

HORSE DOMESTICATION

The domestication of horses illustrates how evolutionary change can be facilitated when key traits are controlled by very few genes.

Liu et al., in a paper which appeared in *Science* (1), report that a single variant at the *GSDMC* locus, affecting spinal anatomy, strength, and coordination, had a profound effect on horse rideability.

Because only one (or a few) loci were involved, selective breeding rapidly increased its frequency, demonstrating that domestication is more likely to succeed when a useful trait depends on simple rather than highly polygenic genetic architecture. The paper was accompanied by an insightful commentary (same *Science* issue).

1. <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.adp4581>