

What is a Gaited Horse?

A Gaited horse is a horse whose intermediate gait is does not have suspension. Some gaited horses trot, but in competition with other gaited horses, they perform the intermediate gait common to the breed. Gaited horses are often referred to as soft gaited meaning the ride or gait is smooth and comfortable for the rider.

Breed Profile - possible a picture, brief history, and explanation of Gaits.

Tennessee Walking Horse

A light horse breed founded in middle Tennessee, the Tennessee Walking Horse is a composition of Narragansett and Canadian Pacer, Standardbred, Thoroughbred, Morgan and American Saddlebred stock. Originally bred as a utility horse, this breed is an ideal mount for riders of all ages and levels of experience. The breed easily adapts to English or Western gear, and its calm, docile temperament combined with naturally smooth and easy gaits insure the popularity of the Tennessee Walking horse as the “world’s greatest pleasure horse”.

Easy-gaited stock imported to America's shores during the colonial era left its genetic imprint on the fox-trotting horse in the Ozarks, the American Saddle Horses of Kentucky and the walking horses of Tennessee.

Missouri Fox Trotter

The Missouri Fox Trotter was developed in the rugged Ozark Mountains during the nineteenth century by settlers who needed smooth-riding, durable mounts that could travel at a comfortable, surefooted gait for long distances. The pioneers who crossed the Mississippi River to settle in the Ozarks came mostly from the hills and plantations of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia. They brought with them their finest possessions, including their best saddle stock. The breeding of this stock was largely Arabian, Morgan and plantation horses from the deep South. Later more American Saddlebred, Tennessee Walking and Standardbred breeding was added. It became apparent that horses able to perform the easy, broken gait called the "fox trot" were the most useful in the rocky, forest-covered hills of the Ozarks, and selective breeding of the fox trot gait began.

The distinguishing characteristic of the Missouri Fox Trotter is the fox trot gait. The Fox Trot is basically a diagonal gait like the trot, but the horse appears to walk with its front legs and trot with his hind legs. Because of the back feet's sliding action, rather than the hard step of other breeds, the rider experiences little jarring action and is quite comfortable to sit for long periods of time without posting.

Rocky Mountain Horse

The history of the Rocky Mountain Horse from 1890 to the latter part of the 1900s carries little or no documentation and few facts that can be proven beyond the shadow of doubt. Everyone who personally witnessed the breed's beginnings (back to the 1800s) is deceased, and we have been left with only verbal history passed down from generation to generation. Thus, all that can be recorded at this point in time are the stories recollected by living descendants.

The Rocky Mountain Horse breed originated in the United States in the late 1800s, in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains of eastern Kentucky. At the time of its beginnings, there was no understanding of the need to document anything about these horses. The people living in this region were quite unaware that one day their utility horses would become the foundation of a special breed of horse. The existence of these horses was practically a secret for many years to all but the inhabitants of this region.

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the rural inhabitants of eastern Kentucky considered these saddle horses to be horses for all seasons. They were sure-footed, easy-gaited, and the mount of choice for postmen, doctors, and traveling preachers. People used them for plowing small fields, herding cattle, traveling through the steep and rugged trails, and driving the buggy to church on Sunday. Horses were not a luxury, but a necessity. Every horse had to earn its keep and be extremely versatile. It was not a matter of having horses around to use every once in awhile; these horses were worked hard, every day. At the end of the day they were exhausted, but possessed enough stamina to continue on, day after day.

The families of eastern Kentucky who owned these horses were not wealthy and could not afford to spend a lot of money on the upkeep of their horses. Unlike Kentucky Thoroughbreds that were typically owned by wealthy people, the gaited horses of eastern Kentucky received no special care, and as a result most of the weak ones did not survive. These horses withstood the harsh winters of eastern Kentucky with minimal shelter, and they were often fed "fodder", a kind of rough silage. Some had to exist on whatever sustenance they could find. So, like deer, they ate the bark off trees when they were hungry. Only the horses that survived these extreme conditions lived to reproduce their kind.

