



**Credits:** C.A. Porr, C.C. Crisman, R.K. Splan, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA

Project funded by the Virginia Horse Industry Board. Artwork by Pam Talley Stoneburner. Thanks to the Virginia 4-H Cloverbud Advisory Group and Virginia Tech Equine Science Undergraduate Students for ideas and support.

Special thanks to Megan Salaj for her efforts on this module.

The 4-H name and emblem are protected under 18 USC 707.

## Virginia Cooperative Extension



[www.ext.vt.edu](http://www.ext.vt.edu)

Produced by Communications and Marketing, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 2011

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; Jewel E. Hairston, Interim Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State, Petersburg.

Publication 380-104

# A Horse of a Different Color!

How do you tell the difference between horses? If you go into a herd, how do you know which one you're looking for?



How many markings can you identify?

## Introduction

Horses come in a variety of colors with many different markings that can help with the identification of individuals. Knowing the names of those colors and markings not only makes you knowledgeable about horses, it helps you communicate with others in the horse industry.

Common colors include black, chestnut, bay and gray. Any of the colors can have white face or leg markings. Points include the ears, lower legs, mane and tail.

**Black** horses often have dark eyes, hooves, and skin. **Chestnut** horses, sometimes called sorrel, have a coat that is basically some shade of red, including the points. If the horse has a red or brown coat but black points, then it's a **bay**. **Gray** horses may be born any color and have white hairs that begin to appear at or shortly after birth. They usually have dark skin and eyes. Other colors include **dun** (a yellow coat with dark points), **palomino** (golden coat with a light mane and tail and no black points), **paint** or **pinto** (white patches on the body, combined with any other color), or **appaloosa** (coat has a spotted pattern, usually over the rump; hooves may be striped and skin may be mottled with colors).

Face and leg markings are white areas on that part of the body. The skin under such a marking is white or pink. A horse's face marking could include a **star**, **snip**, **stripe**, **blaze**, or a **bald face**. Leg markings could include a **coronet** (white only over the coronet band), **sock** (white extends from the coronet to the middle of the cannon), or **stocking** (white extends up to and possibly over the knee).

**Skill Level:** Cloverbud, K-3

### Learner Outcomes

1. Identify various coat colors of the horse.
2. Identify various leg and face markings of the horse.

**Science Standard(s):** Life Science/ Characteristics of Organisms

**Success Indicator:** Correctly identify coat colors and markings of the horse by matching colors and markings

**Life Skill(s):** Decision-making, Critical thinking, Cooperation

**Tags:** Cloverbud, horse, colors, markings

**Time Needed:** 45-60 minutes (can be easily broken into smaller segments)

### Materials List

Printed pages for colors and markings memory cards

Crayons or colored pencils

Scissors, Glue sticks, Construction paper

Magazines or books with examples of horse colors and markings

### Did You Know?

Some horses turn grey as they get older!

The skin under the white markings on a horse is pink or white, but under colored hair, the skin is dark!

### Glossary Words

**Bald Face** – white covering most of the forehead and usually at least one eye

**Blaze** – wide stripe

**Cannon** – the bone beneath the knee or hock

**Coronet** – the area where the hoof wall connects to the leg

**Points** – refer to the ears, lower legs, mane, and tail

**Snip** – small white area on the nose or lips

**Star** – small white area on the forehead

**Stripe** – long, narrow band of white from forehead to nose

## Experience / What to Do

Begin by discussing colors of horses, using magazines or books to find pictures that represent them. Also, having model horses in various colors allows each child to choose one to hold and use in examples. Discuss the characteristics of each color or marking, using the pictures or models for emphasis.

### Practice Coat Colors and Markings

1. Hand out blank memory cards to children. Each child should have two cards for each color or marking to be learned.
2. Ask youth to color and label their memory cards appropriately, two for each color or marking (put their names on the face of the cards as well).
3. Ask youth to cut out the memory cards and glue them to construction paper. If the paper is bigger than the picture, it will form a “frame” around the picture.
4. These can be used in games listed in the “More Ideas” section at the end.

### Scavenger Hunt (Testing knowledge)

1. Provide magazines, books, or pictures (have kids bring their own to add to the mix).
2. Give them a list of colors or markings to find examples for.
3. This can be made easier for younger children by only using colors, face markings, or leg markings.
4. If the magazine can be cut up, allow the children to cut out their pictures and glue them on a piece of construction paper to make a collage.

## For More Information

Search [www.extension.org/](http://www.extension.org/) for additional information.

## References

“Equine Science – Basic Knowledge for Horse People of All Ages” by Jean T. Griffiths. [www.Horsebooksetc.com](http://www.Horsebooksetc.com) or Phone: 1-800-952-5813

“Horse Science” by Ray Antoniewicz. [www.4-hmall.org/detail.aspx?ID=16681](http://www.4-hmall.org/detail.aspx?ID=16681)

“Horses & Horsemanship” by Ray Antoniewicz. [www.4-hmall.org/detail.aspx?ID=16680](http://www.4-hmall.org/detail.aspx?ID=16680)

## Talk It Over

### Share . . .

1. Which part of what you did today was the most fun?
2. What's your favorite horse coat color? Why? What other animals are that color?
3. Which activity today helped you learn the most about horse colors and markings?

---

---

### Reflect . . .

1. Explain the difference between a chestnut and a bay horse.
2. How did others help you learn about the differences between colors and markings?

---

---

---

### Generalize . . .

1. How does knowing colors help you when you're around horses?
2. Why is it important to know colors and markings when you're talking to other people?

---

---

---

### Apply . . .

1. What color is your favorite horse?
2. Which markings does that horse have, if any?
3. Where could you go to see different pictures or photos of horses to help you find the colors and markings you learned about today?

---

---

## More Ideas!

**“Pictionary”** – give the children a blank horse outline. Have one child draw markings or color the horse and the other children have to name it!

