

CANADIAN REGISTRY OF THE TENNESSEE WALKING HORSE

A Guide to Coat Colour Registration of CRTWH Horses



<http://www.crtwh.ca>

secretary@crtwh.ca

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Disclaimer: The information below is based on the best information we have at the time of writing. We have not included horse colours that are not found in our breed. It is intended as a guide for TWH owners who want to be as accurate as possible when registering foals. However, as new genetic information is discovered and more genetic tests become available, there may be changes.

For Your Information

1. **POINTS** include the mane, tail, lower half of legs, tips of ears, and nostril edges.
2. **CRÈME** dilutes red but has a limited effect on black. It is possible for a horse that appears to be black to produce one of the crème dilutes but **only** if the black parent carries a hidden crème gene from an ancestor that had it and passed it on.
3. **OVERO** was used as a collective term for any pattern of white that was NOT tobiano. It is no longer widely used. See Splash and Frame.
4. **SABINO** is the ‘signature’ white spotting pattern in TWH. There are, however, horses that do not appear obviously sabino that still produce offspring of that pattern. Some sabinos have one or both blue eyes throughout their life.
5. **DEPTH & INTENSITY of a horse’s colour** is influenced by other genetic factors such as shade, sootiness, mealy (pangare`) and others. Currently there are no genetic tests for these.
6. **MANE & TAIL COLOUR** is not always governed by the same genetic control as coat colour, especially in red base colours. The inheritance of mane & tail colour is not completely understood at this time.
7. **‘DOMINANT WHITE’ HORSES WITH DARK EYES AND PINK SKIN** are very rare. Before registering a foal as “white”, it is important to know its family background. DNA testing to be sure it’s not a maximal sabino is advised.
8. **COMBINATIONS of colour, patterns or dilutions may occur.** For example: a bay horse that carried both sabino and silver would be registered as a Bay Silver Sabino; or a black horse with both roan and tobiano characteristics would be registered as a Black Roan Tobiano.

THE BASE COLOURS ARE RED & BLACK

COLOUR	BASE COLOUR	MANE and TAIL COLOUR	SKIN COLOUR	SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS
BLACK	Black	Black	Dark. Pink under white markings.	Black can come in various shades from jet black to a browny black to black with tan around muzzle, eyes, flank. Often born mousey grayish, shed out black.
RED (Sorrel or Chestnut)	Some shade of red from bright reddish to deep dark red brown.	Can be red, dark brown, flaxen or mixed	Dark. Pink under white markings.	No dark points; skin around eyes may look pink at birth but becomes dark soon after.

The presence of other genes can modify or dilute these base colours to create the many additional colours seen in horses.

MODIFIED COLOURS - AGOUTI

Name of COLOUR	COAT COLOUR (What you see.)	MANE and TAIL COLOUR	SKIN COLOUR	SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS
BAY (black with an agouti gene that sends the black to the points)	Body is a light to dark brown, often with a red hue.	Black	Dark. Pink under white markings.	Points are black on a Bay– mane, tail, the lower half of legs, tips of ears, and nostril edges.

MODIFIED COLOURS – GRAY

Name of COLOUR	COAT COLOUR (What you see.)	MANE & TAIL COLOUR	SKIN COLOUR	SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS
GRAY	May be any colour at birth. As horse ages, the coloured hairs are replaced by gray to white ones.	Dark at birth, changing to gray, sometimes to white	Dark. Pink under white markings.	Born any colour. Goes gray around eyes and flanks first. Horse lightens to dapple gray, flea-bitten gray or eventually white One parent must be Gray.

MODIFIED COLOURS – ROAN

ROAN (Black roan, sorrel roan, chestnut roan, bay roan, etc.)	May be any colour, silvered with white hairs evenly mixed throughout body coat. Dark head and points. The unaffected color on the legs often forms a “V” above the knee and hock.	Any colour. Mostly solid but may contain scattered white hairs.	Dark. Pink under white markings.	Foals are born Roan or shed to Roan after foal coat. Head, mane, tail, and lower leg are usually solid coloured. One parent must be Roan.
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DILUTE COLOURS - CREME

