

Paso Fino Color Chart

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One of the attractive characteristics of the Paso Fino is that it can come in just about any color. However, if you're like me, trying to remember the description and distinct traits of each of the fourteen color options on the PFHA registration application can be difficult. I have put together a "cheat sheet" to make selecting the color of your foal at time of registration a little easier. Although the PFHA does accept color changes on registered horses, correctly determining the color of a foal during the initial registration process will save you time, money, and potential confusion in the future. Keep this article handy and enjoy the Paso Fino's coat of many colors!



Bay: Bay horses are characterized by a body color that ranges from red to dark brown with black points. The black points are the defining feature of this color, and a horse must have a black mane, tail, ear edges, and lower legs in order to be classified as a bay. Some horses may have white markings that cover their black leg points; however, they are still considered to be bay.



Buckskin: Buckskin is a cream dilution of the bay coloring. A buckskin must still have a black mane, tail, ear edges, and lower legs, but their body color will be tan or golden.



Perlino: Perlino is a double cream dilution of the bay coloring. A Perlino will have a cream coat color, pink skin, and blue eyes similar to a Cremello. The main difference is Perlino horses retain a mane, tail, and points that are darker than their coat color, but these darker areas will appear reddish or rust colored instead of black.



Chestnut: Chestnut is a common coat color with a wide range of variations. The main characterization of a chestnut horse is the complete absence of black hairs. A chestnut horse typically has dark brown eyes, black skin, and a solid base color of red with a mane and tail that match or are lighter than the body color. Variations in the base color of a chestnut can range from a light coat that appears almost palomino, to a very dark shade that can be confused with brown or black. Chestnut horses are also commonly seen with white leg and face markings.



Palomino: Palomino is a cream dilution of the chestnut coloring. A Palomino horse will have a coat color ranging from a very light yellow or tan to gold with a light cream or white mane and tail. The skin beneath the coat will be dark, and a Palomino's eyes are typically brown or dark amber.



Cremello: Cremello is a double cream dilution of the chestnut coloring. Cremello horses will have a white mane and tail similar to a Palomino, but the coat color is light cream to nearly white. A Cremello will also have pink skin and blue eyes.



Roan: Roans can have a coat with any base color intermingled with white hairs. They are born with this mixed coat, and it does not fade as the animal ages like a gray. The head, mane, tail, and lower legs of a Roan are typically dark, with the exception of white markings.



Pinto: A Pinto horse has a coat color that consists of large white patches combined with any other base color. There are a number of terms used to describe distinct pinto patterns or coloring; any valid term (tobiano, overo, skewbald, etc.) may be listed on a horse's registration certificate in the description section at the owner's request.



Dun: The Dun gene is similar to a dilution; however, Dun horses' base coat show through with a distinctive pattern instead of the entire body being diluted. The pattern always includes a dorsal stripe down the center of the back, but you may also see zebra stripping on the legs, shoulder bars, ear tips, cob-webbing on the chest and face, or a transverse strip at the withers. Any color or color combination can have the Dun gene. A horse can appear chestnut, pinto, buckskin, or any other base color, but the presence of pronounced primitive markings is the best indicator that the horse is Dun.



Gray: Gray is a progressive color trait. A gray foal may be born with any base color including bay, chestnut, or black, but will typically begin to show signs of graying by one year of age. White hairs are usually first seen around the eyes, muzzle, and flanks of a foal. The skin of a gray horse will be dark or black beneath the gray hair, and the eyes also remain dark. Over time, a gray horse can develop a coat that is solid white, white mixed with other colors, dappled, or flea-bitten.



Black: Black horses must have a hair coat that is entirely black. The skin color will also be black, and the eyes will be dark brown. White markings may be seen on black horses, but the coat cannot have any areas of permanently red or brown tinged hair. Black horses may also get sun-bleached from exposure to the elements, and their coat color may be confused for bay. However, the hairs around the eyes and muzzle of a sun-bleached black horse will still be black compared to a bay's reddish brown hairs.



Grulla: A Grulla is a black horse that has the Dun gene. They are much rarer than Duns with any other base color. The coat of a Grulla will appear slate brown or smoky, mouse-colored with a dorsal stripe, dark face, and other primitive markings associated with a Dun.



Brown: Brown horses have a body color of black or brown and are sometimes very hard to distinguish from a bay. However, the main difference is with a brown horse is that the muzzle, flanks, eye area, inner thigh, and belly will have a lighter coloring than the body as opposed to black points.