

NORTH CAROLINA STATE 4-H HORSE PROGRAM *RULES & REGULATIONS MANUAL*



Updated February 2026



RULES & REGULATIONS MANUAL

Chapter I: Horse Shows

Chapter II: Contests

Updated February 2026



Chapter I: Horse Shows

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Overview and Statement of Responsibility

Overview

This handbook of rules and show classes is intended to help establish a standard 4-H Horse Show policy within North Carolina. These ideas are presented as suggestions for possible rules and class lists for county and qualifying 4-H horse shows. Horses, ponies, mules, and donkeys are eligible to participate in the N.C. 4-H Horse Program. Wherever the words “horse” and “pony” appear, mules and donkeys are included.

Statement of Responsibility

The North Carolina State Fair, Extension Horse Husbandry, the management staff of the North Carolina State 4-H Horse Show, and the state of North Carolina will in no way be responsible for any loss or damage that might occur. It will be a condition of the entry that each exhibitor shall hold the State Horse Show and its management blameless for any loss or accident that may occur to any animal, person, or property. Each exhibitor entering a horse in the State Horse Show agrees to obey the rules written in this book.

The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Horse Program (“the 4-H Program”) requires all riders to wear protective headgear that meets or surpasses current applicable ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials)/SEI (Safety Equipment Institute) standards while riding during all County, District and State 4-H Horse Program sponsored events and activities. This headgear must be properly fitted, properly worn on the top of the head, and worn with the harness securely fastened. Go-Pro cameras or other types of devices are not permitted to be attached or affixed to the helmet. Events and activities covered by this Rule include, but are not limited to: 4-H Horse Shows, 4-H Horsemanship Camps, 4-H Trail Rides, and 4-H Horse Drill Teams. The term “riding” as used in this Rule shall refer to the riding or driving of a horse or pony in a 4-H sponsored event or activity. The term “rider” as used in this Rule refers to a person engaged in riding.

The 4-H Horse Program and the show committees, officials, judges, extension personnel and volunteers associated with the 4-H Horse Program shall enforce this Rule during 4-H Program events and activities. Any rider violating this rule will be immediately prohibited from further riding and shall be barred or disqualified from the event or activity in which the rider is engaged at the time of the violation. It is the responsibility of the rider, and the parent or guardian of the rider, to confirm that the headgear worn by the rider complies with safety standards set forth above; is properly fitted, fastened, and worn; and is in such a condition that it would protect the rider in the case of an accident. The 4-H Horse Program and the show committees, officials, judges, extension personnel and volunteers associated with the 4-H Horse Program are not responsible for checking headgear worn by riders for compliance with this Rule.

The 4-H Horse Program makes no representation or warranty, expressed or implied, concerning the headgear worn by any rider during a 4-H Program sponsored event or activity.

In particular, the 4-H Program makes no representation or warranty concerning the safety performance of any headgear worn by any rider. The 4-H Program cautions riders that death or serious injury may result despite wearing such headgear as all equestrian sports involve inherent dangerous risk and as no headgear can protect against all foreseeable injuries.

Pledge, Goals, and Project Definition

4-H Pledge

I pledge . . .

My HEAD to clearer thinking. Working with animals provides mental relaxation from schoolroom studies and at the same time stimulates quick thinking and alertness.

My HEART to greater loyalty. The close bond of comradeship that develops between a horse and his master and between young people planning and working together in a common interest is conducive to a deepening sense of loyalty and consideration of others.

My HANDS to larger service. Skillful hands are a must for a horseman. It is the touch of the hands on the reins that telegraph the rider's wish to his mount.

My HEALTH to better living. Out-of-door activities affect every nerve, muscle, and organ of the body in a healthful way.

For my club, my community, my country, and my world. The associations and varied activities in 4-H Club work provide many opportunities for young people to prepare themselves for active participation in the social and economic life of their community.

Horse Project Goals

The purposes of this program are to encourage 4-H members:

1. To develop leadership abilities, build character, and assume citizenship responsibilities.
2. To experience the pride of caring for a horse or pony and being responsible for its management.
3. To develop an appreciation of horseback riding as a healthy and wholesome form of recreation.
4. To learn skill in horsemanship and to understand the business of breeding, raising, and training horses.
5. To increase knowledge of safety precautions that are needed to prevent injury to oneself, others, and their mounts.
6. To promote greater love for animals and a humane attitude toward them.
7. To help others by working in groups and supporting community horse projects and activities.
8. To learn good sportsmanship in a friendly, competitive atmosphere.

Project Animal

There are no limits on the number of project animals that can be shown by a 4-H member. However, each project animal must meet the eligibility requirements. Participation in any 4-H horse show should be optional and enjoyable for the exhibitor. No 4-H member is required to exhibit in a 4-H horse show to complete a horse project.

Stallions are not allowed to be shown in 4-H horse shows or classes except for yearling colts in halter or in-hand classes.

Horse Ownership

Each horse show exhibitor must manage at least one horse of any age or breed as a 4-H horsemanship project. It is recommended that the horse be owned by the 4-H member or his family. However, the horse can be owned by another person if the exhibitor meets the requirements of eligibility and horse care and is certified by his or her club leader and county Extension agent.

Horse Care

The horse must be managed and under the care of the 4-H member for 60 days prior to the Qualifying Horse Show. Project horses should not be trained on a regular daily basis by a professional within 60 days before competing in 4-H classes. The definition of “regular care” in regard to eligibility for youth keeping a horse at a boarding barn or training facility is defined as “a trainer is not allowed to ride a 4-H member’s horse more than 3 days per week within 60 days of a 4-H qualifying show”. Professional advice and instruction of the 4-H member is encouraged whenever possible. Such assistance can include occasional riding or handling of the horse by the professional but cannot include regular daily training and care of the horse within 60 days of competition. Youths boarding their horses at public stables that feed their horses and clean their stalls are eligible to participate in 4-H horse shows if the 4-H members ride and care for the horses on a regular basis. The state Extension horse specialist’s office will be glad to give advice and guidance when requested.