The Rocky Mountain Horse Association's (RMHA) rendition of the history of the breed states there was a gaited colt brought from the Rocky Mountain region of the United States to the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains in eastern Kentucky around 1890. He was referred to as "the Rocky Mountain Horse" by the local Kentucky people because of the area of the country from which he had come. He is the horse credited for the start of the Rocky Mountain Horse breed. Little is known about this foundation stallion, but oral history indicated he was chocolate-colored with flaxen mane and tail, and he possessed a superior gait. The stallion was bred to the local Appalachian saddle mares in a relatively small geographical area and the basic characteristics of a strong genetic line continued. This prized line of horses increased in numbers as years went by, and these are the horses known today as Rocky Mountain Horses.

Sam Tuttle was the most prominent breeder of Rocky Mountain Horses for the first three quarters of the twentieth century. With the advent of better roads and means of travel, the population of gaited horses in the United States began to decline. The exception was the less developed area of the Appalachian Mountains. Gaited horses were still needed for travel where there were no roads, and therefore they were preserved in that area.

Even through the hard times of the Depression and World War II years, Sam Tuttle kept a sizable herd of thirty to forty horses on his farm. Sam is considered as the man most responsible for the survival of the Rocky Mountain Horse. TOBE was the primary Rocky Mountain stallion used in Sam's breeding program. In the 1950s, many people were selling their stallions, and the horse population in general was rapidly declining due to tractors and farm machinery available. Even so, breeders remembered TOBE, and he was always in demand for stud service. People brought their mares to TOBE from several different states, and he was as famous in Estill County as MAN O' WAR was in Lexington, Kentucky.

Everyone who rode TOBE fell in love with him. TOBE's offspring were always in demand, and Sam never had any trouble selling all the Rocky Mountain Horses he could produce.

In the early 1960s, Sam Tuttle managed the trail riding concession at the Natural Bridge State Park in Powell County, Kentucky. He had as many as fifty horses there, including TOBE. This stallion was often seen tied to the hitching post alongside all the mares. He became quite well known in the ten or so years he was ridden there. Besides breeding, TOBE was used as a trail horse. He carried Sam, and sometimes the trail guides who worked for Sam, with sure-footed ease over mountainous terrain for many years. Although Sam would allow other people to ride TOBE occasionally, it was always a ride closely supervised. He loved to show off his beloved stallion, but also kept a close eye on him. Everyone who rode TOBE enjoyed his gentle temperament and comfortable gait. It amazed people to think the well-mannered horse they were riding was indeed a breeding stallion.

TOBE was used for breeding until July of his thirty-fourth year, and he passed on his gait, disposition, and other great qualities to his offspring. It has been said that TOBE's progeny followed in his "perfectly-timed" footsteps. TOBE fathered many fine horses before his death at the ripe old age of thirty-seven. One outstanding trait passed on to his get was longevity, as many of his offspring were still breeding into their late twenties and early thirties.

***This brief history of the Rocky Mountain Horse® is an excerpt from the book "Rocky Mountain Horses", to be published in the near future. Courtesy of the author, Bonnie Hodge.

United Mountain Horse

A New Unified Era For Gaited Mountain Horses

Kentucky's native gaited Mountain Horses have become favorites across the country for their beauty, athleticism, and smooth, four-beat gait. The Rocky Mountain Horses, Kentucky Mountain Saddle, and Mountain Pleasure horses have a distinct personality, with a calm, willing temperament that makes the mountain gaited horses some of the most trainable and pleasurable for training and for horse shows.

United Mountain Horse, Inc was formed in September 2000 by members of the existing breed associations who were interested in having an organization especially dedicated to promoting and exhibiting the horses registered Rocky Mountain, Mountain Pleasure and Kentucky Mountain, and providing support for all Mountain Horse breeders exhibitors and enthusiasts.

UMH now operates or sanctions the vast majority of all Mountain Horse shows, with both nationally and regionally sanctioned High Point circuits across the country. A Regional promotional program was established in 2002 with 7 regions. As of 2006 11 Regions with Regional Representatives are working to promote the Rocky Mountain, Kentucky Mountain and the Mountain Pleasure Horse.

