



1 Look for clear, alert eyes and attentive, moving ears




Bright ■ Clear	Glassy	Fixed Stare Sunken Eye
----------------	--------	---------------------------

2 Check for pink, slippery gums and nostrils free of abnormal discharge




Pink ■ Moist	Pale ■ Tacky	Jaundiced Brick Red Blue Veins
--------------	--------------	-----------------------------------

3 Time blood refill (i.e., colour returns) after pressure to the gum – a circulation indicator




0 - 1 seconds	2 - 3 seconds	4+ seconds
---------------	---------------	------------

4 Time blood refill (i.e., pops back up) after pressure to jugular vein – a circulation indicator




0 - 1 seconds	2 - 3 seconds	4+ seconds
---------------	---------------	------------

5 Note the speed of return (i.e., 'tent' flattens) after pinching skin – a quick hydration check



0 - 1 seconds	2 - 3 seconds	4+ seconds
---------------	---------------	------------


6 Listen to the pulse – a 'lub-dub' is one beat



Heart is on left side

At rest: 28-44 beats/min. Post-exercise (10 min. after): <68 beats/min.	At rest: >44 beats/minute Post-exercise (10 min. after): ≥68 beats/min.	At rest: highly elevated Post-exercise (30 min. after): >68 beats/min.
---	---	--

7 For respiration, count the number of breaths in 15 seconds and multiply by 4



Watch the flare of nostrils or flank movement to count

10-24 breaths/min. (Relaxed)	25+ breaths/min. (Panting)	25+ breaths/min. (Laboured sounds)
---------------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------------------

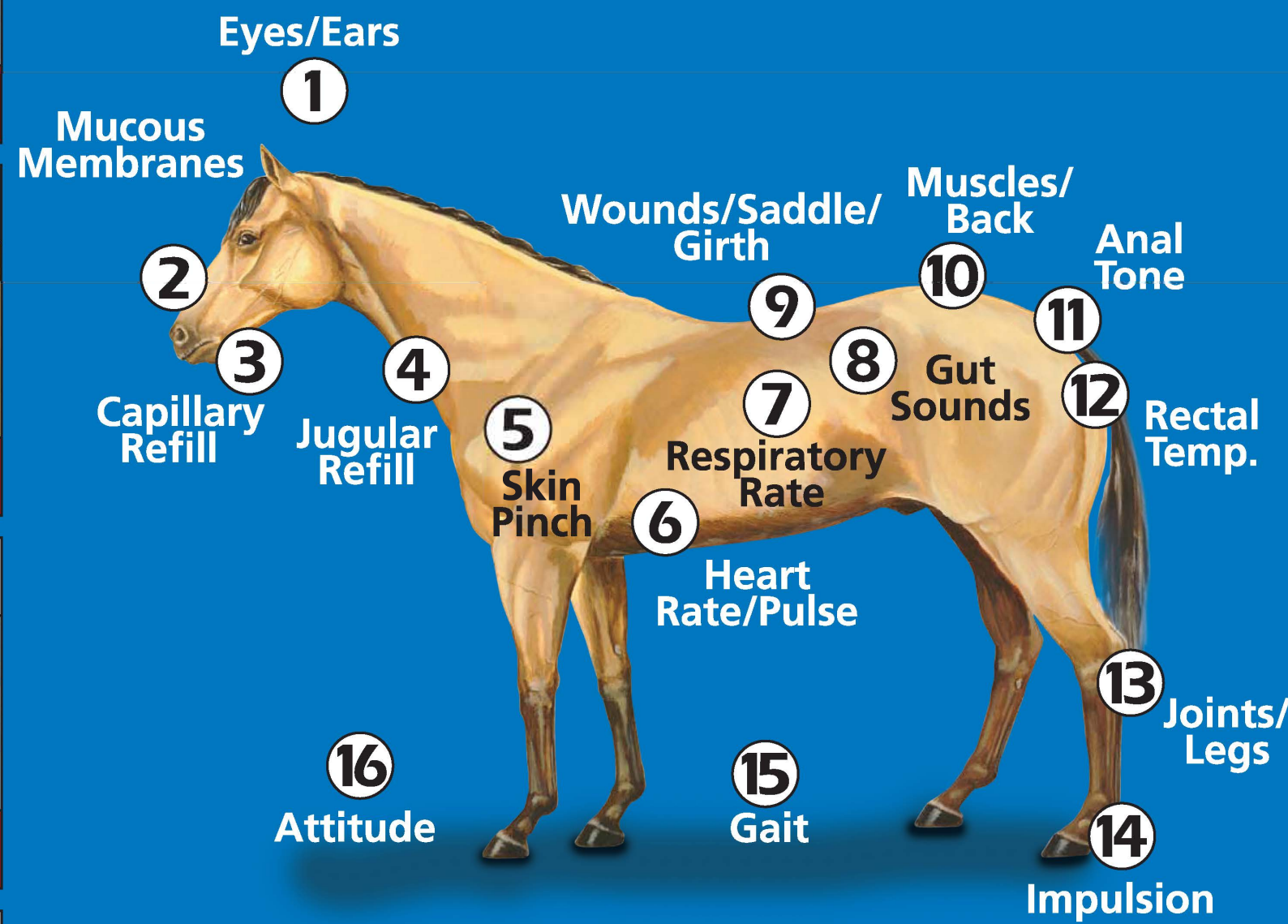
8 Listen to the gut on both sides for normal gurgling, bubbling sounds



