



**Middle California
Region
Foreleg Conformation
Answers**



1. Base Narrow are legs closer together at the feet than at the chest, inside the plumb line. This increases the stress on the outsides of the feet and legs, leading to splints or ringbone. It also causes movement problems such as **plaiting & interfering**.
2. Toes In (Pigeon-toed) point **inward** instead of straight ahead. This puts uneven weight on the outside of the hooves and legs, possibly leading to splints or ringbone. It also causes the horse to swing the feet inwards while moving, called **paddling**.
3. Camped Out in Front: Most of the foreleg is in **front** of the plumb line, with the leg out in front of the horse. This puts extra stress on the flexor tendon and heels.
4. Bench Knees is caused when the cannon **bones** are offset and do not line up exactly with the center of the knees, instead set slightly to the outside. This puts extra weight and concussion on the inside of the lower leg, potentially causing splints or ringbone.
5. Base Wide legs are farther apart at the feet than they are at the chest, outside the plumb line. This is often caused by a **narrow chest**, and puts extra stress on the insides of the feet and legs, leading to splints or ringbone.
6. Bowed knees bend **outward**, so that the knees are outside the plumb line. This makes the legs weaker, and puts extra stress on the knees and on the outside of the legs.
7. Good forelegs viewed from the front should be straight and parallel, not **too close together or too far apart**. You should be able to drop a plumb line evenly through each leg from **the point of the shoulder**.
8. A good foreleg viewed from the side should be **straight and balanced**. You should be able to drop a plumb line from the center of the shoulder blade to the ground, dividing the leg evenly in half.
9. **Knock knees** bend inward so that the knees are inside the plumb line. This puts extra stress on the knees and on the inside of the legs, putting the horse at risk for carpalis, splints and ringbone.
10. When the toes point outward instead of straight ahead, putting uneven weight on the

inside of the legs it is called **toes out (splay foot)**. It also causes a movement called **winging in**, where each foot swings towards the opposite leg. This may cause interference and lameness, and contributes to splints or ringbone.

11. Long, flat pasterns are **weak and prone to injury**. They may allow the fetlock joint to strike the ground when under stress, and increase the pressure on the tendons.

12. When most of the foreleg is behind the plumb line, tipping the horse's weight forward, causing him to move on the forehand. This describes **standing under**.

13. A Short, Steep Pastern does not absorb **shock** well. It produces a shortened stride and a rougher gait, and may contribute to common unsoundnesses caused by concussion, such as ringbone, sidebone, and navicular.

14. Tendons "Tied In Below Knee" are small, narrow tendons which look as though they are **squeezed** right below the knee are weak and poorly developed, and easily prone to injury.

15. Knee-sprung (Over at the knee) is when the knee looks slightly bent, putting the lower leg too **under** the horse. This puts extra stress on the knee and tendons, and in severe cases may cause stumbling.