The American Gaited Mountain Horse Association was formed as an inclusive promotional service encompassing the various existing Mountain Horses that are registered with Rocky Mountain, Mountain Pleasure, Kentucky Mountain and Kentucky Natural Gaited and notes the breed origins, significant show winnings, and Merit Awards of the horse on its certificate.

There had long been an interest in having an exhibitors' and breeders' support organization for the Mountain Horses, and one was actually formed several years ago, but never became active. In the summer of 2000, interest grew among a wider group of exhibitors in having a show circuit and other activities that could augment the services of the breed registries in promotion of the three Mountain Horse breeds. A small group made an appointment to meet in Winchester, KY, word got around, and a crowd showed up! There was clearly a lot of interest and enthusiasm. After three days of non-stop meetings, an initial board was selected by consensus, and an independent Executive Director was hired to get the start-up process underway. Incorporation papers were approved and filed in September, 2000.

What type of organization is UMH?

A non-profit Kentucky corporation.

UMH is also now in the process of forming a separate organization called the Associates' Fund that will qualify for IRS Section 503(c) charitable status, so that contributions to this organization are tax-deductible. The Associates' Fund provides grants to Member Associates of UMH who have special needs due to uninsured accidents or other events, as well as funding scholarships and educational grants and programs. The Associates' Fund has its own Board of Directors.

Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse Association and Kentucky Spotted Mountain Horse Association

1. Show evidence of a gentle temperament and a willing disposition. This evidence must be observed by two (2) examiners or shown on a video tape submitted to the KMSHA office at the time application for certification is made. Any horse that displays a temperament that is unruly or unmanageable will not be eligible for certification.
2. Demonstrate a smooth, comfortable and natural four beat gait (with four distinct hoof beats) under saddle.
3. There are two size categories of the KMSHA/SMHA. At maturity a horse must stand 14.2 hands or above in order to qualify for a class A registration. Class B registrations are for horses 11 hands to 14.1 hands at maturity. No horse can be registered KMSHA or SMHA if at maturity it stands less than 11 hands. All measurements are to be measured on a perpendicular at a point where their neck joins the body. In finding that point the head and neck should be raised at the throat latch, pushing toward the back of the body, to produce a tuck in the neck and should not be in a relaxed position. There is no upper height limit.
4. Conformation characteristics; the Kentucky Mountain Saddle Horse & Spotted Mountain Horse should show an above average degree of beauty and refinement. They must be of medium bone and substance, reflecting their heritage as an all-around utility breed. The horse should present an appearance of athleticism and the ability to perform useful work. Traditionally, KMSHA/SMHA horses have a compact, well-muscled and close-coupled frame. The head is attractive, cob sized, not too long or wide in appearance, proportional, with a broad flat forehead, well defined jaw and a face in profile that is neither severely Roman nor dished. Looking straight at the front of the head, the distance from the middle point between the eyes to the middle point between the nostrils, is of medium length. The facial composure overall, is very pleasing to the observer. The neck is of medium length and thickness, with the top line of the neck longer than the underline, and meets the back behind the shoulder. The neck should show an ability to flex at the poll and not be tied into the body too low in the chest. Little to no wither is desirable.
5. Principles of sound conformation relevant to all breeds are applicable to the KMSHA/SMHA horses. Planes of the legs when viewed from the front and the rear should be straight and aligned. Severe cases of sickle hocks, cow hocks, hoofs turned in or out, and all other variances from correct structure of the major joints are not desirable. When viewed from the side, horses should have near equal proportions between the forequarter, body and hindquarter with proper angulations of the shoulder and humerus. An upright humerus and front legs not set too far underneath the body also allow for good stride and reach. The horse has a strong topline, short in the coupling, with a rounded croup. The tail set should be natural.
6. KMSHA horses can be any solid body color. White markings should be limited to the face, (no bald faces) the legs (no excessive amount of white above the knees or hocks) and an area on the belly that is

behind the breast bone and under the ends of the rib cage not to exceed 36 square inches (6x6 - no bigger than the size of the hand).