### **“Concentration” or “Memory” Game**

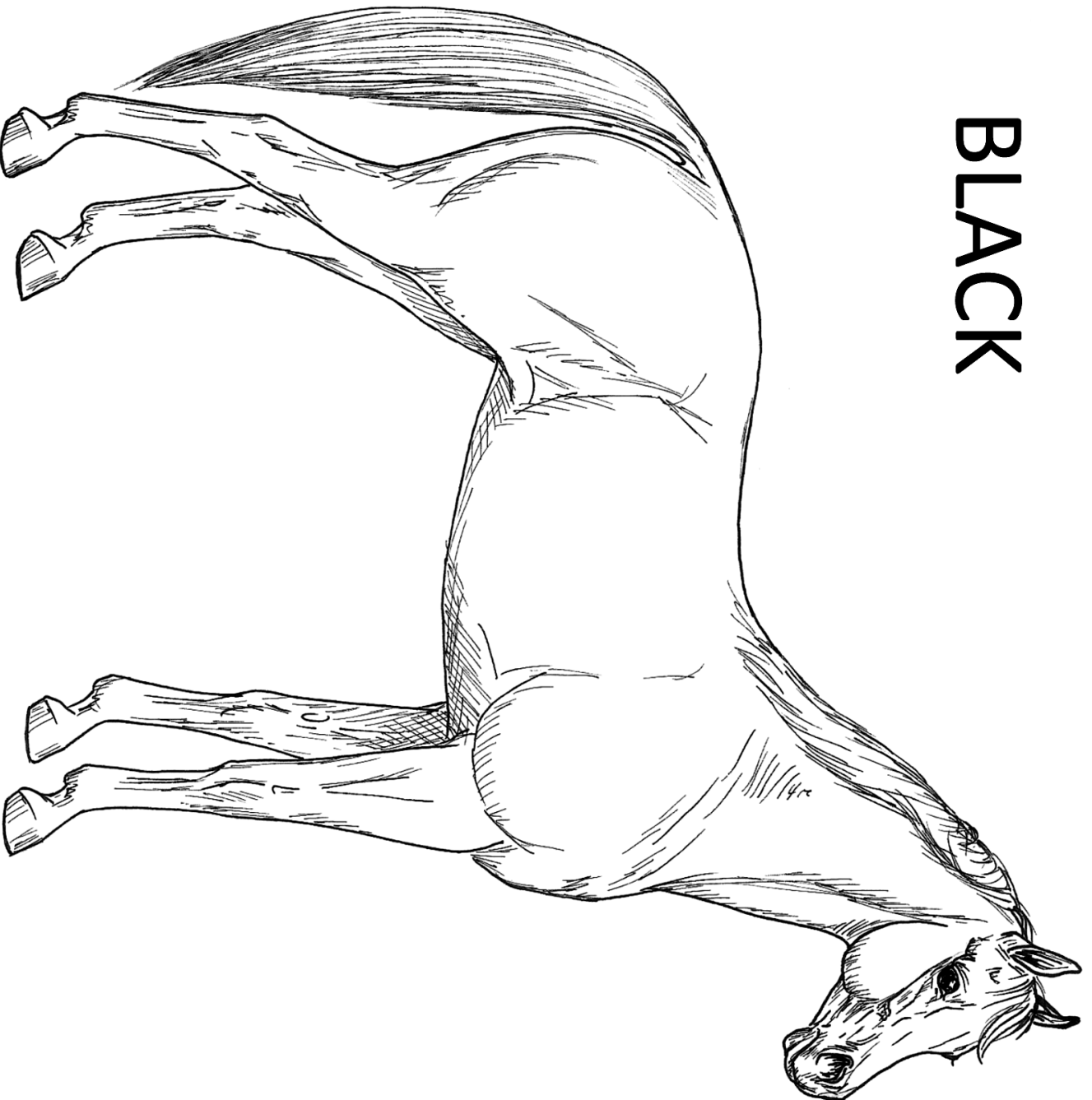
1. Stack colors and markings cards together and then shuffle/mix them up. Lay them face down on the table.
2. The child flips over two cards. If they match, both cards are withdrawn from the table and the youth gets to select two more cards.
3. If they do not match, both cards are turned face down again and play passes to the next child.
4. Play continues until all the cards are gone.
5. This game can be played by one child, who will continue to select cards in pairs until all cards are gone.
6. This game can be made simpler by separating colors and markings or reducing the number used in the game.
7. If multiple children are involved, be aware of age differences – older children will have an easier time remembering where the cards are.

### **“Go Fish”**

1. Shuffle the memory cards to mix them up. Deal an equal number of cards to each child.
2. Any cards that match are pulled out of the child’s hand and set aside.
3. The first child may then ask any other child if they have a card that matches one in their hand. If the answer is yes, the card must be handed over.
4. If the answer is no, play passes to the next child in the circle.
5. Play continues until one child has no more cards.
6. This game can be made simpler by separating colors and markings or reducing the number used in the game.

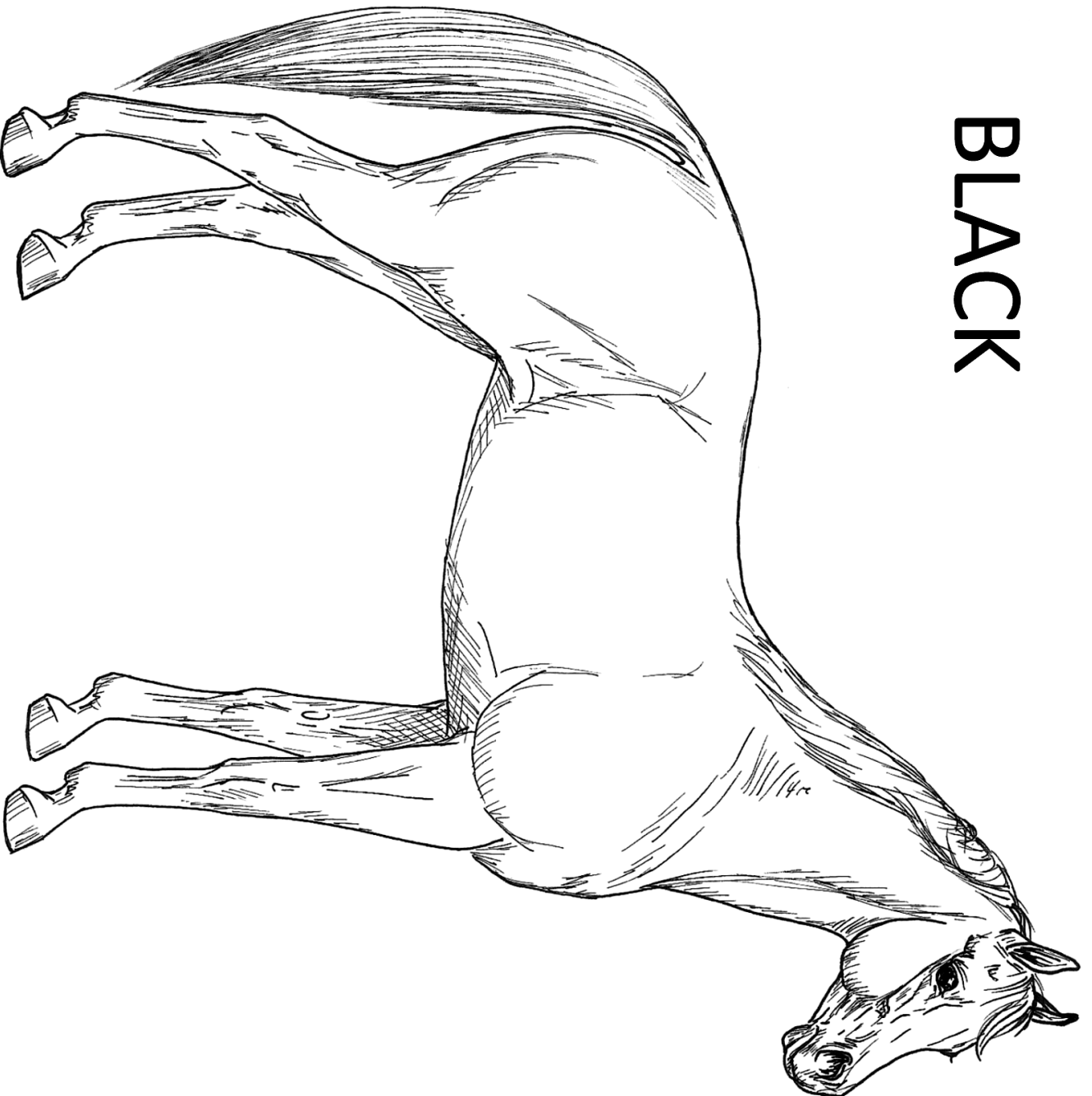
**“In Living Color”** - Take a trip to a local horse show, equine event, or stable and discuss colors and markings of horses seen live!

