

BODY SCORE

SCORE	REGION OF THE BODY				
	Ribs	Spine	Hips	Tail	Coat
5	Not visible; fatty layer on and between ribs	Spine bones not visible. Spine sits in slight depression between fatty bulges left and right of spine	Convex, smooth rear, hip bones not visually apparent	Tail base sits in depression surrounded by soft fatty tissue	Glossy coat covering entire body
4	Few ribs visible towards abdomen; ribs can be felt	Spine bones not visible. Spine feels flat; bone and surrounding tissue are on level	Hip bones can be seen, round smooth appearance and feel	Tail base on level with surrounding fatty tissue	Thin coat covering entire body; or glossy coat with few small bald patches
3	Some ribs visible in centre of ribcage; abdominal ribs feel ridged	Spine palpable as a slightly elevated bony centre-line	Points of hips distinctly visible; bone easy to feel but not protruding	Tail base protrudes slightly; obvious by touch, but not by sight	Some bald patches behind the shoulders or along the flanks
2	Ribs visible throughout; all have ridged feel	Individual spinal vertebrae clearly palpable	Points of hips protrude; flanks are concave	Tail base visibly sticks up from surrounding tissue	Large bald patches throughout torso
1	Ribs clearly visible with deep depressions between them; very ridged feel	Vertebrae distinguish-able by sight and touch	Hip bones protrude beyond the hip point; emaciated rear	Tissue surrounding tail base forms round hollow defined by pelvis	Majority of body area bald or very sparsely coated

Ezenwa1, V.O., Jolles, A.E. & O'Brien, M.P. (2009). A reliable body condition scoring technique for estimating condition in African buffalo. *Afr. J. Ecol.*, 47: 476 – 481.