7. Any horse that does not meet the limited amount of white requirement as stated above but carries significant white markings known as tobiano, overo, sabino, etc. may be registered/certified SMHA, (a subsidiary of the KMSHA). A colt or a filly that is of solid body color and is foaled by one or both Spotted Mountain Horse parents, must be registered SMHA with no exceptions. At this time, there is not a fool proof genetic test that can determine that a solid colored offspring will not throw spots. A solid colored gelding from a Spotted parent(s), may be registered/certified either SMHA or KMSHA, but not both.

Racking Horse

Since the time America began, the Racking Horse has been legendary for its beauty, stamina and calm disposition, this noble animal's popularity grew strong on the great southern plantations before the Civil War. It was learned that the horse could be ridden comfortably for hours because of its smooth, natural gait.

The Racking Horse is attractive and gracefully built with a long sloping neck, full flanks, well boned, smooth legs, and finely textured hair. The Racking Horse is considered a "light" horse in comparison with other breeds, averaging 15.2 hands high (a "hand" is considered to be four inches) and weighing 1,000 pounds. Colors may be black, bay, sorrel, chestnut, brown, gray, yellow, cremello, buckskin, dun, palomino, roan, champagne, and even spotted.

The "rack" of the Racking Horse is a bi-lateral four-beat gait which is neither a pace nor a trot. It is often called a "single-foot" because only one foot strikes the ground at a time. The Racking Horse comes by this gait as naturally as walking or striking a bold trot comes to other breeds. He is not to be confused with other breeds, with which the "rack" is an artificially achieved gait resulting from special training. Though he may be shown under saddle, in hand or in harness, and may be flat shod or shown with pads, he still performs the smooth, collected gait which made him famous as a pleasure mount.

Beginning riders have found the Racking Horse to be the answer to their prayers, not only for his extremely comfortable ride, but also because of his unusual friendliness to humans. Beginners and veterans alike can appreciate the opportunities generated by this intelligent, family oriented steed.

In 1975, an act of legislature declared the Racking Horse to be Alabama's State horse. This notoriety, as well as the comfortable ride and beautiful stride makes the Racking Horse a favorite both in the show ring and on the trail.

Spotted Saddle Horse

The **Spotted Saddle Horse** provides a comfortable ride with the chrome of color as an added bonus. This colorful horse possesses a smooth, easy gait that provides hours of pleasure in the saddle. Not only will you enjoy a most pleasurable ride on the trail aboard a Spotted Saddle Horse, but also the beautifully unique color patterns offered by this fast-growing breed will set you apart from the crowd. The trails are never too steep or too rough for this agile breed. Sure footed as a mountain goat, the Spotted Saddle Horse is ready for any terrain.



A leisurely ride on a cool fall day!

The easy, docile temperament of the gentle breed combined with a people pleasing personality make this equine sports model a highly sought after trail mount. With comfort second to none, climb aboard a Spotted Saddle Horse and be ready for the recreational ride of your life. An added bonus is that the horse you ride during the week on trails can be your Saturday night show horse. This is a very common occurrence in the Spotted Saddle Horse industry.

The Spotted Saddle Horse can trace its roots back to the history of horses that escaped from ships as they crashed on our shorelines. These horses were often spotted, naturally gaited and possessed the strength and stamina necessary for war use. By the end of the Civil War, many imported "gaited" types of horses were present in the United States. Selective mating of these gaited horses with the spotted horses resulted in the production of the smooth-gaited, colorful horse that came to be known as the Spotted Saddle Horse

Paso Fino Horse

Discover the Ultimate Show and Pleasure Horse

The Paso Fino horse reflects its Spanish heritage through its proud carriage, grace and elegance. Modern care and selective breeding have enhanced its beauty, refinement and well-proportioned conformation that conveys strength and power without extreme muscling. With its lively but controlled spirit, natural gait and presence, and responsive attitude, the Paso Fino is indeed, a rare and desirable equine partner.

