

Odd-toed

Horses, rhinoceroses and tapirs are **perissodactyls**. Perissodactyls (pah-RIS-oh-DAHK-tals, meaning "uneven finger") are mammals with an odd number of hooves on each foot.

Mammals with an even number of hooves, such as giraffes, cows and pigs, are artiodactyls.



Three to one

Over millions of years the feet of horses changed so that only the middle toe remained, which was strengthened to carry their weight. All modern horses are one-toed.



Hyracotherium



Meshippus



Merychippus



Pliohippus

Paleocene

Eocene

Oligocene

Miocene

Pliocene

66

55

34

24

5.2

1.75

Millions of years before present

Evolution - simple or complex?



Horse evolution did not occur progressively along a straight line, it actually had many side branches. Some multi-toed horses were still alive when the modern type of horse, the genus *Equus*, appeared.