# BLACK



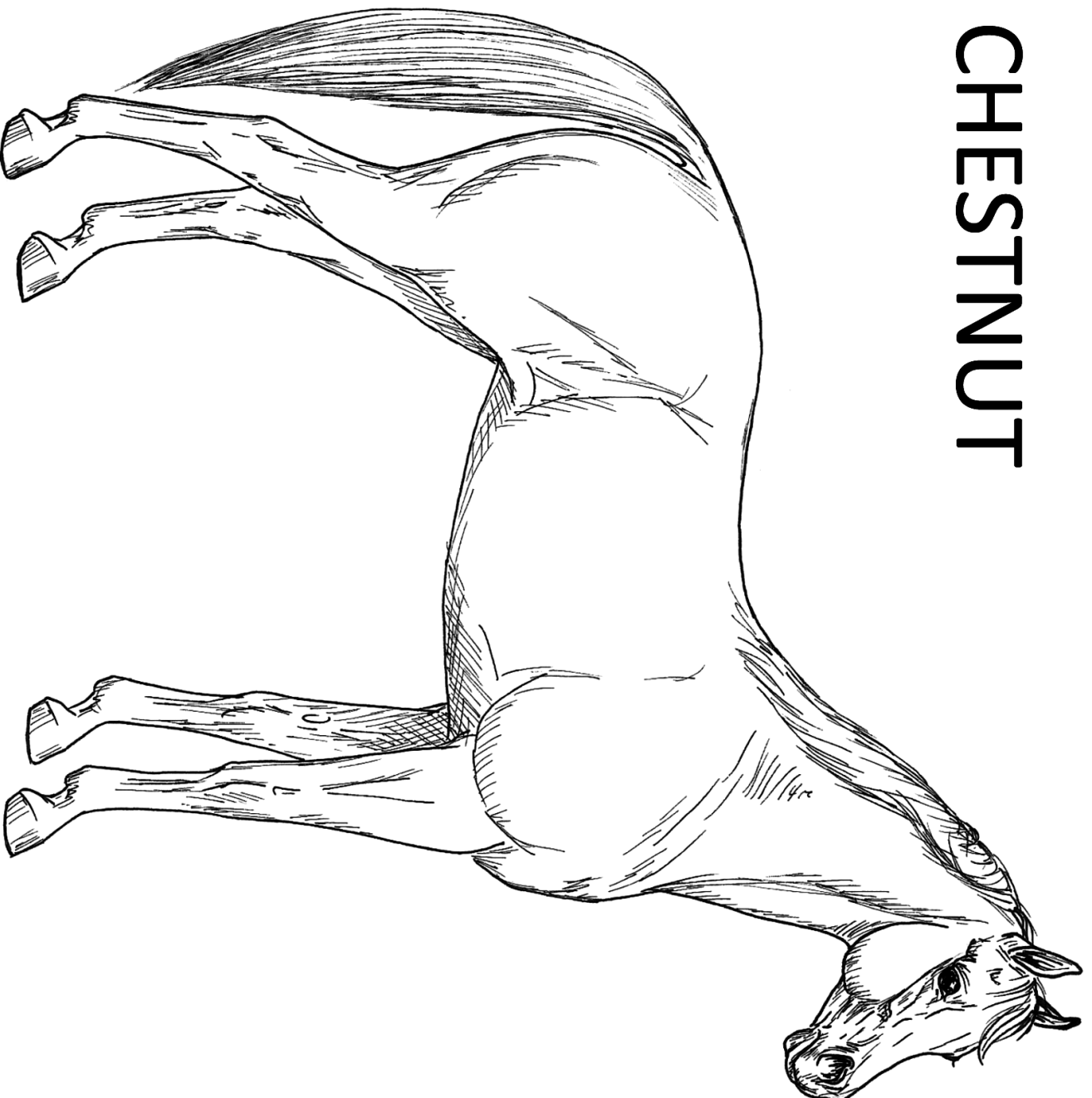
A Horse of a Different Color!

# BLACK



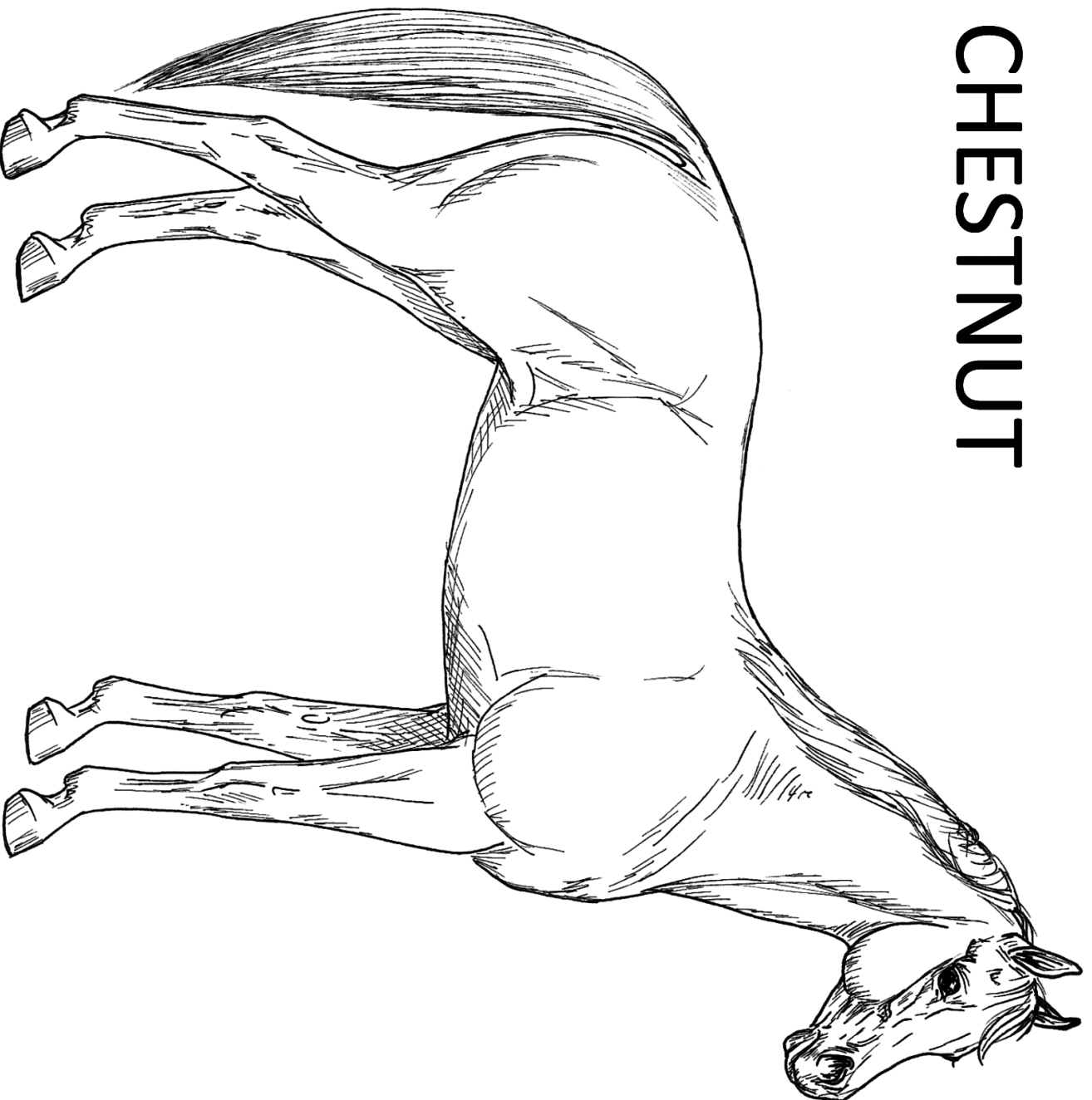
A Horse of a Different Color!

# CHESTNUT



A Horse of a Different Color!