Normal sounds every 5-10 seconds (like waves rolling against a shore)	Reduced or Increased	Absent ■ Abnormal (like ping-pong, ringing, echoes of water dripping)
---	----------------------	--



STOP!	STOP everything and immediately contact your vet for advice
CAUTION!	Proceed with caution; keep your eye on things and consider consulting your vet
GO!	All normal, no intervention required



16-POINT SYSTEMATIC EXAMINATION FROM EQUINE GUELPH

- Takes 5 minutes!
- Many potentially serious conditions can be picked up at an early stage by this simple series of tests
- You are now on your way to being an educated horse owner capable of checking for warning signs of illness, injury or fatigue before they become more serious


PERFORM EXAM:

- weekly
- before and after competition or travel
- when a horse simply "ain't doin' right"!

EQUIPMENT:

- stethoscope
- watch (capable of indicating seconds)
- thermometer


9 Look for evidence of sores, wounds and bumps



Check the entire body – saddle area especially

No visible marks	Heat ■ Swelling Tender	Pain ■ Raw Bleeding
------------------	---------------------------	------------------------


10 Palpate the body for pain, sensitivity and tightness



Focus on withers, shoulders, back, croup/rump and girth


Relaxed	Tight ■ Tender	Very tight ■ Pain
---------	----------------	-------------------

11 Check for a healthy response – a loose anus is generally a sign of an exhausted horse




Tight	Slightly loose	Anus/Penis relaxed
-------	----------------	--------------------

12 Place a lubricated thermometer carefully into the anus



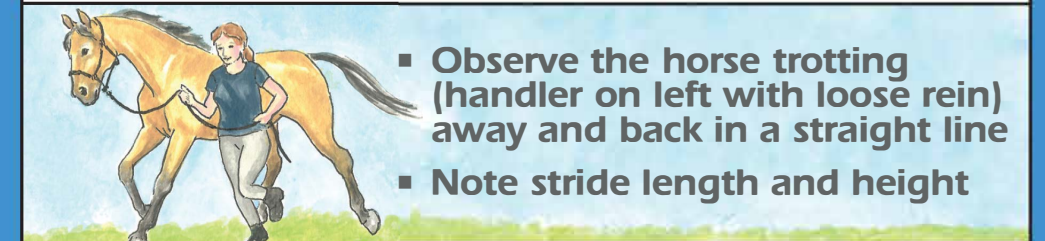
Rest: <38.6°C During ride: <39.6°C	Rest: >38.7°C During ride: 39.7°C - 40.4°C	Rest and During ride: >40.5°C
---------------------------------------	---	----------------------------------

13 Palpate legs; pay special attention to joints, ligaments, tendons, splint area and hooves



No heat No Swelling	Heat ■ Swelling	Heat ■ Swelling Pain
------------------------	-----------------	-------------------------

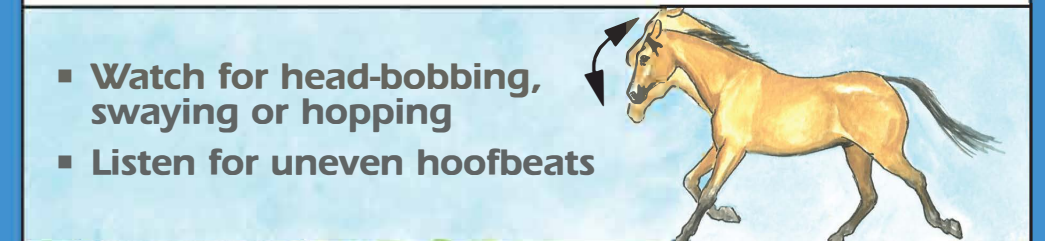
14 In motion, is your horse pushing off the ground energetically?



- Observe the horse trotting (handler on left with loose rein) away and back in a straight line
- Note stride length and height

Free ■ Willing Eager	Stumble ■ Short Stride Disinterested	Stiffness Limping ■ Sour
-------------------------	---	-----------------------------


15 In motion, can you observe even distribution of weight?



- Watch for head-bobbing, swaying or hopping
- Listen for uneven hoofbeats

No abnormal gait	Slight gait change	Consistent gait change ■ Non-weight bearing
------------------	--------------------	--

16 Learn your horse's attitude, behaviour and general condition (including coat)



Bright ■ Alert Eating ■ Drinking	Depressed Lethargic	Dull ■ Absence of thirst, appetite, urination, defecation
-------------------------------------	------------------------	---