
Miniature Horse

Equus caballus caballus

Class: *Mammalia*

Order: *Perissodactyla*

Family: *Equidae*

Characteristics: Among miniature horse breeders, there is ongoing debate whether miniature horses should possess more horse-like or more pony-like characteristics. Most miniature horses have the characteristics of a full-sized horse including conformation and proportion, rather than the stocky build of the pony. They are smaller in height than a regular horse, and breeders usually say they should not exceed 34 inches at the withers (top of the shoulders) (MiniatureHorse.com).

Behavior: According to the American Miniature Horse Association (AMHA), a "Miniature should be a small, sound, well-balanced horse and should give the impression of strength, agility and alertness. A Miniature should be eager and friendly but not skittish in disposition." (Wikipedia)

Reproduction: The most valuable miniature horses are the stallions as they can mate with several mares each year. The mare gives birth to a single foal once per year.

Diet: hay and equine pellets

Conservation: None

History: Miniature horses were first developed in Europe in the 1600s as a novelty for nobility. Once mining regulations were implemented to preclude the use of children in coal mines, miniature horses and ponies became regular fixtures for pulling ore carts in mines throughout England and Holland.

FYI: Just like other horses, miniature horses come in a variety of color variations. It is thought miniature horses may live longer (up to a third longer) than larger horses. The oldest-known miniature horse on record lived to be 50 years old.



Range & Habitat:

Worldwide, live in association with people usually as a novelty species.

Lifespan: 25-35 years

Special Adaptations: Basically tiny horses. Most breeders do not consider them ponies as ponies have different physically characteristics.

IUCN Conservation Status: Not evaluated