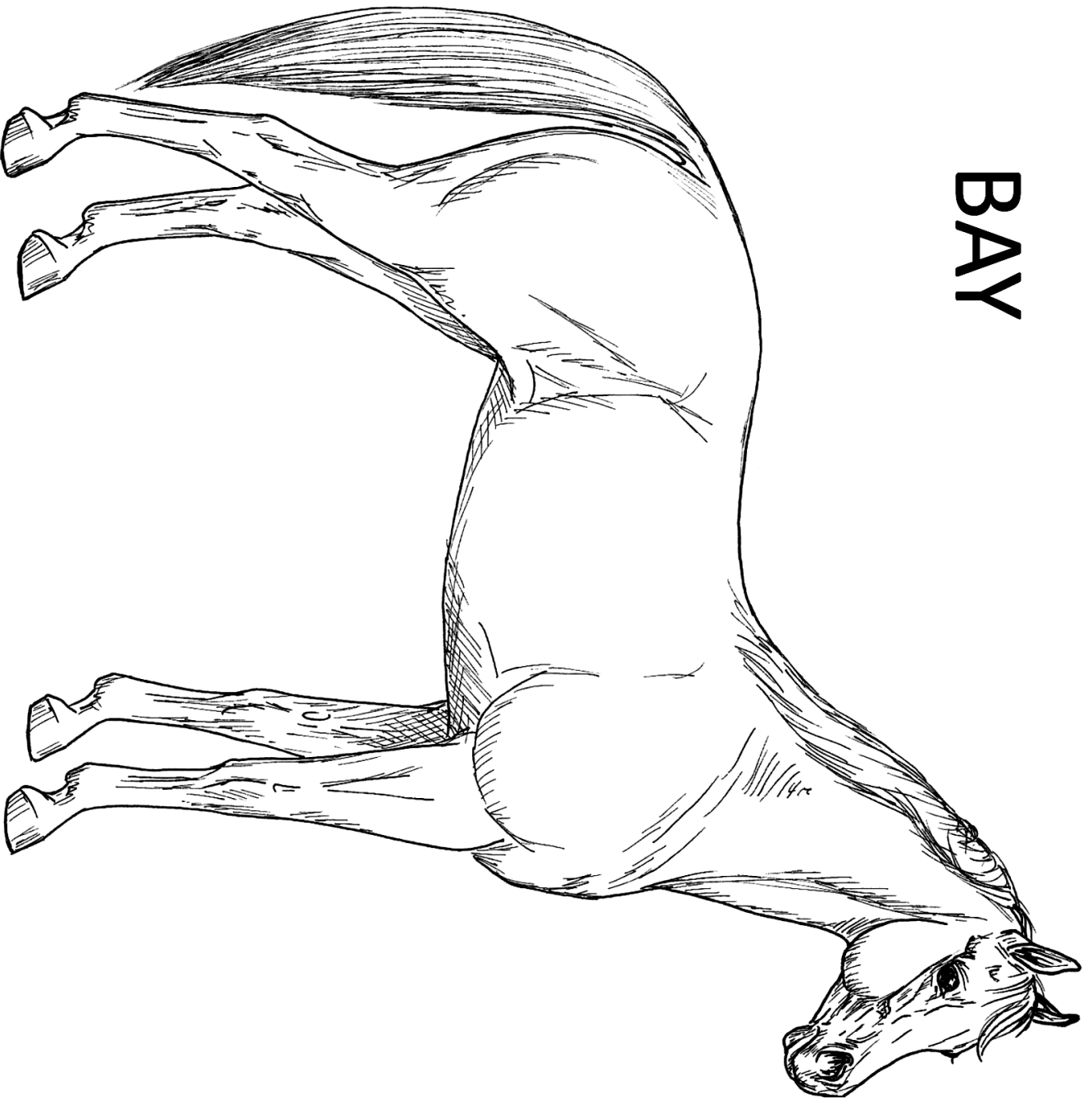
# CHESTNUT



A Horse of a Different Color!