The History of the Paso Fino

The Paso Fino's journey to the Americas began more than 500 years ago with the importation of Andalusians, Spanish Barbs from North Africa, and smooth-gaited Spanish Jennets (now extinct as a breed) to the "New World" by Spanish Conquistadors. Bred for their stamina, smooth gait and beauty, "Los Caballos de Paso Fino" – the horses with the fine walk – served as the foundation stock for remount stations of the Conquistadors. Centuries of selective breeding by those who colonized the Caribbean and Latin America produced variations of the "Caballo de Criollo," among them the Paso Fino that flourished initially in Puerto Rico and Colombia, and later, in many other Latin American countries (primarily Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Aruba, and Venezuela).

Descendants of the Conquistadors' horses are believed to have spread into North America after the Spanish soldiers forayed for a brief time into this territory. The modern-day mustang has traces of his Spanish forbears. The Nez Perce Indian tribe, renowned for their expert horsemanship and sophisticated knowledge of breeding spotted horses, may have mixed some Spanish stock into their famous Appaloosas, whose name is derived from the Palouse River region of the Nez Perce's tribal homeland in Oregon.

Awareness of the Paso Fino as we know it today didn't spread outside Latin America until after WWII, when American servicemen came into contact with the stunning Paso Fino horse while stationed in Puerto Rico. Americans began importing Paso Finos from Puerto Rico in the mid-1940s. Two decades later, many Paso Fino horses began to be imported from Colombia. For a while, there was some contention as to which country produced the "true" Paso Fino. Though there are still some self-professed "purists" who advocate for one or the other country, the American Paso Fino -

true to our "melting pot" tradition - is often a blend of the best of Puerto Rican and Colombian bloodlines.

The Unique Gait of the Paso Fino Horse

The Paso Fino is born with a gait unique to the breed, and its attitude seems to transmit to the observer that this horse knows its gait is a very special gift that must be executed with style and pride! The gait is smooth, rhythmic, purposeful, straight, balanced in flexion and synchronous front to rear, resulting in unequalled comfort and smoothness for the rider. The Paso Fino is a graceful, agile and supple equine athlete that uses all four legs with precision and harmony.

The gait of the Paso Fino horse is totally natural and normally exhibited from birth. It is an evenly-spaced four-beat lateral gait with each foot contacting the ground independently in a regular sequence at precise intervals creating a rapid, unbroken rhythm. Executed perfectly, the four hoof beats are absolutely even in both cadence and impact, resulting in unequalled smoothness and comfort for the rider.

The Paso Fino gait is performed at three forward speeds and with varying degrees of collection. In all speeds of the gait, the rider should appear virtually motionless in the saddle, and there should be no perceptible up and down motion of the horse's croupe.

Classic Fino - Full collection, with very slow forward speed. The footfall is extremely rapid while the steps and extension are exceedingly short.

Paso Corto - Forward speed is moderate, with full to moderate collection. Steps are ground-covering but unhurried, executed with medium extension and stride.

Paso Largo - The fastest speed of the gait, executed with a longer extension and stride, and moderate to minimal collection. Forward speed varies with the individual horse, since each horse should attain its top speed in harmony with its own natural stride and cadence.

The Paso Fino is capable of executing other gaits that are natural to horses, including the relaxed walk and lope or canter, and is known for its versatility. In PFHA/USEF-sponsored shows, Paso Finos compete in Western classes (Trail and Versatility), as well as costume and Pleasure Driving. Paso Finos are also being seen in cow penning, trail riding and endurance competitions and are winning ribbons.

Peruvian Paso Horse



Although a newcomer to North America, the Peruvian Paso had its origins over four centuries ago in South America, where the horses brought to Peru by the conquistadors and subsequent Spanish settlers were bred selectively to produce the genetic miracle that became the "National Horse of Peru." The judicious fusion of several Old World breeds provided the foundation for the Peruvian horse. The Spanish Jennet gave its even temperament and smooth ambling gait, the African Barb contributed great energy, strength and stamina while the Andalusian imparted its excellent conformation, action, proud carriage and beauty to the new breed. Once established, the

Peruvian Paso was maintained in its native country as a closed population, isolated by geography and the dedication of its creators from the influence of additional outside blood.