Eligibility Card

All eligible 4-H members will be given a 4-H Horse Project Card (an eligibility card) that must be presented when entering 4-H classes of 4-H horse shows.

A separate eligibility card must be obtained for each project horse the 4-H member intends on showing for the current year. Completing an eligibility card does not require that horse to attend a horse show and it is advisable to fill out an eligibility card for each potential horse that the 4-H member may show.

See the Exhibitor and [Horse Eligibility](#) section for more details.

Exhibitor and Horse Eligibility

General

Each exhibitor must be an active and participating member of a 4-H club or be a member at large in good standing and meet the requirements for membership as established by the local club or county program. Rules for membership in the 4-H Horse Project will be determined by the county; however, the 4-H member is encouraged to participate in other 4-H events besides the 4-H horse show. Contact your county extension agent to obtain deadlines for completing eligibility cards.

It is the responsibility of the county extension agent and club leader to certify the eligibility of their 4-H members, including division status. All exhibitors must have a signed and completed eligibility card for each animal they plan to exhibit.

The Eligibility Card information (name, address, horse information, etc.) should be completed by the 4-H'er and their parents using the online request form found on the Extension Equine Husbandry website. After the online form has been completed, a pre-filled eligibility card document will be electronically generated and shared with the county Extension agent. Extension agents will print the completed cards and arrange distribution to the leaders of the youth that have met the county requirements.

The parent/guardian, volunteer leader, and Extension Agent must all sign the card (in ink) for it to be valid. By signing this card, the parent, volunteer leader, and agent are each verifying that the youth is a current 4-H'er in good standing (including a current and complete 4-H Online enrollment) and that they are fulfilling the requirements/rules of the events that they are participating in; if found to be ineligible, for a division, the three persons signing this card shall be considered responsible for failing to recognize ineligibility.

4-H members may attend any qualifying show, but they may only attend one show and must indicate on their eligibility card which qualifying show they are planning to attend. 4-H'ers must consult the entry deadlines and requirements for the qualifying show they are attending to be sure that all their paperwork is turned in on time and correctly.

Age Requirements

Cloverbud

Cloverbud classes are open only to those youths who have reached age 5 as of January 1 of the current year and who have not reached age 8 as of January 1 of the current year.

Junior

Junior classes are open only to those youths who must have reached age 8 as of January 1 of the current year but have not reached age 14 before January 1 of the current year.

Senior

Senior classes are open only to those youths who have reached age 14 as of January 1 of the current year and who have not reached age 19 as of January 1 of the current year.

Division Selection

Please refer to the chart below for a summary of different divisions to determine which is the best fit for the exhibitor and horse.

NC State 4-H Horse Show Qualifying Divisions

Division Name	Ages	Description
Rookie Hunter Walk Trot	8-18	This Division is a safe, introductory experience for 4-H'ers in their first year of showing hunt seat (Junior division or higher). Riders are limited to one year of participation and may use horses or ponies. Members competing exclusively in this division are ineligible for the Versatility Class and Southern Regionals.
Short Stirrup	8-13	Short Stirrup is designed for inexperienced Junior 4-H riders. Participants are allowed a total of three years in the division, with a maximum of two years showing over fences. Fence height is two feet. The division is open to horses and ponies.
Junior Hunter	8-13	Junior-aged riders showing both horses and ponies. For over fence classes, riders select one of three fence height options based on the combined ability of the rider and their mount: A= 2'-2'3"; B=2'3"-2'6"; C=2'6"-2'9" In Working Hunter and Equitation Over Fences, riders may show one horse and one pony in the same class and the pony must be measured.
Long Stirrup	14-18	Long Stirrup is designed for inexperienced Senior 4-H riders. Participants are allowed to spend a maximum of two years in the division. Fence height is two feet. The division is open to horses and ponies.
Senior Hunter	14-18	Senior-aged riders showing both horses and ponies. For over fence classes, riders select one of three fence height options based on the combined ability of the rider and their mount: A= 2'-2'3"; B=2'3"-2'6"; C=2'6"-2'9" In Working Hunter and Equitation Over Fences, riders may show one horse and one pony in the same class and the pony must be measured.
Stock-Type Hunter	8-18	The Stock Type Hunter Division is open to Junior and Senior riders using horses or ponies, and defaults to AQHA

		rules when not covered in the <i>R & R Manual</i> . Entries (horse/rider combos) in this division cannot cross-enter into any other hunter division and may not show over fences (including Hunter Hack).
Rookie Western	8-18	The Rookie Western Division is specifically designed for inexperienced Western riders (ages 8-18) who are in their first two years of showing Western, excluding Cloverbud classes. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie, Junior or Senior Ranch. Members competing exclusively in this division are ineligible for the Versatility Class and Southern Regionals.
Junior Western	8-13	Junior-aged riders showing both horses and ponies. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie or Junior Ranch.
Senior Western	14-18	Senior-aged riders showing both horses and ponies. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie or Senior Ranch.
Rookie Ranch	8-18	The Rookie Ranch Division is specifically designed for inexperienced Ranch riders (ages 8-18) who are in their first two years of showing Ranch, excluding Cloverbud classes. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie, Junior or Senior Western. Members competing exclusively in this division are ineligible for the Versatility Class and Southern Regionals.
Junior Ranch	8-13	Junior-aged riders showing both horses and ponies. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie or Junior Western.
Senior Ranch	14-18	Senior-aged riders showing both horses and ponies. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie or Senior Western.

