



## United States Icelandic Horse Congress



The Icelandic horse is bred for use, not for show. Highest priority is given to its rideability. It must be courageous and resourceful, cooperative and willing, with good forward action.

Its typical robustness must always be preserved. It is easy to keep and should be of a flawless disposition.

The Icelandic horse is an extremely versatile riding horse for adults and is under certain circumstances also suitable as a children's horse. It can be used for long distance riding as well as five-gaited competition, as a family horse as well as in dressage.

The horse must possess at least four gaits. In addition to the normal gaits of walk, trot and canter, it must also have tolt (running walk, slow-gait, single-foot or rack). The fifth gait, "flugskeid" or flying pace, is very highly valued, but not always present.

The horse should be somewhat rectangular and well proportioned. The head must be clean-cut and expressive, the neck long, supple and well set, so that the horse carries itself well balanced when ridden. The shoulder should be comparatively long and well angled the back flexible and the croup sloping, wide and well muscled. The limbs must be strong with well defined joints.

The horse must give an impression of courage and power, with a proud and attentive expression, especially when ridden. The ideal size lies between 135 and 138 cm/13.1-13.3 hands measured with a rigid stick measures at the highest point of the withers, although the horses may vary considerably in size and type. All colors and markings are allowed.

When evaluating an Icelandic breeding horse, 40% of the score derives from its conformation and 60% from its rideability (action as well as disposition and other psychological traits of importance in a riding horse). An Icelandic breeding horse can therefore not be evaluated before it has been correctly trained. The Icelandic horse is a slow developing breed with a long life span (25-30 years is not unusual), so the horse cannot be trained or fully evaluated until it is five years of age.

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*For more information, contact:*

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