What does equine mean?

Equine is the connection to horses or appearing similar to a horse. This category of animals includes horses, ponies, donkeys and zebras.

A survey showed the horse industry generates nearly $2.08 billion annually in Alabama.

The horse industry contributes to 24,000 jobs in Alabama, representing $706 million in labor income.

There are approximately 154,000 horses/ponies in the state.

There are approximately 32,000 mules/donkeys in the state.

Equine ranked as the 12th agricultural industry in the state.

There are approximately 8,800 horse/pony farms in the state.

There are approximately 3,963 mule/donkey farms in the state.

DID YOU KNOW?

Horses have 7 common blood types. Humans only have 4.
Horse Of A Different Color

Appaloosa — Come in many different colors and spotting; look as if they have on a spotted blanket
Bay — Brown body with black mane, tail and legs
Blank — Fully black body; mane and tail with no brown hairs; tends to look blue at times
Buckskin — A tan or gold coat with black markings on the feet and a black mane and tail
Chestnut — Red coat that can be light or dark; usually has a light-colored mane and tail
Dun — Come in many shades; typically has a dorsal stripe down its back
Palomino — Shiny golden coat with a very light or white mane and tail
Pinto — Can be a variety of colors; tends to look as if they have had white paint spilled on them
Roan — Either red or a gray-blue base coat; over time, white hairs start coming through
Seal Brown — Nearly black but has some brown mixed in

Horse Care

When thinking about getting a horse and the things it takes to care for them, some think it is as simple as putting them in a pasture. However, horses require lots of upkeep and maintenance so they can be ridden. Horses can live outdoors in a field, but some also live in a barn or stall when not being ridden. Having a place for your horse to go indoors allows shelter from bad weather or wild animals.

Also consider how to feed, groom and treat the animal. Horses eat lots of natural forages such as grass and hay. They also need supplemental feeds such as grain, oats, corn and other pelleted feeds. Grooming a horse is simple but needs to be done daily to ensure there is no buildup of dirt and mud. To groom your horse, you will need items such as a body brush, curry comb, hoof pick and a mane-and-tail comb to get out pesky knots. Horses have hooves that continually grow; similar to fingernails, which should be trimmed every 4-6 weeks. Treatment such as yearly vaccines and tests from a veterinarian are also necessary.

Did You Know?

Horses are not measured in feet or inches like humans. They are measured in hands. One hand equals about 4 inches.

Four Classifications of Horses

**Miniature** — 34 inches or less (American Miniature Horse Association), 38 inches or less (American Miniature Horse Registry)
**Ponies** — 14.2 hands or less (57 inches tall) and less than 800 pounds
**Lightweight** — less than 1,300 pounds
**Heavyweight** — greater than 2,000 pounds

Equine Terminology

**Poul** — a young equine up to a year old
**Colt** — male horse under the age of 4
**Filly** — female horse under the age of 4
**Gelding** — adult male horse
**Stallion** — adult male horse used for breeding
**Mare** — adult female horse
**Pony** — mature horse that measures less than 14.2 hands
**Donkey** — part of the equine family, different from a horse
**Jenny** — a female donkey
**Jack** — a male donkey
**Mule** — offspring of a male donkey and a female horse
Let's take a look at the different types of equine and how they can be used, from trail riding to work animals. There are over 350 breeds of horses due to domestication and the desire to have a horse suited for various lifestyles. The equine industry is diverse, meaning some horses may look similar but have different purposes.

Throughout history, draft horses were needed to work in fields and help get labor done. War horses were in demand and were used to carry men into battle. Even today, our military and police forces have units that work on horseback. Horses are used on ranches to help do daily tasks such as work cattle.

Horses are also used for pleasure and for competition. Pleasure riding, also known as trail riding, is the No. 1 equine activity in the state of Alabama. Competition riding breaks down into two major categories, racehorses and rodeos. Racehorses are used in contests such as the Kentucky Derby, where multiple horses race for a prize. The rodeo circuit has many different events, including barrel racing, team roping, bronc riding and steer wrestling. All of these events include horses that work hard to do specific jobs and require lots of strength and agility.

Fun Facts

- Horses enjoy sweet flavors and typically don’t reject food that is sour or bitter
- There are 205 bones in the horse’s body
- The average lifespan for a horse is 25 years
- Horses can sleep standing up or laying down
- The gestation period in a horse is 11 months
- Ponies have thicker manes and tails than horses
- Horses have a better sense of smell than sight
- Horses can gallop or run up to 27 miles per hour

- Horses have bigger eyes than any other mammal, allowing them to see nearly 360 degrees at a time
- Nearly 80% of a horse’s life is spent standing up
- An average healthy horse produces about 12 liters of saliva daily while chewing their food — that’s about 3 gallons
- Horses are not able to breathe through their mouths
A Horse Is A Horse Of Course?

Use the word corral below to identify each equine variety pictured and write the name below the picture.

A:  
B:  
C:  

D:  
E:  
F:  

Word Corral:

**Paint** | Can be used on the farm or at the rodeo like the quarter horse. They are easily identifiable due to coloring, white with either black or brown spots. They stand about 14.6 hands tall.

**Clydesdale** | One of the taller horse breeds and is known for its white face markings and bell bottom feathering at its feet. Due to its large body, it is used as a draft, or work, horse.

**Shetland pony** | One of the most popular pony breeds which stands about 11.6 hands tall. Coloring typically is brown, black, bay or chestnut.

**Quarter horse** | Known to be a cowboy's favorite horse with strong muscular bodies and quick speed. They average 14 to 16 hands tall and can be all colors, like light, bay and roan.

**Donkey** | Thought to be like a cousin to horses, they have a smaller build and stand around 11 hands tall. They have large, floppy ears and can be tan, brown, gray or black depending on genetics.

**Zebra** | This animal is associated with the zoo or the wild but is part of the equine family. It is known for its black and white striped fur.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The triangular shaped area on the underside of a horse's hoof is called a “frog” and serves as a sort of shock absorber when its feet hit the ground.

**HORSE ANATOMY**

How much do you know about horse anatomy? With parts named withers, croup, chestnut and cannon, horses are quite different from people. How weird would it be if our elbows and knees were both on our legs?

**COLORING FUN!**
Everyone has a favorite color horse. What's yours?