Junior Non-Trotting	8-13	The Non-Trotting Division is for gaited breeds like Walking Horses, Racking Horses, Rocky Mountains, and Paso Finos, and is open to both horses and ponies competing together. Horses must perform gaits appropriate to their breed, and there is no cross-entering into the Trotting Division.
Senior Non-Trotting	14-18	The Non-Trotting Division is for gaited breeds like Walking Horses, Racking Horses, Rocky Mountains, and Paso Finos, and is open to both horses and ponies competing together. Horses must perform gaits appropriate to their breed, and there is no cross-entering into the Trotting Division.
Junior Speed Events	8-13	Junior-aged riders showing both horses and ponies. A youth may show one horse and one pony in the same class and the pony must be measured.
Senior Speed Events	14-18	Senior-aged riders showing both horses and ponies. A youth may show one horse and one pony in the same class and the pony must be measured.
Combined Training	8-18	The Combined Training Division is open to any 4-H member who possesses a current horse project eligibility card and SUCCESSFULLY completed a course consisting of at least 8 fences at a qualifying horse show. It consists of two phases, a dressage test and stadium jumping.

NC State 4-H Horse Show Special Interest Classes
(must have qualified in one of the above divisions to enter the State Show)

Class Name	Ages	Description
Pleasure Pairs	8-18	Two horses or ponies and two exhibitors shown abreast at a walk; jog, trot or pleasure gait; and lope, canter or extended pleasure gait, both ways in the ring. May be shown in hunt seat, saddle seat, or western tack and attire in accordance with the rules of the pleasure class in the respective riding divisions.
Junior Versatility	8-13	Composed of four events (Western Pleasure, English Pleasure, Precision Pattern, Texas Barrels), with each event counting equally toward the overall placement. All horses and riders will remain in the arena for the entire class. Two grooms per horse will be permitted in the ring at a designated time between events.

Senior Versatility	14-18	Composed of four events (Western Pleasure, English Pleasure, Precision Pattern, Texas Barrels), with each event counting equally toward the overall placement. All horses and riders will remain in the arena for the entire class. Two grooms per horse will be permitted in the ring at a designated time between events.
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NC State 4-H Horse Show Non-Qualifying (Invitational) Divisions

Division Name	Ages	Description
Cloverbud	5-7	All classes within this division are offered on a noncompetitive basis. Exhibitors will not be ranked; participants will receive ribbons. Youth showing in the Cloverbud Division classes are not eligible to participate in other classes. Horses and ponies will participate in the same class.
Dressage	8-18	Open to any 4-H member who possesses a current horse project eligibility card. An exhibitor may enter up to two horses, a horse and pony, or two ponies in the same dressage test. The horse and/pony must be eligible to be shown at the North Carolina State 4-H Horse Show. You may only compete in three classes that are consecutive.
Miniature	8-18	Open to any 4-H member who possesses a current horse project eligibility card. Horses cannot exceed 38" in height.
Drill Team	8-18	Open to any 4-H member who possesses a current horse project eligibility card.
Adaptive	8-18	To qualify for this division, the rider must have been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability, cognitive delays as measured by formal assessment, physical disability, or significant learning or vocational problems due to cognitive delay that require or have required specially designed instruction.

Restricted Divisions' Eligibility

The following divisions are restricted in their years of participation:

- Rookie Hunter (1 year)
- Short Stirrup (3 years- only two of those years may be over fences)
- Long Stirrup (2 years-may not have previously shown over fences for more than 2 years)
- Rookie Western (2 years)
- Rookie Ranch (2 years)

4-H'ers should keep their eligibility cards for the current and past years for reference.

Horse and Pony Height and Measurement

In the following divisions an exhibitor may show a horse and a pony in the same class. In this instance, the pony must be measured by the steward at the qualifying show and the height recorded on the eligibility card by a NC 4-H Steward. This is the only instance in which ponies must be measured. If the exhibitor can provide show management a USEF or NCHJA permanent pony card, this will be honored. Pony heights may be protested. [Refer to Appeals and Complaints](#). If a rider is exhibiting only a pony and not a horse in the same class, the pony does not need to be measured. Entries in the miniature division must also be measured.

- Junior Hunter
- Senior Hunter
- Junior Speed Events
- Senior Speed Events
- Miniature Division

Horse and Rider Combinations

At the State Show, a horse may be exhibited by more than one rider only if both riders qualified for the State Show on the same horse in different classes at the qualifying show. In no instance, will the contestant-horse combination be allowed to show in the same class twice. Each exhibitor and horse may participate only once in a class with the exception of the Speed Events, Junior and Senior Working Hunter Over Fences, and Junior and Senior Equitation Over Fences, wherein an exhibitor may qualify and exhibit one horse and one pony in each pattern class. The horse or pony can participate only once in each class and [ponies must be measured](#).

Multiple Classes

Exhibitors may enter more than one showmanship class, but they must qualify in each division in which they enter showmanship. When one project horse is shared by two exhibitors, it may be shown in different showmanship classes by each exhibitor, providing both the exhibitors and the horse are qualified to participate. If an exhibitor has more than one horse, he or she may show each qualified horse in different showmanship classes.

Multiple Horses

Exhibitors may qualify multiple horses for the State Show but may enter only one horse in each class with the exception of the Speed Events, Junior and Senior Working Hunter Over Fences, and Junior and Senior Equitation Over Fences, wherein an exhibitor may qualify and exhibit one horse and one pony in each class when running an individual pattern. A horse or pony can participate only once in each class, regardless of rider.

General Entry Rules

One Entry Per Class: Generally, an exhibitor may only enter a specific class once.