Name of COLOUR	COAT COLOUR (What you see.)	MANE and TAIL COLOUR	SKIN COLOUR	SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS
BUCKSKIN (Bay with a single crème dilution)	Some shade of tan from cream to dark bronze	Black to very dark brown	Dark. Pink under white markings.	Points are black or dark brown; may have dorsal stripe but not required; does not have primitive markings. One parent must show or carry the Crème gene.
PALOMINO (Red with a single crème dilution)	Yellow, shades from very pale to copper gold	White or flaxen	Dark, Pink under white markings.	Usually born light, shedding out darker but occasionally born red and shedding to gold. One parent must show or carry the Crème gene.
SMOKY BLACK (Black with a single crème dilution)	Black to dark brown	Black to dark brown	Dark. Pink under white markings.	Some smoky black horses look like regular non-dilute blacks while others appear some shade of brown. Eyes may be lighter than normal. One parent must show or carry the Crème gene.
CREMELLO (Red double dilute) PERLINO (Bay double dilute) SMOKY CREME (Black double dilute)	Cream/white Darker cream Smoky cream	White/Cream Cream to Pale brownish Smoky cream	Pink Pink Pink	Eyes are blue at birth and stay blue for all the animal's life. Little difference in appearance between the 3 types. Both parents must show or carry the Crème gene.

DILUTE COLOURS – CHAMPAGNE

Name of COLOUR	COAT COLOUR (What you see.)	MANE and TAIL COLOUR	SKIN COLOUR*	SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS
CLASSIC CHAMPAGNE (Black with one or both champagne genes.)	Varies from beige to tan with medium to light brown points.	Brown	Pink, becoming dusky/mottled with age and sun exposure.	Foals usually born darker, turning lighter. Eyes usually blue at birth becoming amber, hazel, green, or brown later. No dorsal stripe. May show reverse dappling. One parent must be Champagne.
AMBER CHAMPAGNE (Bay with one or both champagne genes.)	Varies from yellow to light tan with medium to chocolate brown points.	Brown	Pink, becoming dusky/mottled with age and sun exposure.	Foals usually born darker, turning lighter. Eyes usually blue at birth becoming amber, hazel, green, or brown later. No dorsal stripe. May show reverse dappling. One parent must be Champagne.
GOLD CHAMPAGNE (Red with one or both champagne genes.)	Varies from pale yellow to gold. May have a shiny, almost iridescent quality.	Usually white, flaxen, gold or a similar shade to body.	Pink, becoming dusky/mottled with age and sun exposure.	Foals usually born darker, turning lighter. Eyes usually blue at birth turning amber, hazel, green, or brown later. May show reverse dappling. One parent must be Champagne.

DILUTE COLOURS – SILVER

Name of COLOUR	COAT COLOUR (What you see.)	MANE and TAIL COLOUR	SKIN COLOUR	SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS
BLACK SILVER (Black with silver dilution)	Body coat a shade of brown or chocolate, often with dapples or rings of lighter colored hair.	Flaxen appearance, Sooty white or silver, often darker at roots and darken with age.	Dark, pink under white markings.	Pale grayish tan body coat at birth, often with white eyelashes. These characteristics darken over time. This dilution gene only affects the black base color. Red horses may carry it but it won't show on them. One parent must carry the Silver gene.
BAY or RED SILVER (Bay with silver dilution)	Reddish brown bodies. Legs are brownish black mottled with silver. Hair around eyes may show signs of silvering.	Mane and tail are usually sooty silver. Often darken with age.	Dark, pink under white markings	Pale grayish tan body coat at birth, often with white eyelashes. These characteristics often change over time. This dilution gene only affects the black base color. One parent must carry the Silver gene.

