

Estimating your Horse's Weight



Estimating weight

The total amount of food that should be eaten per day is roughly dependent on the body weight of the horse—the bigger the horse, the more food it will need.

If you have access to livestock weigh scales, then determining weight is easy and this is the most accurate means. Check to see if a feed rep has a portable scale. Alternatively, feed stores may have periodic days that they bring in scales, or a local roadside transport weigh scale may be able to accommodate you. Breeding farms and training facilities may also have one. Referral veterinary clinics and university clinics will have scales as well.

Be consistent for weighing—always do it before or after meals or exercise to keep the values reproducible over time. Accurate weight trends are important for nutrition. Accurate values are important for medications and worming.

Most owners underestimate the weight by about 150 pounds when guessing visually. If you cannot access a scale, here are some other methods for estimating horse weight.

Option A: Weight Tape

You can obtain a weight tape from the tack store or local feed distributor. Place it firmly around the girth and overlap the ends to read the number. They are not as accurate on some body types, and are not accurate on foals and pregnant mares. A horse with a hay belly will be underestimated since the large belly fill will not be reflected. Heavy haircoat may affect results. Make sure the top of the tape is consistently placed. Pick the end of the mane, or a whorl so that the tape is there at the same place every time. The tape is applied firmly but not cinched over-tight. Landmark: end of the mane, girth position.



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Note:

The tape is about 85-90% accurate. Do not use this on pregnant mares or foals.

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Option B: Calculating Weight using measures

Using a long measuring tape such as a quilter's tape over 4 feet (1.5M) measure the following:

1. Heart girth: barrel circumference
2. Length of the horse to rump: from the front point of the shoulder bone to the start of the curve of the rump (looking from the side, the back edge of the furthest back extending butt)
3. Length to hip: from the front point of the shoulder bone to the point of the hip bone.



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Example Measurements	Horse 1	Your horse
Heart girth (HG)	74"(188 cm)	
Length to hip	49"(124 cm)	
Length to rump	66" (168 cm)	
Calculated weight	1113 pounds (503 kg)	

Calculate your Horse's Weight (Sample Calculation for Horse 1 in table below)

- A) Using formula below in table below
- B) Entering measurements into **thehorse.com calculator**
<http://www.thehorse.com/tools/horse-weight-calculator>

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How to calculate your Horse's Weight using formulas

METHOD 1 – Length to Hip Measurements

Calculations using length to hip

IMPERIAL—use **inches**

Calculations using length to hip

METRIC — use **centimetres**

Formula to use: [HG ² X length-to-hip]/241	Formula to use: [HG ² X length-to-hip/8717
[74 ² X 49]/241	[188 ² X 124]/8717
Multiply top row of numbers first 268324/241	Multiply top row numbers first 4382656/8717
Divide by the bottom number	Divide by the bottom number
1113 pounds	502.77 kg (round up to 503)

METHOD 2 – Length to Rump Measurement

Calculations using length to rump

IMPERIAL—use **inches**

Calculations using length to hip

METRIC — use **centimetres**

Formula to use: [HG ² X length-to-rump]/330	Formula to use: [HG ² X length-to-rump/11,880
[74 ² X 66]/330	[188 ² X 168]/11,880
Multiply top row of numbers first 361416/330	Multiply top row numbers first 5937792/11,880
Divide by the bottom number	Divide by the bottom number
1095 pounds	499.81 kg (round up to 500)

Note: These equations will not be accurate for foals or pregnant mares but are about 90-95% accurate for mature horses

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General Weight Guidelines

*Reference table lists probable weights based on the height of the horse or pony. Height (hands)	Pounds	Kilograms
10-12	550-660	250-300
12-14	660-880	300-400
14-16	880-1100	400-500
16-17	1100-1200	500-550
17-18	1200-1320	550-600