Shared Horses: Two exhibitors may share one horse only if both qualified with that horse in different classes at the qualifying show.

Multiple Horses: If you qualify with multiple horses, you may enter them in different classes, but you cannot enter more than one horse in the same class (except in Speed Events and Working Hunter and Equitation Over Fences an exhibitor can qualify and show a horse and a pony).

Regardless of the rider or the event, no horse or pony may compete in the same class more than once.

Conducting 4-H Shows

Personnel

Selection of Judges

It is strongly recommended that any judge used in 4-H shows be selected from competent horsemen outside the home county or district of a given show. It is the show committee's responsibility to select and hire show judges. The selected judges must be given a copy of the show rules and class procedures when hired, well in advance of the show date.

Organizers

County Extension agents, horse club leaders, and 4-H members should all be involved in the planning and conducting of 4-H horse shows.

Stewards

Each 4-H horse show should have a steward appointed who will interpret and clarify rules. Any exhibitor with a question or complaint must speak with the show steward or show manager, not the ringmaster, prior to approaching the judge. If appropriate, the steward or show manager will arrange an appointment for the exhibitor with the judge. No exhibitor or parent can discuss class placings or reasons for placings with the judge unless the steward has granted permission and is present.

Nature of the Role

The steward must be a knowledgeable horseman, have an understanding of 4-H rules and procedures and be certified as a NC 4-H Horse Program Steward. This is a required position at 4-H Horse Program shows. It is also strongly encouraged for districts to have a steward present for events, such as horse bowl, in order to help interpret and clarify rules. A steward has no authority in connection with the management or judging of a show. He or she is solely responsible for interpreting rules and should protect the interest of exhibitors, judges, and show management. He or she should report any rule infractions to the proper officials and make recommendations. The steward is not a policeman and is not expected to look for rule infractions, but the steward should investigate any situations in which rules are not upheld.

Specific Duties

The steward's duties are as follows:

1. Interpret and clarify rules and advise on eligibility for a particular class. Show management is responsible for enforcing these rules.
2. Report to management any misrepresentation or substitution of entry without waiting for a protest.
3. Measure officially any horses that are questioned relative to size and class eligibility.
4. Report to show/event management any rule violations. Show/event management is responsible for enforcing rules.

5. Serve as a mediator between the exhibitors and the judges. Exhibitors may not speak to the judge concerning a class without permission from the steward. Judges are encouraged to help youths, but in no circumstances should judges be abused as a result of their placings. All exhibitors and parents should display good sportsmanship at all times.
6. Serve as a representative of the State 4-H Horse Program.

Profitability

The qualifying and state horse shows are not planned as a money-making operation. Any profits that may be made from the show will be used to improve the 4-H Horse Program by supporting educational events and 4-H member scholarships.

Classes

Some classes or divisions in the State Show will not be applicable to each county or qualifying show. If the county or qualifying show does not have sufficient interest in a given class or division, it should be removed from that group's show. The list of classes in this program should not limit or restrict a county or qualifying show host. Each qualifying show host is required, however, to offer a minimum number of standard qualifying classes as listed below. Each county and qualifying show host is encouraged to include any additional classes that are of local interest (dressage, miniature, etc.), but these classes will not be used in determining exhibitors for the State Show. It is suggested that local shows add some fun classes (such as Costume, Egg and Spoon, Ride-A-Buck, Lead Line, Parent's or Leader's Pleasure, or Go-As-You-Please) to the class list for the enjoyment of members and spectators.

Minimum Qualifying Classes for Qualifying Shows

According to the North Carolina 4-H Horse Advisory Committee, all qualifying 4-H Horse Shows must offer the following minimum standard qualifying class list:

Rookie Hunter Walk Trot	● Showmanship ● Hunter Under Saddle W/T ● Equitation W/T
Short Stirrup	● Showmanship ● Hunter Under Saddle ● Equitation ● Hunter Over Fences ● Equitation Over Fences
Junior Hunter	● Showmanship ● Hunter Under Saddle ● Equitation ● Hunter Over Fences

	• Equitation Over Fences
Long Stirrup	• Showmanship • Hunter Under Saddle • Equitation • Hunter Over Fences • Equitation Over Fences
Senior Hunter	• Showmanship • Hunter Under Saddle • Equitation • Hunter Over Fences • Equitation Over Fences
Stock Type Hunter	• Showmanship • Hunter Under Saddle • Equitation
Rookie Western	• Showmanship • Pleasure W/J • Horsemanship W/J
Junior Western	• Showmanship • Pleasure • Horsemanship
Senior Western	• Showmanship • Pleasure • Horsemanship
Rookie Ranch	• Ground Handling • Ranch Rail Pleasure W/T • Ranch Horsemanship W/T
Junior Ranch	• Ground Handling • Horsemanship • Ranch Riding • Ranch Rail Pleasure
Senior Ranch	• Ground Handling • Horsemanship • Ranch Riding • Ranch Rail Pleasure
Junior Non-Trotting	• Showmanship • Pleasure • Equitation
Senior Non-Trotting	• Showmanship • Pleasure • Equitation

Junior Speed Events	• Barrel Racing • Pole Bending • Stake Race
Senior Speed Events	• Barrel Racing • Pole Bending • Stake Race

Qualifying, Points, and Entry Forms

Qualification

All exhibitors wanting to show at the State Show must qualify at one of the approved qualifying shows held throughout the state. Each exhibitor and horse combination must earn one or more qualifying point in each division to be eligible to participate in that division at the State Show.

