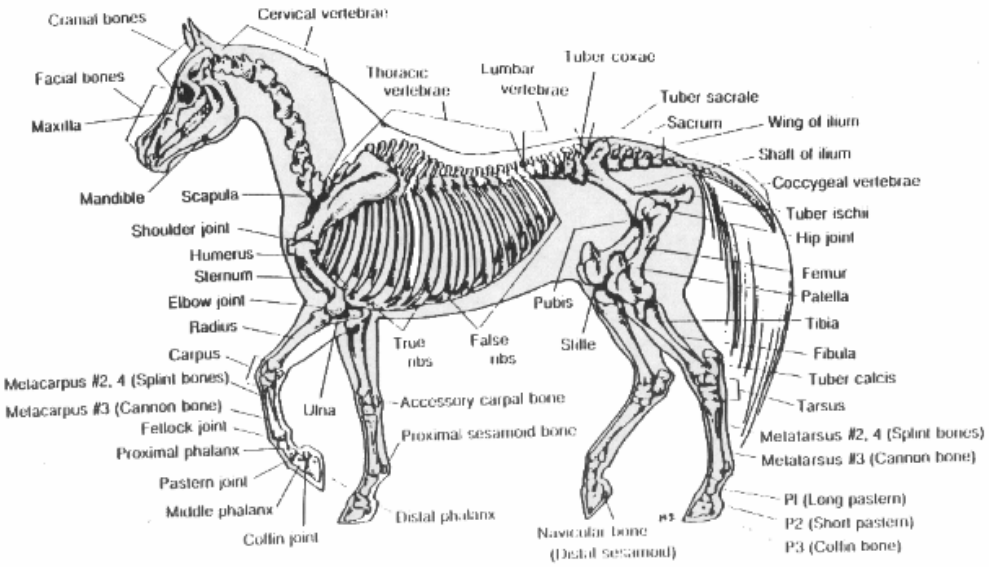
Skeletal System

The Skeleton of a horse is very important. It provides body structure, protection of muscles and all the organs, and support of the horse's weight. Joints acts to help the horse move fluidly when walking in a field or being ridden or jumped in a ring. Bones also store essential minerals. There are 205 bones in a horse's skeleton and they can be divided into two sections; the trunk and the limbs. Bone to bone attachments are known as ligaments and bone to muscle attachments are known as tendons. This is how the skeleton is held together

Trunk:
The trunk of the animal includes the skull, spine, ribs and the breast bone.
Key words:
Cranial Bones- encapsulates the brain, provides protection
Facial bones- defines face, forms nasal passage
Maxilla- forms eye socket, adds facial form
Mandible- lower hinged jaw
Cervical Vertebrae- There are 7 vertebrae that make the neck
Thoracic Vertebrae- forms the back, 18 vertebrae
Lumbar- there are 6 vertebrae, forms the loin
Sacral- forms the croup, 5
Coccygeal- It forms the tail, usually with 18 vertebrae

Limbs:
Scapula- shoulder blade
Humerus- "arm" of the horse
Radius- long bone of forearm
Ulna- smaller fused bone, attached to the radius
Carpus- knee composed of 8 carpal bones
Metacarpels – 3 bones, two are splint bones and one is the cannon bone, extends down leg
Fetlock- joint between the cannon bone and bones with in the hoof
Femur- back legs, thigh bone
Patella- "knee"
Tibia- main bone of leg, large long bone
Fibula- smaller bone fused to the tibia
Tarsus- Hock, consists of 7 bones
Long pasturn- first phalanx
Short pasturn- second phalanx
Coffin bone- 3rd phalanx
Navicular- A small bone behind the coffin bone known as the distal sesamoid.

SKELETON OF THE HORSE



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