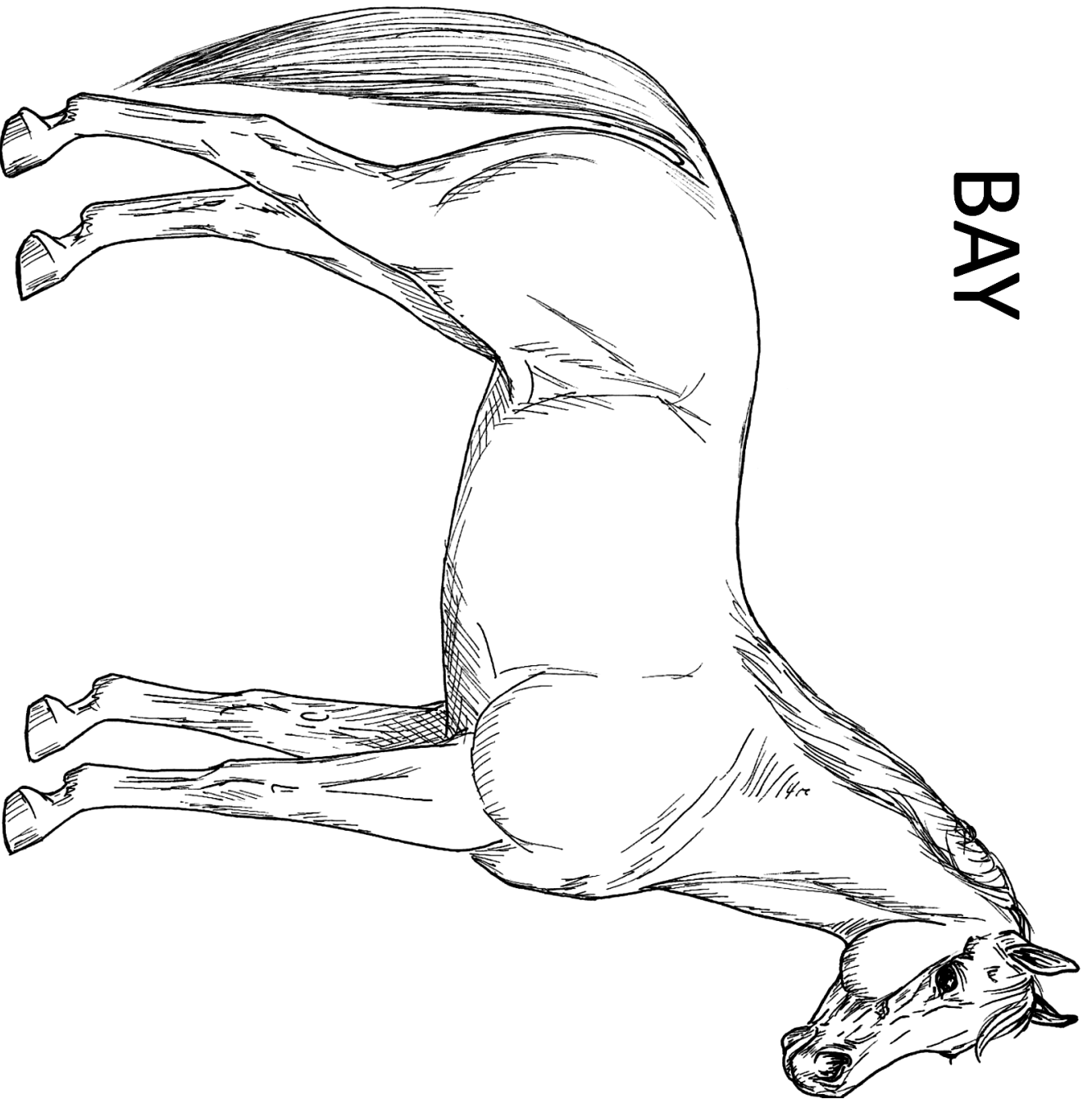


# BAY



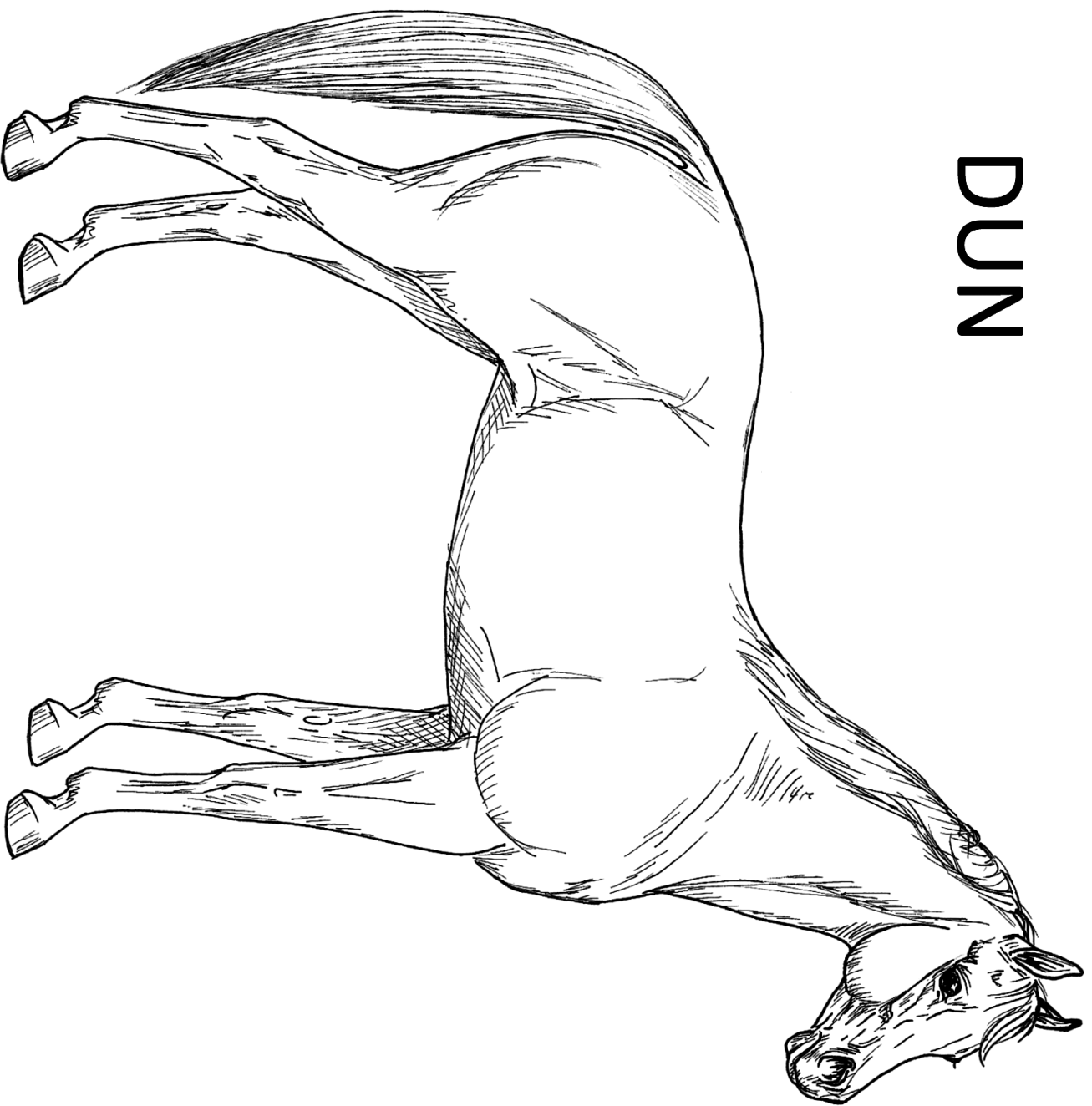
A Horse of a Different Color!

# BAY



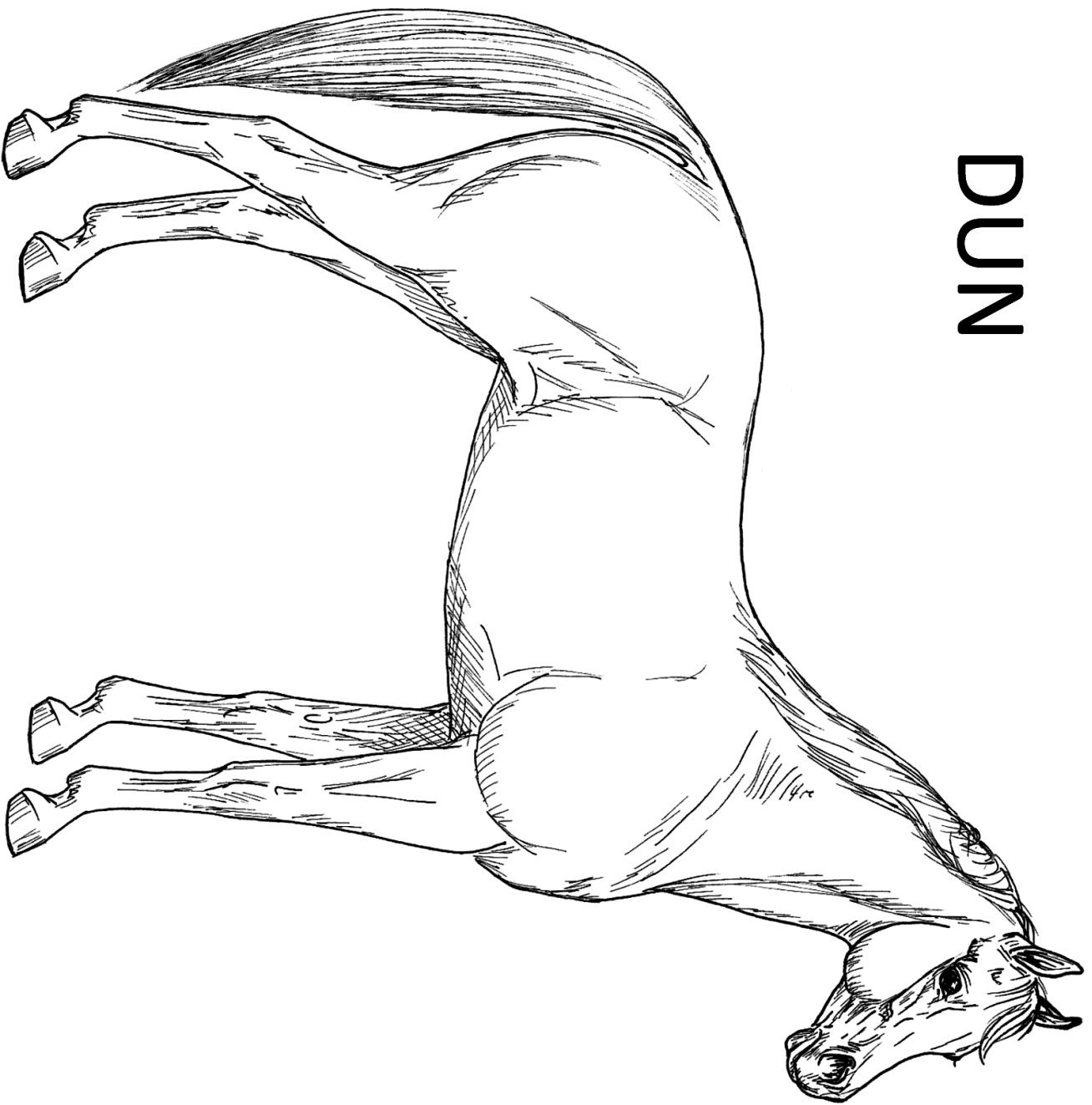
A Horse of a Different Color!