Division Qualification

Each exhibitor in the State Show must qualify each horse in each respective division in a qualifying horse show in which he or she wishes to participate. Exhibitors must qualify in both the Hunter and Western divisions at the qualifying show if they plan to participate in both divisions at the State Show (for example, exhibitors qualifying only in Western Pleasure in the qualifying show will be allowed to enter only Western Division classes at the State Show). Exhibitors will be allowed to enter any class in the divisions for which they qualified at the qualifying show. The horses and exhibitors must meet the class requirements for the divisions they enter. Exhibitors should refer annually to the rules in this rulebook for the respective classes and the rule supplement that is enclosed in their qualifying packets and found on the Extension Horse Husbandry website.

Entry Forms

The qualifying show secretary will be given entry forms for the State Show. The secretary should fill in the 4-H member's name, horse's name as it appears on the Coggins test, and qualifying division and certify that the 4-Her is eligible to attend the State Show by signing or stamping the entry form. The agent that advises the qualifying show or the show secretary must sign the entry form. The qualifying forms (including a list of 4-H members, their horses' names, and the divisions in which they are qualified) must be forwarded to the state Extension horse specialist's office immediately following the qualifying show.

Entry forms for the dressage division and drill team competition can be found on the State Show page on the NC Extension Equine Husbandry webpage.

Entry Form Submission

It is the 4-H member's responsibility to complete the entry form and mail it with the entry fees and a photocopy of a current negative Coggins test for equine infectious anemia (current through the last day of the State Show) along with their current, completed 4-H eligibility card, and appropriate show fees to the appropriate person before the postmark deadline date. Incomplete or incorrect entry forms will be returned to the sender (See the entry form for specific penalties concerning returned entries.) No entries will be accepted if received after the advertised deadline date. The horse's name on the entry form must be the same as that appearing on the Coggins test and the 4-H eligibility card for the entry to be accepted.

Refunds

Refunds will be made to any individual canceling before the entry deadline in accordance with current Advisory Committee policy. Current policy as recommended by the Advisory Committee is that no State Show fees (including entry and stall fees) will be refunded if the amount is less than \$25. Entries canceled after the deadline will be refunded only upon receipt of a veterinarian's or physician's certificate. Stall fees will also be refunded upon receipt of a physician's or veterinarian's certificate if show management is notified up to one week before the show. Requests for stall fee refunds will not be honored after this date. Individuals must submit to the State 4-H Horse Program Office a completed Refund Request Form, including all required information, by the advertised deadline for a refund to be processed.

Qualifying Points

The following point system will be used in earning qualifying points toward attending the State Show:

Number of Entries in Class	Place in Class and Points									
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
1	1									
2	2	1								
3	3	2	1							
4	4	3	2	1						
5	5	4	3	2	1					
6 to 12	6	5	4	3	2	1				
13 to 15	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
16 to 17	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
18 to 19	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
20 or more	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

State Show Awards

Class Awards

For all classes at the State Horse show, a special award and ribbon for first place and ribbons only for second through tenth places will be awarded in each class, depending upon class entries. Cloverbud classes shall not be ranked.

Championship Awards

Championship awards will be based on points earned in performance classes only. (Showmanship is considered a performance class.) In order to be eligible for a Championship award, exhibitors must show in a minimum of three classes in that division.

The following championship and reserve championship awards will be given to the individual horse and rider combination that earned the most points in each division, with the classes that count towards high point awards listed:

- Rookie Hunter W/T
 - Showmanship, Hunter Hack (cross rails), Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation on the Flat
- Short Stirrup, Long Stirrup, Junior Hunter, Senior Hunter
 - Showmanship, Hunter Hack, Working Hunter Over Fences, Equitation Over Fences, Hunter Under Saddle, Equitation on the Flat, Bridle Path Hack
- Stock Type Hunter
 - Showmanship, Hunter Under Saddle, Hunt Seat Equitation on the Flat, All-Around Hunter Pattern
- Combined Training
 - Maiden Combined Test, Beginner Novice Combined Test
- Dressage
 - USDF Intro A, USDF Intro B, Training Level Test 1, Training Level Test 3, Western Dressage Intro Test 1, Western Dressage Intro Test 3
- Rookie Western
 - Showmanship, Horsemanship, Walk/Jog Pleasure, Walk/Jog/Lope Pleasure, Trail
- Junior Western, Senior Western
 - Showmanship, Horsemanship, Trail, Western Pleasure, Western All-Around Pattern
- Rookie Ranch
 - Ranch Trail W/T, Ranch Riding W/T, Ranch Ground Handling, Ranch Horsemanship W/T, Ranch Rail Pleasure W/T, Ranch Rail Pleasure W/T/L
- Junior Ranch, Senior Ranch
 - Ranch Trail, Ranch Riding, Ranch Ground Handling, Ranch Horsemanship, Ranch Rail Pleasure, Ranch Reining
- Speed Events, Junior and Senior

- Barrel Race, Texas Barrels, Flag Race, Pole Bending, Stake Race
- Non-Trotting, Junior and Senior
 - Showmanship, English Non-Trotting 2-gait/Other Non-Trotting 2-gait, Equitation, Walking Horse Pleasure/Racking Horse Pleasure/Other Non-Trotting Pleasure, Western 2-gait
- Adaptive Rider (Levels 1, 2, and 3)
 - Showmanship, Walk Only, Walk/Trot Equitation, Trail

In addition, special awards will be given to the following:

- High Score, Training Level Dressage Ride
- High Score, Intro Level Dressage Ride
- High Score, Western Dressage Ride
- High Score, Combined Training
- High Score, Drill Team

Non-Point Classes

The following nonpoint classes may also be offered during the State 4-H Horse Show. These classes do not count towards divisional high point awards.

