

Smoky Black: A horse that appears much as a regular black horse looks; but it actually has a dilute gene (in this case, a dominant cream gene) from a dilute parent (palomino, buckskin, cremello, perlino, smoky). Both the black gene and the cream gene are dominants, so if you breed a black to a palomino, you can get black, palomino, smokey black, chestnut and even occasionally a bay or buckskin.

Now we have always heard that there is an exception to every rule and we are about to give you that exception in reference to the cream gene. **Black is the ONLY color that can partially hide or even cover up the cream gene.** A chestnut with the cream gene is a palomino, a bay with the cream gene is a buckskin, but a black with the cream gene can appear to be black although it is actually a smoky black. However the cream gene is still present and can produce palominos from a smoky black to chestnut mating. This is the one sure way to determine if the horse is a smoky; since the chestnut can only contribute a red gene, the dominant cream gene showing the palomino color has to come from the smoky.

Smokys can also produce cremellos if bred to a palomino, smoky or buckskin since you have the possibility of getting a cream gene from **both** parents. If you get a foal that appears black and one of the parents in the mating is a cremello/perlino, then you know that the foal is a smoky because the cremello/perlino (2 dominant cream genes) has only a dominant cream gene to pass on and the black is hiding it.

Smoky foals usually are born with blue or grey eyes that later darken or go amber gold. They often have light tan or gold appearing tufts of hair in the ears (or even the whole inside). The foal coat color usually appears the same as a black foal, although some may look like dark buckskins until the foal coat sheds and the black color becomes evident. Some may even develop gold dapples on the body as they mature. One of the great things about smoky black is that even though they appear black, most times they will breed as though they are palomino.