# DUN



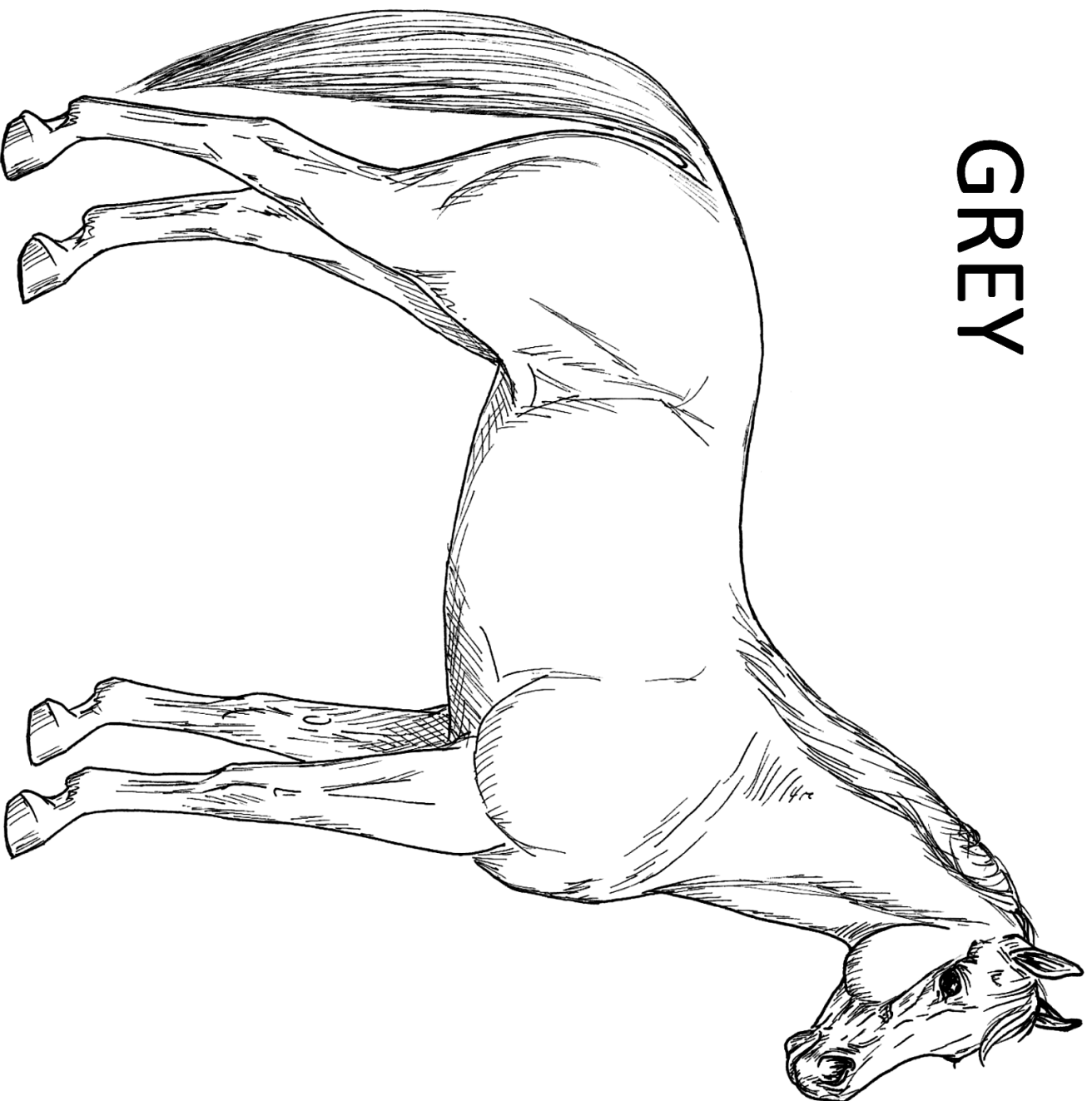
A Horse of a Different Color!

# DUN



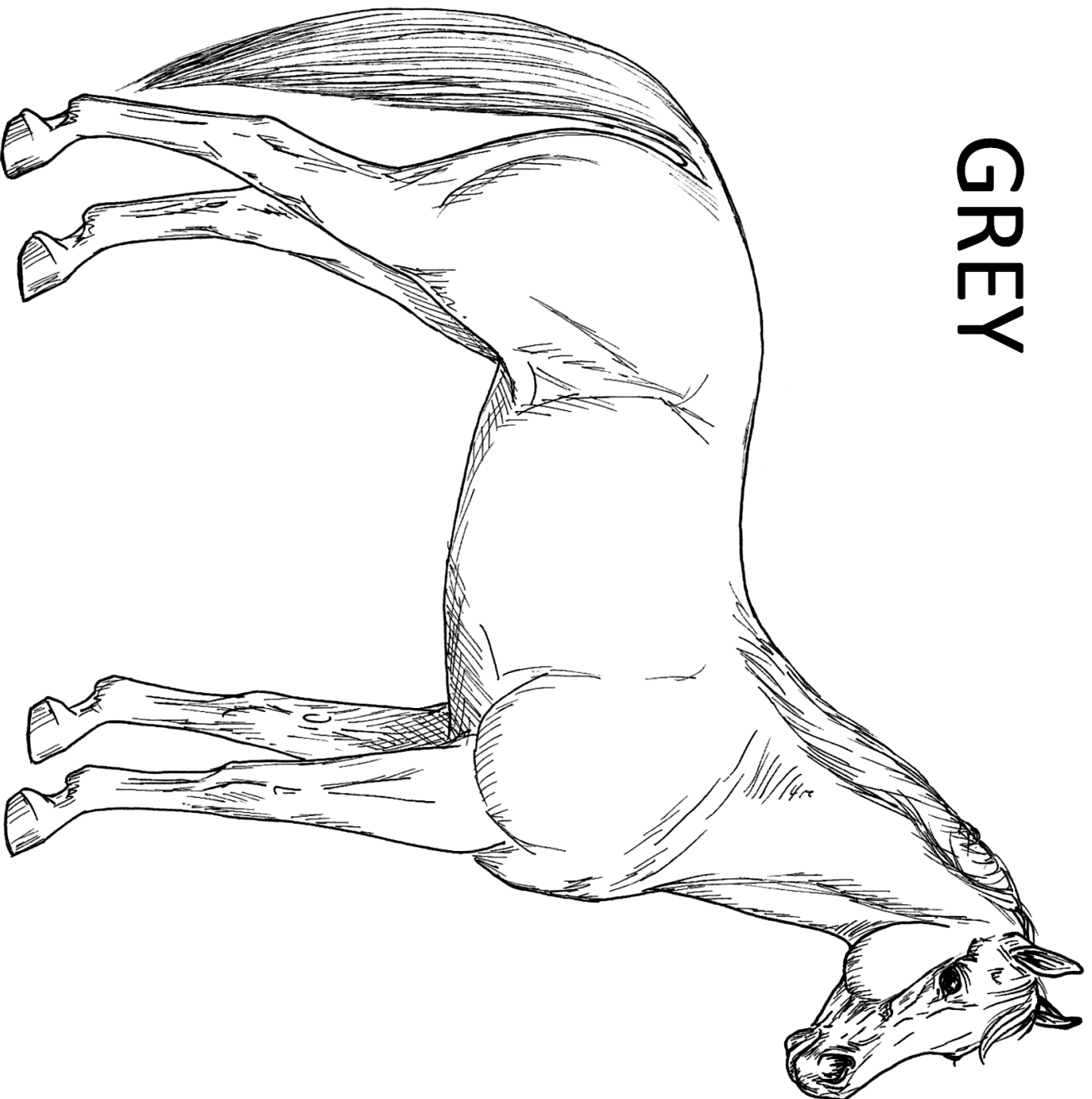
A Horse of a Different Color!