Non-Point Classes:

1. Non-Trotting Division
 - a. Non-Trotting Mares In Hand
 - b. Non-Trotting Geldings in Hand
2. Hunter Division
 - a. Hunter Type Mares In Hand
 - b. Hunter Type Geldings In Hand
 - c. Hunt Seat Equitation Medal Class
 - d. Cross Rail Working Hunter Over Fences
3. Western and Ranch Divisions
 - a. Stock Type Halter Mares
 - b. Stock Type Halter Geldings
 - c. Horsemanship Medal Class
4. Special Interest Classes
 - a. Pleasure Pairs
 - b. Versatility (Junior and Senior)

Championship Points

Points will be awarded based on the following number of entries per class:

Number of Entries in Class	Place in Class and Points*									
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
1	1									
2	2	1								
3	3	2	1							
4	4	3	2	1						
5	5	4	3	2	1					
6 to 12	6	5	4	3	2	1				
13 to 15	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
16 to 17	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
18 to 19	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
20 or more	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

*Points to count towards the Non-Trotting High Point will be awarded based on the following in regard to the type specified pleasure classes (Walking Horse Pleasure, Racking Horse Pleasure, Other Gaited Type Pleasure **only**):

Class Placing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Points (regardless of entries)	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

The number of entries in a class will be determined by the number actually shown. Under no circumstances shall a disqualified contestant receive points; however, each horse brought into the ring will constitute an entry and will be counted.

Ties

Class Ties

Ties for first place in any class will be decided by a work-off with points being given according to placing after a work-off or shall be based on penalty points or a designated obstacle if an individually scored class.

All other ties may be decided by the flip of a coin, judge's discretion, or a work-off with the consent of the exhibitors involved.

The total points of the exhibitors involved in a tie will be split equally among the exhibitors unless a work-off is used to split the tie.

Championship Ties

Non-Trotting, Western, Ranch, Stock Type Hunter, Rookie Hunter W/T, Rookie Ranch, Rookie Western, and Adaptive Divisions

Championship ties will be broken on the basis of total equitation or horsemanship points earned. If a tie still exists, the contestant with the most points in the showmanship classes (ranch ground handling for the ranch division) will be declared the champion. If a tie still exists, the exhibitor who places in the greater number of classes will be declared the champion.

Short Stirrup, Long Stirrup, Junior Hunter, and Senior Hunter Divisions

Championship ties will be broken by awarding the championship to the horse and rider who earn the most points in Over-Fences classes. Ties will be broken based on the rider accumulating the most points in classes in the following order: Equitation Over-Fences, followed by Equitation On-the-Flat, and, finally, total points earned in showmanship plus Equitation Over-Fences and On-the-Flat classes. If a tie still exists, the horse and rider placing in the greatest number of classes, will be declared the Hunter Champion.

Speed Event Divisions

Championship ties will be broken by awarding championship points in the least number of classes participated in, followed by the horse or pony with the highest number of first place finishes. If still tied, horses or ponies will be ranked based on the fastest time earned in Texas Barrels.

Dressage and Combined Training Divisions

Champion ties will be broken by awarding the championship to the horse or pony scoring the most points in the least number of classes, followed by the horse or pony with the highest number of first place finishes.

Invitational Classes and Divisions

The following classes or divisions are considered invitational. An exhibitor may show in these classes or divisions without previously qualifying at a qualifying show. Any points awarded in these divisions do not count toward any other divisions, nor for Southern Regional qualifications:

- Adaptive Riding Division
- Dressage Division classes
- Costume
- Cloverbud Division

- Drill Team
- Miniature Division

Sportsmanship Awards

A sportsmanship award will be presented to the junior and senior 4-H members who best exemplifies good sportsmanship and leadership during the show. The award is in memory of Pam Holland, Rockingham County Volunteer leader, and is sponsored by the North Central District 4-H Horse Council. Individual members and leaders are encouraged to submit nominations for this award during the State 4-H Horse Show. Nominations should include the nominee's name, county, and the reason you feel this member deserves the award. The State Show committee will select the winner from their observations and after careful review of all nominees.

Refunds

Refunds will be made to any individual canceling before the entry deadline in accordance with current Advisory Committee policy. Current policy, as recommended by the Advisory Committee, is that no State Show fees (including entry and stall fees) will be refunded if the amount is less than \$25. Entries canceled after the deadline will be refunded only upon receipt of a veterinarian's or physician's certificate. Stall fees will also be refunded upon receipt of a physician's or veterinarian's certificate if show management is notified up to one week before the show. Requests for stall fee refunds will not be honored after this date. Individuals must submit to the State 4-H Horse Program Office a completed Refund Request Form, including all required information, by the advertised deadline for a refund to be processed.

Southern Regional 4-H Championship Horse Show

Overview

All exhibitors in the Southern Regional 4-H Horse Show will be required to wear safety helmets in every class/division and while being mounted on the grounds. Adults are not permitted to ride horses unless cleared by the show office for safety concerns. Exhibitors exclusively showing in the Rookie divisions are not eligible to participate in Southern Regionals.

North Carolina is allowed to send 70 horses to participate in the Southern Regional Horse Show. Multiple exhibitors may show the same horse; consequently, more than 70 exhibitors could compete.

All exhibitors will be expected to pay their own expenses to attend the show. The county horse clubs or district horse advisory councils are encouraged to help exhibitors from their area in meeting this expense. The State 4-H Horse Advisory Committee approved the awarding of gifts to all North Carolina delegation members showing at the Southern Regional 4-H event. All North Carolina delegation members will receive an NC 4-H Horse Program T-shirt at the event. Additional horse-related items may also be provided to show exhibitors.

Selection and Participation

Each 4-H member will be allowed to qualify only one horse for the Southern Regional Horse Show (unless the horses were champions or reserve champions at the State Show). The individual member may choose which horse to take if more than one horse qualifies. If there are openings remaining after the entry closing date, members qualifying more than one horse will be given the opportunity to bring an additional horse. These additional horses and youths will be ranked and placed in the lowest priority group.

