

IRISH COB BREED STANDARD

For the original Irish Cob (Traditional Irish Cob)

Author: Evelyn Flynn

GENERAL APPEARANCE - The Irish Cob is compact and powerful, ample both in muscle and bone, yet, with an ability to perform as a good all-purpose animal. Some Irish Cobs tend to be more “stocky” than others. The Irish Cob is well balanced and proportioned, standing straight and square and offering an imposing appearance.

TOPLINE - The head, which should be held proudly, should be carried on a powerful and arched, well “set on”, neck. The neck should appear to “carry on” through good withers and to finish at the start of the back (this feature should be particularly evident in stallions). The back, which should be short and straight, should slope gently upwards to a well-muscled croup (the backbone/spine or the hip bones should not be apparent). The croup, which is quite high and generous, the backbone should have both croup muscles well defined, the top of the quarters being exceptionally well muscled, broad and ample. The angle of the spine from the croup to the tail should slope gently downwards and should not be exaggerated; this allows for a high, well “set on”, tail and contributes to good well-rounded quarters.

BONE - Irish Cobs are from medium weight to heavy weight, (Some allowance in bone measurement can be made for mares and geldings only).

IN MOTION - Irish Cobs with their unique action, luxuriant hair and feathering and the large range of colours available, combine to present a beautiful and varied sight to see when turned out at their best, particularly when in motion.

TEMPERAMENT - The Irish Cob should possess a docile and willing nature, with a friendly disposition towards humans and other animal species. Displays of aggressive and threatening behaviour such as ears back, kicking, biting, rearing and not being under control of the handler, will result in expulsion from Approval Inspection and the Show Ring.

HEIGHT - Under 170cms (not exceeding 16.2 hands)

HEAD - should be straight, handsome and in proportion to the rest of the horse. The forehead should be broad and the muzzle, jaw and cheek should be generous.

MOUTH - should have a level bite.

EYES - should be quite bold, open and set well apart.

EARS - should be neat and well set on.

NECK - should be compact, but not too short and should be generously muscled, including the crest (stallion's necks should be particularly well muscled and crested).

SHOULDERS - should be ample, powerful and sloping.

WITHERS - should be of average protrusion or height and should be encased in plenty of muscle and flesh.

CHEST - should be powerful, well-muscled and not too broad or narrow.

BACK - should be short, straight, well covered in muscle and flesh and slope gently upwards towards the croup.

HINDQUARTERS AND HIND LEGS - should be very generous, well-rounded, broad and powerful with a well-muscled high croup. The second thigh should also be very generous, quite long and well coupled to good straight powerful hocks. The hind legs should be well boned and muscled.

BODY - should be short and compact with ribs well sprung to barrel shape.

FORELEGS - should be powerful and not too short. There should be a good length of well-muscled forearm and generously boned shins.

KNEES AND HOCKS - should be well developed and of generous dimensions but should be in balance with the proportions of the horse.

FETLOCK JOINTS - should match the other joints in power, size and build.

PASTERNS - should also be of sufficient bone and not too long (straight or over-angled pasterns are a fault).

HOOVES - should be well-shaped, neat and of a size capable of carrying the frame of the horse without stress.

LEG HAIR/FEATHERING - Leg hair/feathering is a characteristic and decorative feature of the Irish Cob breed. This is especially prominent in the heavier Irish Cobs. However, the amount of leg hair/feathering present may vary considerably, particularly in the case of medium weight Irish Cobs. Leg hair/feathering should, at the very least, fall from the back of the knees and hocks, down to a thick covering of hair/feathers on the heels. Leg hair/feathering should also fall over the front of the hoof, from at least the coronet.

MANE AND TAIL - should be luxuriant and capable of growing to a substantial length.

MOVEMENT - should appear sound and free from obvious hereditary defects.

COLOUR - The following colours are considered most typical.

- All solid colours, including black, bay, brown, chestnut, palomino, grey and roan.
- All solid colours, including black, bay, brown, chestnut, palomino, grey and roan, which contain white body markings. White body markings are measured in percentages and exclude the head, legs and underbelly.
- Irish Cobs, which have white body markings, are described as COLOURED.
- Irish Cobs, which have white markings on the underbelly, are described as SPLASHED or BLAGDON

Although described as a 'draught' type animal, the Irish Cob breed also remains a dual-purpose animal, by retaining the docile character attributed to the cold-blooded breeds, while retaining the breed's agile and versatile capabilities, which are ideally suited to a number of leisure riding pursuits.

NOTE

An Irish Cob is still an Irish Cob even if it has had its mane and/or leg feathering removed

IRISH COB BREED STANDARD

For the modern Irish Cob

Author: Evelyn Flynn

Since the 1990s the original Irish Cob (Traditional Irish Cob) has been modernised. As a result, the modern Irish Cob would not fully conform to the Irish Cob Breed Standard for the original Irish Cob (Traditional Irish Cob). Allowances in the Irish Cob Breed Standard for the original Irish Cob (Traditional Gypsy Cob) therefore have to be made in respect of the modern Irish Cob.

Not only does the modern Irish Cob have a wider range of colour, but it is also regarded as more refined than the original Irish Cob. The modern Irish Cob can also have more of a driving cob structure (subtlety added dimensions and proportions attributed to the driving cob including a subtlety added driving cob shoulder and chest) than the original Irish Cob (which has a riding cob structure including a riding cob shoulder and front) and can therefore have a more emphasised movement action than the original Irish Cob. Because the modern Irish Cob can have subtlety added dimensions and proportions attributed to the driving cob including a subtlety added driving cob shoulder and front, the difference between an original Irish Cob and a modern Irish Cob may only be seen by the experienced eye.