive the environment through touch.
Our animals	4 males. Born: 1990–1994
Cool stuff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domesticated ponies of all breeds originally developed from the need for a working animal that could fulfill specific draft and transportation needs while surviving in harsh environments. They are remarkably strong for their size. Breeds such as the Connemara pony are recognized for their ability to carry a full-sized adult rider. Pound for pound ponies can pull and carry more weight than a horse. • Nearly all pony breeds are very hardy and share the ability to thrive on a more limited diet than that of a regular-sized horse, requiring half the hay for their weight as a horse, and often not needing grain at all. • The horse has the largest eye of any land mammal. • Currently, there are seven known species of horses, asses and zebras in the Equid family. Of those, five species are endangered. The only true wild horse in existence today is the Przewalski's horse. Captive breeding efforts in zoos in the United States have resulted in the reintroduction of this endangered species to its homeland in Mongolia and China. • Zoologists have been able to piece together a more complete outline of the evolutionary lineage of the modern horse than of any other animal, much of it found in North America. Horses existed in North America until about 10,000 years ago; however, all equid species in North America ultimately became extinct. When the Spanish colonists brought domestic horses from Europe, beginning in 1493, escaped horses quickly established large wild herds. These feral horses eventually became known as mustangs.

Phylum
ChordataClass
MammaliaOrder
PerissodactylaFamily
EquidaeGenus
Equusspecies
E. caballus