Southern Regional Horse Show exhibitors will be selected on points earned at the State 4-H Horse Show within a respective show division. The total number of eligible exhibitors for Southern Regional competition will be based upon a percentage of the number of exhibitors within a division (not including invitational divisions, such as dressage) as compared to the number of exhibitors in the entire show. Within each division, a specific priority system has been developed. The following qualification selection procedure will determine the 70 horses that represent North Carolina:

- One qualifying position is reserved for a 4-H member exhibiting in Roping classes and one position is reserved for the highest Dressage Division ride score from the training-level dressage classes at the State Show. The State 4-H Horse Advisory Committee executive committee shall select a 4-H member based upon participation in that 4-H Horse Program's activities and performance in roping events. Exhibitors wishing to be considered as a Roping representative must submit a letter requesting consideration to

the state Extension horse specialist's office before the State 4-H Horse Show. The executive committee has the option to reject applications based on lack of 4-H participation.

- The remaining 68 qualifying positions will be selected based upon the following formula:

# of exhibitors in a division (W, HS, SE, NT, R)*	X 68** Qualifying Positions =	Number of qualifying positions within a respective division
Total number of show exhibitors		

* W = Western; HS = Hunt Seat; SE = Speed Events; NT= Non-Trotting; R=Ranch

** If all slots within a division are not filled, that is, Roping, Non-Trotting, or any other division, open qualification spots will be recalculated on a percentage basis between remaining divisions with adjustments made in the total number of exhibitors eligible to participate in Southern Regionals.

Example

120 Western Division exhibitors divided by 240 total exhibitors = 0.50

0.50 x 68 qualifying positions = 34

34 Western Division exhibitors will be given the opportunity to exhibit

Qualification slots within a division will be determined based on the following priority system:

1. The champions in each qualifying division.
2. The top-point-earning horses and ponies within each division will be selected from the greatest number of points accumulated during the State 4-H Horse Show to the least within the division.
3. When all individuals within a division who have earned points in the State 4-H Horse Show have declined a Southern Regional qualifying slot, the remaining slots will be reapportioned between the remaining divisions using the percent-basis formula.
4. All horses qualified for the Southern Regional Horse Show must have shown and earned a point at the State 4-H Horse Show or received reserve qualification slots as mentioned above.
5. Ties will be broken, giving priority to the horses or ponies having earned the highest places, starting in the largest class and working down to the smallest class.

Entry Procedures

Class lists and entry forms for the Southern Regional Show will be available in the State 4-H Horse Show office. All interested youths should complete the entry form. The completed form

and entry fees must be returned to the Extension horse specialist by a specified deadline. The deadline will be advertised in the Operating Procedures in each exhibitor's show packet. Submitted and completed forms will be ranked and accepted according to the priority schedule outlined above. Youth not submitting their completed forms by the deadline will lose their eligibility. Accepted entrants will receive rulebooks, information on motel accommodation options, and other related materials. All entry forms not accepted will be returned along with the entry fees. Entry forms for the top 70 horses will be forwarded to the Southern Regional Horse Show.

State Horse Show General Guidelines

Precedence of Rules

Rules in this book will have precedence over all other rules. US Equestrian (USEF) rules will be used for any Equitation, Hunt Seat, and Dressage rules not covered in this book. American Quarter Horse Association rules (AQHA) will be used for any Western, Ranch or Speed Events Division rules not covered in this book. Walking Horse Owners Association (WHOA) rules will be used for any Non-Trotting Division rules not covered in this book.

Right of Refusal

Show management reserves the right to refuse an exhibitor entry into any class or event if they deem that entry unsafe for the exhibitor or other exhibitors or animals. All show officials have authority and must dismiss from the ring any entry that is unruly or not in sufficient control for the safety of the handler or other exhibitors.

Class Selection

Horse show classes in this rulebook may be offered at the discretion of the state 4-H Extension horse specialist's office. Class rules may be amended. Not all classes listed in this rulebook are offered at the State 4-H Horse Show. State 4-H Horse Show classes are designated annually during the State 4-H Horse Advisory Committee Meeting.

Show management reserves the right to alter or modify any class or contest procedures, obstacles, or patterns in this book due to safety concerns.

All scheduled classes will be held. Classes with less than five entries for more than two consecutive years may be canceled or combined where appropriate at the discretion of the North Carolina State 4-H Horse Advisory Committee.

Safety

No person other than the exhibitors and show officials will be allowed in the ring while any class is being judged. Exceptions are for the Adaptive and Cloverbud divisions.

Riding over the show grounds, except in the immediate area of the horse show ring, is strictly prohibited. No horse will be allowed to proceed at any gait faster than a walk on the State Fairgrounds property except within the riding rings. Youth are reminded that signs have been posted in certain areas that forbid horses. Failure to follow these courtesies on the fairgrounds could result in dismissal from the show.

Flat classes may be split into heats at show management's discretion. The number of exhibitors selected from each heat to return to the finals will be left to the discretion of the judge. Judges do not have to select the same number of exhibitors from each heat.

Schooling

All schooling times are subject to availability of schooling supervisors. All riders schooling over fences must be supervised by a parent, guardian, or trainer while schooling. If there are no schooling supervisors for the main or covered arena at the State Show, there will be no schooling sessions, and the rings will be closed.

Sign-up sheets for volunteers willing to serve as schooling supervisors are available during the State 4-H Horse Show. A schooling supervisor, designated with the authority to maintain order in schooling areas, will be on duty each day of the show.

Any 4-H member that possesses a current eligibility card may ride or lunge another 4-H member's horse but must wear an exhibitor back number.