Peruvian Paso/Paso Fino

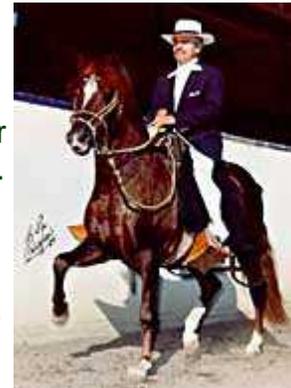
Many people assume a close relationship between the Peruvian Paso and the Paso Fino. Although the two breeds share some common ancestors in the Old World breeds that are their forebears, the horses that gave rise to each came to the New World with different groups of settlers and were generated in entirely separate environments for totally different purposes.

The Paso Fino was developed in and around the Caribbean, Central and South America, while the Peruvian horse was born entirely within the borders of the country for which it was named. The Peruvian is somewhat larger, deeper in the body and wider. Both have high head carriage and front leg lift, are smooth to ride and exhibit basically the same four-beat footfall although it is executed differently. The Paso Fino is not bred for the distinctive "termino" and its finest show gait does not require the length of stride so essential in Peru for traveling long distances. In addition, the Peruvian can guarantee transmission of its gait to all purebred foals.

Breed Characteristics

Physically, the Paso is a horse of medium size, usually standing between 14.1 and 15.2 hands tall, with a powerful build. He may be chestnut, black, brown, bay, buckskin, palomino, gray, roan

or dun; with the solid colors, grays and dark skin considered most desirable. The mane is abundant with fine, lustrous hair that may be curly or straight. Horses must be shown unshod.



The Peruvian Paso horse should have an appearance of energy, grace and refinement. Horses should have a well-developed muscular appearance without exaggerations. The head is of medium size with a straight or slightly concave profile; a small muzzle; oblong nostrils which extend easily; dark skin; dark expressive eyes set well apart; moderately marked jowls and medium length ears with fine tips curved slightly inward. The neck is of medium length with a graceful arch to the crest. It is slightly heavier in proportion to the body than with most light saddle breeds. The back is medium to short in length, strong and rounded. Loins broad and well muscled over kidney area. Croup long and wide, fairly muscular with moderate slope and nicely rounded. Tail is set low and viewed from the rear is carried straight, quietly and held close to the buttocks. Chest is wide with abundant muscling. Rib cage well sprung and deep. The barrel is deep and the underline is nearly level from the last rib to the brisket. Flanks are moderately short, full and deep. Quarters should be strong, of medium roundness and width. Shoulders long, very well inclined and well muscled, especially at the withers. Bones of the lower limbs should be well aligned and well articulated so that the long bones line up with each other correctly above and below the joints with the skin tight against the bone and strong, prominent tendons. Pasterns of medium length and springy but not showing weakness. Cannon bones are short. Slightly more angle to the hock than other light saddle breeds.



Today, the Peruvian Paso transmits its smooth gait to all purebred foals. No artificial devices or special training aids are necessary to enable the horse to perform its specialty - a natural four-beat footfall of medium speed that provides a ride of incomparable smoothness and harmony of movement.

In addition to an easy gait, the Peruvian Paso's creators desired their new breed to retain brilliant action typified by lift as the knee and fetlock flex, combined with "termino," a movement of the front legs similar to the loose outward rolling of a swimmer's arms in the crawl.

Perhaps the most misunderstood of all traits that distinguishes the Peruvian horse is "brio," a quality of spirit that enables this tractable horse to perform with an arrogance and exuberance that can only be described as thrilling. "Brio" and stamina give the Peruvian its willingness and ability to perform tirelessly for many hours and many miles in the service of its rider.

