

the accidental smallholder

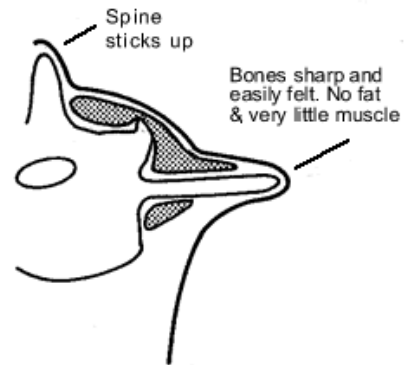
Body condition scoring sheep

Body condition score 1 - Extremely emaciated

All individual vertebrae can be felt easily. There is no muscle or fat covering the bones.

Sheep in this condition have a serious problem and should normally be culled immediately

Backbone	Prominent and sharp
Short ribs	Ends are sharp and easy to press between, over and around
Eye-muscle	Thin, the surface tending to feel hollow

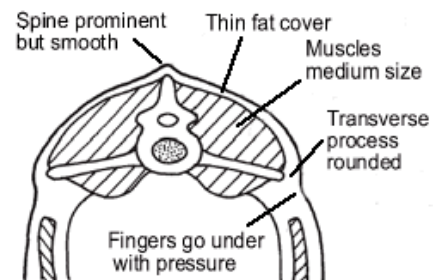


Body condition score 2 - Lean

Individual bones can be felt, but they are **rounded** rather than sharp.

There is some muscle covering the bones, but this feels concave rather than convex.

Backbone	Prominent but smooth
Short ribs	Smooth well-rounded ends can feel between, over and around each smoothly
Eye-muscle	Reasonable depth with the surface tending to feel flat

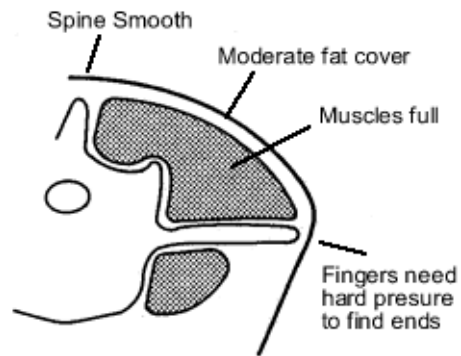


Body condition score 3 - Good

The ends of the transverse processes of the vertebrae can be felt only with firm pressure.

There is good full muscle with some fat covering the bones, and this feels convex rather than concave.

Backbone	Can be felt but smooth and rounded
Short ribs	Ends are smooth and well covered firm pressure necessary to feel under and between short ribs
Eye-muscle	Full and rounded

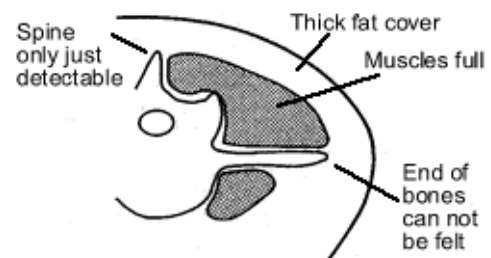


Body condition score 4 - Fat

The ends of the bones are not detectable, but their position can just be made out with very firm pressure.

There is a thick covering of fat over the muscle covering the vertebrae.

Backbone	Detectable with pressure on the thumb
Short ribs	Individual short ribs can only be felt with firm pressure
Eye-muscle	Full with a covering layer of fat



Body condition score 5 - Obese

Nothing can be detected under a thick layer of fat covering the loin; even the tips of the spinous processes of the backbone are buried in fat.

Backbone	Can be felt with firm pressure
Short ribs	Cannot be felt even with firm pressure
Eye-muscle	Muscle cannot be felt due to a thick layer of fat