# GREY



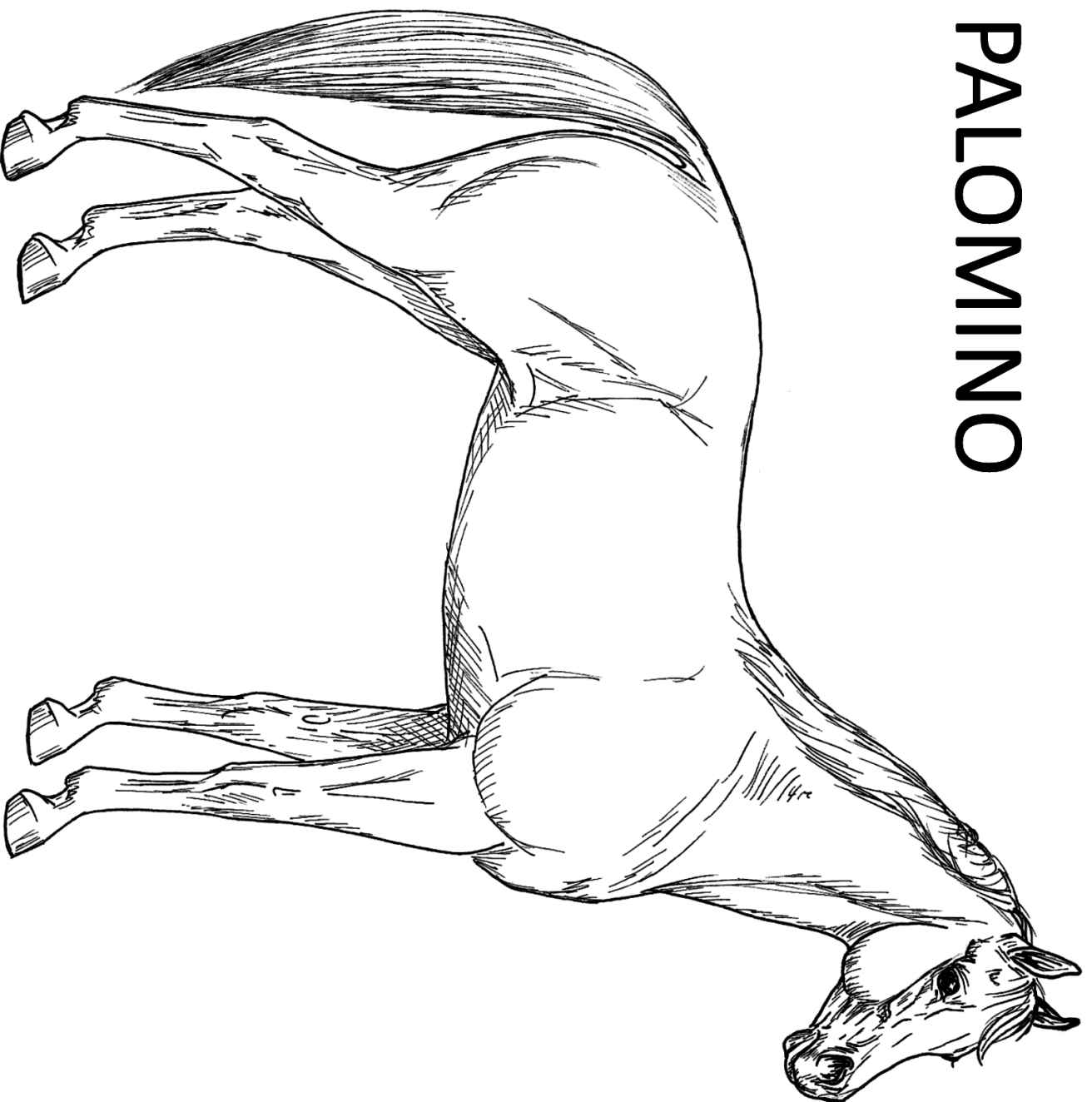
A Horse of a Different Color!

# GREY



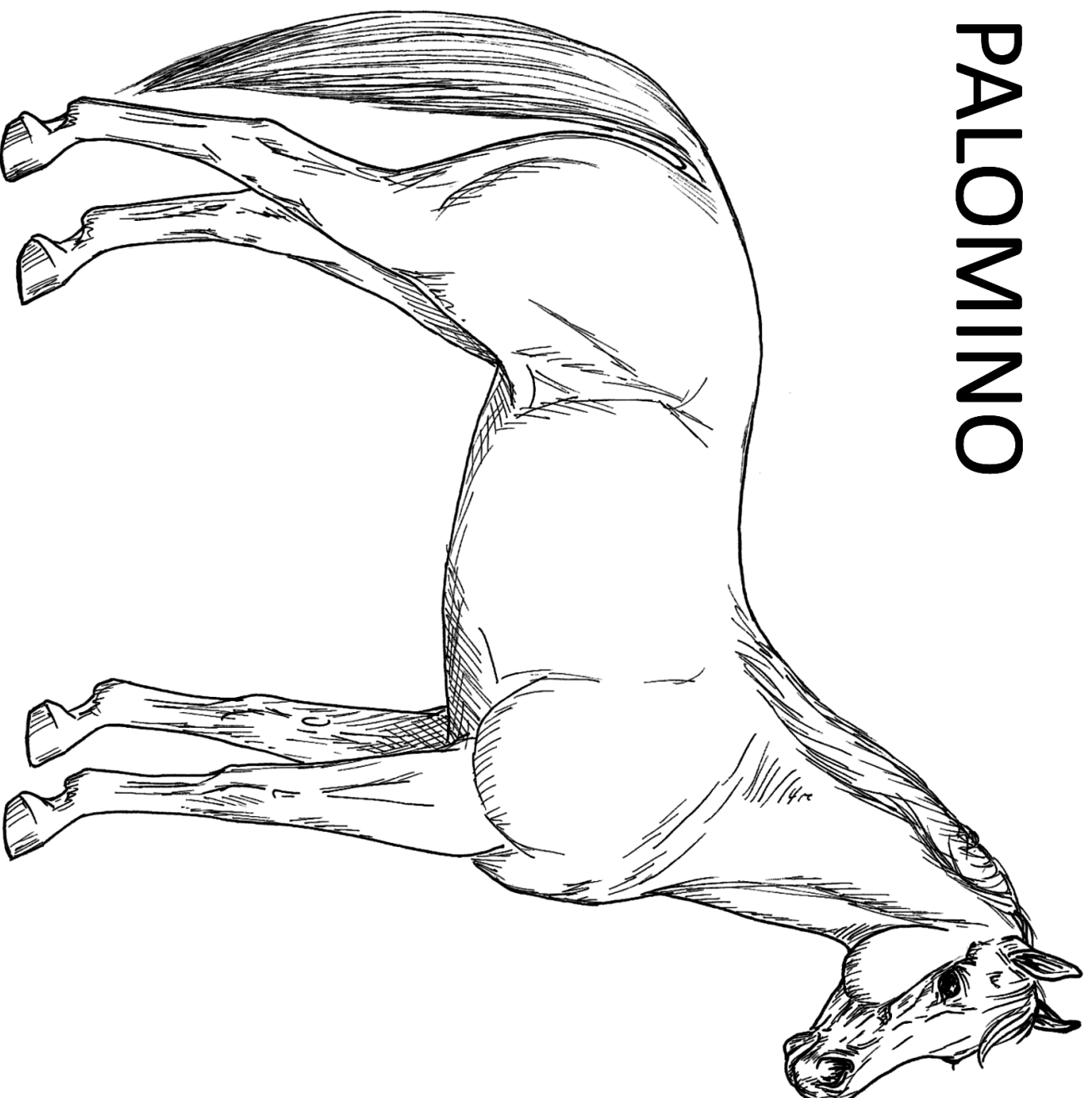
A Horse of a Different Color!

# PALOMINO



A Horse of a Different Color!

# PALOMINO



A Horse of a Different Color!





**STAR**

**A Horse of a Different Color!**



**STAR**

**A Horse of a Different Color!**



# STRIP

A Horse of a Different Color!

# STRIP



A Horse of a Different Color!



**SNIP**

**A Horse of a Different Color!**

# SNIP



A Horse of a Different Color!

# BLAZE



A Horse of a Different Color!

# BLAZE



A Horse of a Different Color!