PATTERNS

Name of PATTERN	COAT COLOUR (What you see.)	MANE and TAIL COLOUR	SKIN COLOUR	SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS
SABINO	Any colour, often speckled with white hairs throughout coat including head and lower legs	Any colour including white or bicoloured	Dark. Pink under white markings	May have minimal or maximal markings. Often have high white on legs, large face markings, belly or body spots, and chin spots. Occasionally have one or both blue eyes that remain blue throughout life. The minimally marked Sabino may have only face and leg markings, often with jagged edges. The maximally marked Sabino is almost pure white with dark eyes; both its parents must carry sabino. One parent usually shows or carries sabino but sabino foals may occur unexpectedly.
TOBIANO	Any colour (except white) with patches of white with at least one crossing the spine somewhere on the animal.	Any colour including white or bicoloured	Dark. Pink under white markings.	Dark head with conservative markings; regular shaped white markings with crisp edges cross the spine at some point. Eyes are usually dark. One parent must be Tobiano.
SPLASHED WHITE FRAME OVERO	Any colour; usually with white legs, white on chest, belly, sides. Head extensively white. Any colour; usually dark legs, extensive white on heads, and on middle of sides & neck.	Any colour including white or bicoloured. Any colour including white or bicoloured	Dark. Pink under white markings. Dark. Pink under white markings.	Edges between coloured and white areas usually very crisp. Blue eyes common. Many splashed white horses are deaf. Some frames carry the Lethal white overo gene. Inheriting this from both parents results in early foal death.

WHITE FACE MARKINGS (White hair with pink skin underneath)

MARKING	DESCRIPTION
STAR	A white marking roughly between the eyes.
STRIP	A white marking on top of the nasal bone.
STRIPE	A narrow connected STAR, STRIP and SNIP.
RACE	A STRIPE that goes off to one side.
BLAZE	A wide white STRIPE.
SNIP	A white marking between nostrils and above the upper lip.
CHIN SPOTS	White markings on the lower lip and chin.
WHITE MUZZLE	A white mark that includes the upper and lower lips.
BALDFACE	A white marking extending beyond the nasal bone out to the eyes and beyond.
APRONFACE	More white than a BALDFACE, white extending down the bottom of the jaw to the throat generally leaving colour over the eyes and ears.
PAPERFACED/BONNETED	Entirely white heads, generally with coloured ears.

LEG MARKINGS

MARKING	DESCRIPTION
WHITE HEEL	White marking only on the heel.
WHITE CORONET	White marking on the coronet band (that portion just above the hoof).
HALF PASTERN	White marking only on the lower half of the pastern.
WHITE PASTERN	White marking covering the entire pastern but not the fetlock joint.
WHITE FETLOCK	White marking covering the entire pastern and the fetlock joint.
SOCK or BOOTS	White marking extending up the cannon bone.
STOCKING	White marking extending to the knee or hock. May be $\frac{3}{4}$ or full depending on how far it extends.
ERMINE SPOTS	Dark spots on white leg markings.

For Your Information when registering a foal:

CRTWH allows a full year before requiring you to register your foal at the minimum cost. This is because foals are generally born a pale shade, then darken to their adult colour when they shed their baby coat. (Except for champagnes that are often born darker, then lighten.) We recommend that you wait close to a year to ensure you are seeing the true adult colour of your young horse.

On the Registration application, note in writing any white hairs or unusual body markings. Include colour, size, and shape.

When registering any foal showing WHITE SPOTTING, include coat colour and pattern. (eg. Sorrel Sabino, or Black Tobiano) AND include 4 pictures - both sides, front and back OR a colour test from an accredited DNA laboratory indicating the pattern. Frame & Splash white are rare to unknown in CRTWH. If you suspect your foal may have one of these patterns, please contact the Board or have DNA colour testing done.

When registering a CHAMPAGNE foal you must include close-up colour pictures of the dock of the tail, udder or sheath, and head OR a colour test from an accredited DNA laboratory.

When registering a ROAN foal, include the original coat colour (eg: BLACK ROAN).

When registering a GRAY foal include the original coat colour (eg: BAY going GRAY).

This colour guide is intended as an aid to help you correctly colour register Walking Horse foals with CRTWH.

What a horse looks like does not always reflect what it is genetically.

Often you need to know the colours and family background of the animal's parents.

If you have a foal that does not seem to fit any of these colours or colour patterns, or combines several different dilutions and/or patterns, contact the Board of Directors. We will do our best to help.

However, in many cases where colour, pattern and/or dilution have been combined, only a DNA colour test can give you the answer.

COMMERCIAL DNA COLOUR TESTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR THE FOLLOWING:

BLACK

RED (sorrel or chestnut)

AGOUTI (bay pattern)

ROAN

GRAY

TOBIANO

SABINO 1 (*Polygenic, only one test available to date.*)

SPLASHED WHITE

and the dilution genes

CRÈME, CHAMPAGNE and SILVER