Gaits

(a) Paso llano: Equally spaced, four beat gait. Timing and footfall: 1 - 2 - 3 - 4; LH - LF - RH - RF

(b) Sobreandando: Usually faster, slightly more lateral than the Paso llano. Timing and footfall: 1,2 - 3,4; LH, LF - RH,RF

Gaited Morgans

Few horseman of any breed fancy have not heard the story of the stocky, stylish little stallion, Figure, destined to become known by this owner's name, Justin Morgan. This pre-potent horse spawned a dynasty that has spanned generations.

The hallmark of the breed is the stamp of its progenitor. Morgans bear his unmistakable "type," both physically and mentally.

The Morgan is a horse of **proud bearing**. He holds his delicately chiseled head, upright, on his graceful, substantial neck. The eyes are deep and expressive and the ears, foxy and alert. Morgans are known for long sloping shoulders which contribute to smooth, extended gaits. They are tough, sound, athletic horses, heralded for their versatility, as well as their cooperative nature. Traditional Morgan character is sought after for the intelligence, willing attitude, calmness and tractability the founding sire impressed upon his get.

Nearly a secret

But the gaited Morgan is nearly a secret. He is so little known, that until very recently, breed aficionados vehemently denied his existence. Strange, considering the illustrious past of the smooth, "traveling" Morgan. For instance, Morgan horses were instrumental as Calvary mounts. **General Stonewall Jackson's** favorite horse, Little Sorrel, or Fancy, was a ground covering, smooth gaited, "pacer" -- most likely a singlefooter.

Many Morgan breeders are surprised to find new foals gaiting the paddock. Due to the **mysteries of the genetic code of gait**, non-gaited mares and stallions routinely produce gaiting offspring. Unofficial breed estimates state that from **10 to 20 percent of all Morgans** perform some sort of intermediate gait! The gaits produced range from a true singlefoot, for which an entire registry has been established. (The North American Singlefooting Horse Association), to a high action rack to a form of a running walk.

So where does this tendency come from in a "non-gaited" breed?

Perhaps the more pertinent question is "**where did it go?**" The old literature and indeed, the original Registry volumes, point time and again, to "pacers" -- the often used common term for a horse performing a gait other than a trot, rather than a true hard pace. there were other references to "single-footers."

Gait sacrificed to "big trot"

As roads improved, the emphasis was on speed at the trot. As **vehicles replaced horses**, the emphasis was on what placed in the show ring. Because the Morgan rack was not as high as that of the American Saddlebred, he was not able to compete at that level. In short, the gait was sacrificed to the "big trot" so esteemed by roadsters

and show exhibitors.

Consider these gaiting claims to fame:

- Several sons of Justin Morgan, including Sherman and Hawkins Horse were reputedly gaited.
- Maggie Marshall, granddaughter of the famous Morgan stallion, Black Hawk, was the dam of the foundation sire of the Tennessee Walking Horse breed, Allen F-1. In fact the dam of Black Hawk, himself, was believed to be a Narragansett Pacer.
- Copperbottom was a legendary racing Morgan of the early nineteenth century, who could win any race, in any gait.
- Lady de Jarnette, the most renowned Morgan show mare ever, could call upon seven perfectly developed gaits, including the singlefoot and pace.

Bloodlines that most typically display gait include **Jubilee King** and **Flyhawk**. The **L.U. Sheep Ranch**, a half million acre Wyoming spread, ran up to 80 saddlehorses at time -- all Morgans. The singlefooters were the hands-down favorites of the ranch hands! And a good percentage of the Calvary remounts bred by government stables from the turn of the century on were smooth traveling, coveted singlefooters. this all goes to show, the gaited Morgan is nothing new, and apparently he's here to stay!

Photos: The Morgan Stallion Twilight Golden Dream. Courtesy of
The Morgan Single-footing Horse Association
2893 S 500 W
Kingman, IN 47952

Mardalargo Marchador

The Mangalarga Marchador is a beautiful horse, exhibiting classic Spanish conformation and charm. The gait is remarkably fast and smooth, a gait in which the horse moves its feet alternately laterally and diagonally with moments in which triple support can be verified.