# BALD FACE



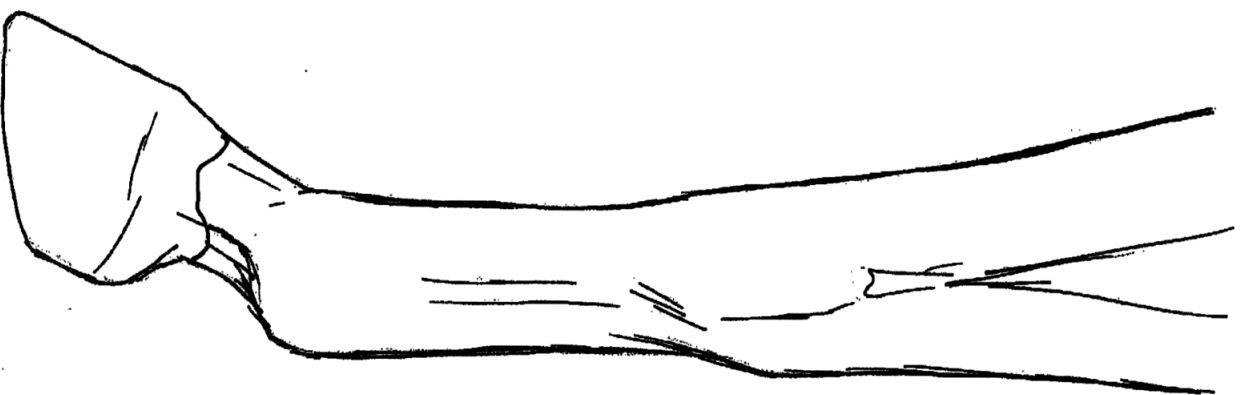
A Horse of a Different Color!

# BALD FACE



A Horse of a Different Color!

# CORONET



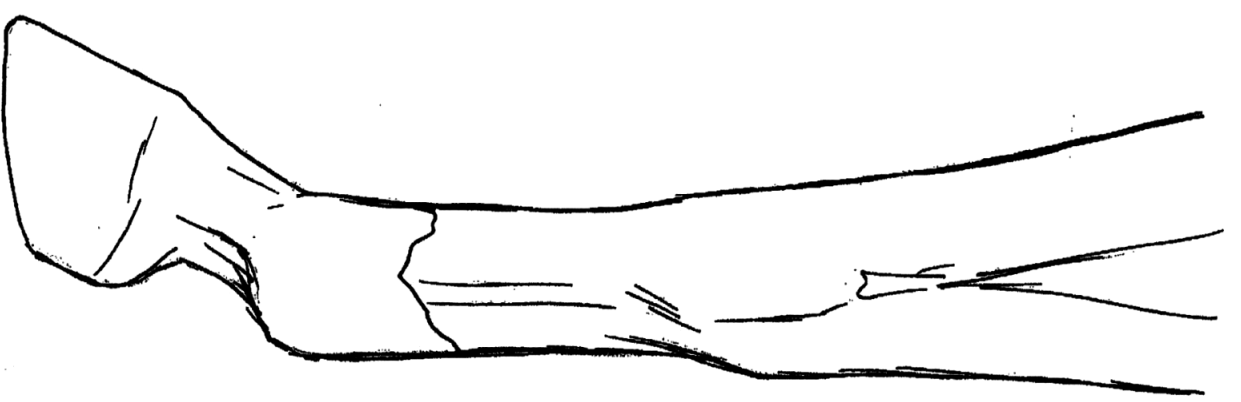
A Horse of a Different Color!



# CORONET

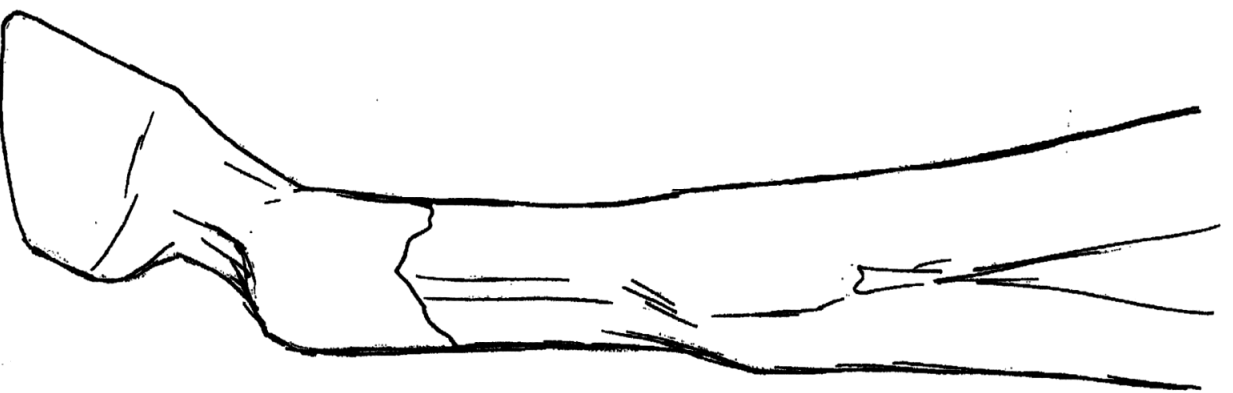
A Horse of a Different Color!

# SOCK



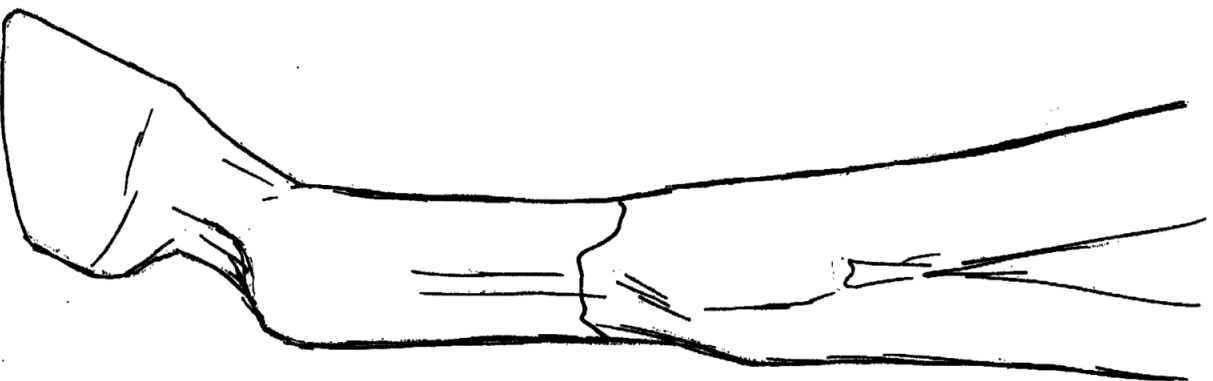
A Horse of a Different Color!

# SOCK



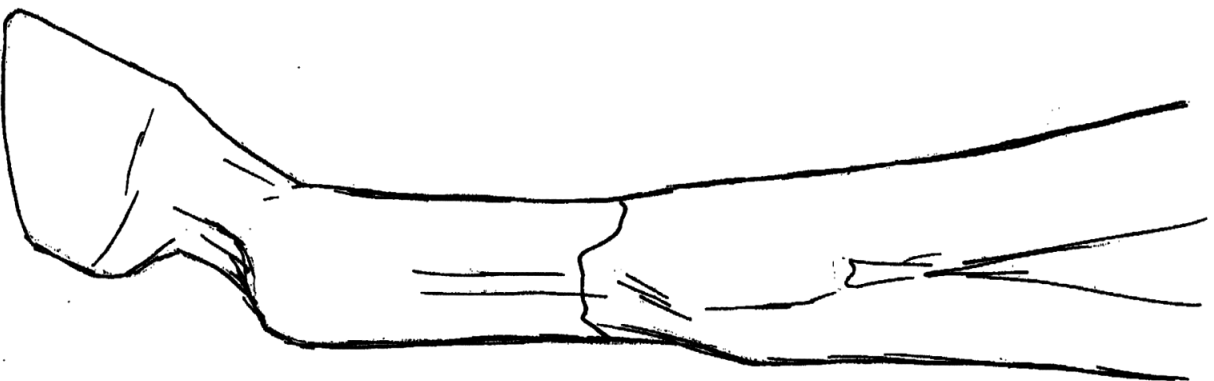
A Horse of a Different Color!

# STOCKING



A Horse of a Different Color!

# STOCKING



A Horse of a Different Color!