

Mason

### How the horse has evolved

Have you ever wondered how a horse looked like millions of years ago? This text will tell you all about how the horse has evolved throughout the last million years.

#### Hyracotherium

The Hyracotherium was the first horse of the time. They lived in humid rainforests and, because they lived in a rainforest, their diet was leaves. Their eyes were on the front of their head because they had fewer predators back then. This was the time when they had toes instead of hooves and their environment was marshy so they needed to spread their weight out easily. It was about 0.4m tall.

#### Meshippius

The Meshippius was the middle horse; they were still a browser but their hooves started to change to become more like modern day horses and now they started to eat grass more than leaves because their environment was changing. It started to become less humid and they started to get bigger, faster and stronger. At this time, they were about 0.6m tall. Their hooves had changed because they migrated and weren't on marshy land and needed to run faster to get away from predators.

#### Merychippus

At that time, the horse had doubled in size and had migrated because they had more and more predators. At this part of the evolution, their hooves had changed because of the environment and since then they had predators. Another great fact is that they never stop eating (grazers). Over that amount of time they had grown to be around a metre tall.

#### Equus

After all those millions of years, the horse has evolved to be a grazer. As well as being a grazer, it is now prey to many animals so their eyes moved to the side of their head to see behind them and in front.

#### Conclusion

In the text above I talked about how the horse has evolved and its diets and the environment it lived in: read below to get some more interesting facts.

#### **Fun Horse Facts**

**Horses** can sleep both lying down and standing up.

**Horses** can run shortly after birth.

A 19th century **horse** named 'Old Billy' is said to have lived 62 years.

**Horses** have around 205 bones in their skeleton.

**Horses** have been domesticated for over 5000 years.

**Life span 25 – 30 years**

**Speed: 88 km/h (Maximum, Sprint)**