If the horse is marching on level ground at a normal rhythm, the tracks of the two hind feet will cover or pass slightly beyond the tracks of the front feet. When the horse places the feet diagonally and with moments of triple support, the gait is called marcha batida. If the horse moves the feet laterally and separately and also has moments of triple support, it is called marcha picada.

The reason for so much preoccupation with the marcha, indicated by the name of the breed is that this gait is unique in the world. The famous Spanish Jennets have died out, and the Marchador is probably the purest surviving remnant of that breed. No other breeds have been tossed into the Mangalarga Marchador. Due to the triple support exhibited in the Mangalarga Marchador, the marcha gives a very comfortable ride with little friction. The Mangalarga Marchador neither trots nor paces, naturally going from the smooth marching gait into a wonderful canter.

Florida Cracker

The Florida Cracker Horse, like the cattle breed of the same name, traces its ancestry to Spanish stock brought to Florida in the 1500's when discovered by Spain. Preparing to return to Spain, the Spanish left some of their cattle, horses and hogs to make room for their collected treasures. The genetic heritage of the Cracker Horse is derived from the Iberian Horse of early sixteenth century Spain and includes blood of the North African Barb, Spanish Sorraia and Spanish Jennet (gaited). Its genetic base is generally the same as that of the Spanish Mustang, Paso Fino, Peruvian Paso, Criolla and other breeds developed from the horses originally introduced by the Spanish into the Caribbean Islands, Cuba and North, Central and South America.

The free roaming Cracker Horses evolved over a long period of time by natural selection. They were molded and tempered by nature and a challenging environment into horses that ultimately were to have a large part in the emergence of Florida as a ranching and general agriculture state. The horses also played an important role in the life of the Seminole Indians.

Florida cowmen were nicknamed "Crackers" because of the sound made by their cow whip cracking the air. This name was also given to the small agile Spanish Horse essential for working Spanish cattle. Over the years, Cracker Horses have been known by a variety of names: Chicksaw Pony, Seminole Pony, Marsh Tackie, Prairie Pony, Florida Horse, Florida Cow Pony, Grass Gut and others.

The Cracker Horse suffered a reversal of fortune in the 1930's. The Great Depression led to the creation of a number of relief programs, one of which encouraged the movement of cattle from the Dust Bowl into Florida. With the cattle came the screwworm, which, in turn, led to changes in the practices followed in raising cattle. Before the screwworm, cowmen used these horses to herd and drive the free roaming Scrub cows and Cracker cows; with the arrival of the screwworm came fencing and dipping vats and the need to rope cattle and hold them for treatment. As a result, ranchers turned to the larger, stronger Quarter Horse, and the Florida Cracker Horse lost its demand and became quite rare.

The breed's survival over the last fifty years resulted from the work of a few families who continued to breed Cracker Horses for their own use. It was these ranching families and individuals whose perseverance and distinct bloodlines that kept the Cracker Horses from becoming extinct. The family names include the Ayers, Harvey, Bronson, Matchett, Partin and Whaley names.

Spanish Jennet Horse Society

The Spanish Jennet Horse Society is recreating the rare and exclusive horses that courageously glided through the reclamation of Spain, as well as the discovery and exploration of the New World. The Spanish Jennet was a horse of beauty, style and refinement, blessed with stamina, smooth gait and splashed with a rainbow of colors and a multitude of patterns.

In the Middle Ages, the Spanish Jennet Horse (Pinto Paso or Paso Tiger Horse), reflected his lofty Spanish heritage in his crisp, smooth gait, his proud and elegant carriage, and his brilliant colors and flashy patterns of Pintado and Atigrado. He was the mount of choice of all European nobility. Today a registered Spanish Jennet Horse is a predictable reflection of his historic predecessor.

The Spanish Jennet sports an exotic patterned coat in full spectrum of the usual colors of horses, however, the grey gene is not allowed. The Spanish Jennet is heir to the stylish smooth gait and distinctive conformation of the modern day Paso Horses.