An adult may lunge or lead a 4-H member's horse but may not mount or ride a 4-H member's horse unless that horse is deemed "dangerously uncontrollable" and the adult has received written permission from the schooling supervisor. Permission will only be given when the schooling supervisor is announced to be on duty. Exhibitors who violate this rule can be disqualified at the show committee's discretion.

Timing

In timed events, an electric timer will be used if available. In all cases, two stopwatches should be available and used for the official time if no timer is available. The average of the two stopwatches used by the official timers will be considered the official time.

Reruns and Re-rides

No rerun or re-ride will be given to any contestant if handicapped by an equipment/tack failure or an accident to the horse or rider. If timing equipment malfunctions, riders will be granted a rerun.

Orders of Go

All heats and working orders will be drawn at random and posted daily with the class orders-of-go.

Gate Calls

It is not a responsibility of the announcer to announce gate calls. When time permits, announcers at their discretion may make announcements to update exhibitors in the paddock and barn areas concerning the progress of the classes in the arena(s). It is each exhibitor's responsibility, however, to stay aware of which class is in the arena and when his or her class is entering the arena. For all "individual go" classes, there will be an "on-deck" cone prior to the 1st cone on course. If an exhibitor is called to the "on-deck" cone and misses this call, then the exhibitor has officially missed their gate call and will be refused entry into the class. It is the responsibility of each exhibitor to be at the on-deck cone at the required time. In all other

classes, the gate will be closed when the last visible horse in the paddock area for that heat and/or class enters the ring. No additional entries will be accepted to that class and/or heat. Show management may authorize an exhibitor to be moved in order-of-go to help alleviate a class conflict, if notified before the class starts. There are no class holds for tack changes.

Multiple rings will be used concurrently during the show. Efforts have been made to eliminate or minimize class conflicts between the rings. In cases of conflicts, however, the show management will cooperate wherever possible to allow youth to participate in conflicting schedules if notified in advance. **It will be the exhibitor's responsibility to choose the preferred class when no solution is available to work out the conflict.** Please note: Entry fees will not be refunded to youth who miss a class due to scheduling conflicts.

Horse Health and Welfare Compliance

Proof of Horse Health

All horses must submit and show proof of a negative Coggins test for equine infectious anemia (EIA) or swamp fever within the past 12 months before participating in the State 4-H Horse Show. (The Coggins test must be current through the last day of the State Show.) Additional health papers may be requested at the direction of the NCDA&CS State Veterinarian. A photocopy of the current Coggins test must be enclosed with the entry forms for the State Show. **The horse's name that appears on the Coggins test must be the same as that which appears on the entry form for the entry to be accepted.** Those not complying will be returned to the sender. Photocopies may be returned upon completion of the show. Youths are encouraged to have all horses vaccinated for tetanus and Eastern and Western equine encephalomyelitis (sleeping sickness).

Control of Horses

All exhibitors must always have their horses under complete control. Horses must enter the ring unassisted, and the gate must be closed before starting the class or course. Riders will not be allowed to leave the ring until their horses are walking under control. No horses will gallop into or out of the show ring because this endangers other exhibitors and spectators. Riders having difficulties in the ring and desiring to leave should request permission to be excused from the ringmaster or judge.

Treatment of Horses

Cruelty or rough handling of horses will not be allowed at any show or event. A horse and exhibitor may be excused from the ring, show, or event for lack of control, cruelty, rough handling, or unsportsmanlike conduct. The standard by which conduct or treatment will be measured is that which a reasonable person, informed and experienced in general accepted equine training and exhibition procedures, or veterinary standards would use to determine whether the incident is cruel, abusive, or inhumane. The stewards, show-event management, or judge may disqualify anyone mistreating an animal or demonstrating unsportsmanlike conduct.

Body Condition Score

Research has shown that health complications, such as heat stress, stress of traveling, and showing can be exacerbated at low body condition scores. Due to concerns for animal welfare and the objective of 4-H to educate and promote quality animal husbandry; horses, ponies and/or mules shall not be exhibited at any NC 4-H Horse Program supported events with a body condition score of less than 4 based on the Henneke scale (ribs easily discernible, tops of spinous process easily discernible, tailhead prominent with hook bones easily discernible, withers accentuated, and neck obviously thin).

Soundness

All horses in all classes must be serviceably sound. Judges may disqualify animals that are not serviceably sound.

Forbidden Substances and Methods

The North Carolina 4-H Horse Program has adopted American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) rules concerning drug use in horses during horse shows or classes exclusive to 4-H'ers. Exhibitors are responsible for being knowledgeable of and following the guidelines for drug use as prescribed in the current AQHA rulebook for that year. All groups sponsoring 4-H shows or 4-H classes reserve the right to have horses tested for drugs by a qualified veterinarian. To incorporate drug-testing procedures, there will be an administrative fee charged to every entry at the State 4-H Horse Show. For current rules, either refer to the AQHA Handbook Showing Rules at [2026 AQHA Rulebook](#).

Disciplinary actions of those tested positive or those who refuse to have their horses tested will be referred to the Executive Committee of the NC 4-H Horse Advisory Committee for action. All protests are to be filed with the Grievance Committee following appropriate protest rules. If the drug test is returned positive, the exhibitor will be fined a \$50 penalty and may be subject to the following actions below. The Executive Committee of the N.C. 4-H Horse Advisory Committee reserves the right to take the following actions if a horse tests positive for forbidden substances at a sanctioned show:

1. Disqualify the horse from all classes in which it participated in the show and take away earned points for high point and Southern Regional Qualification.
2. Ban the horse from participation in future 4-H shows for such a period as determined appropriate.
3. Levy an additional fine or penalize the exhibitor as deemed appropriate.
4. Ban the exhibitor from participation in future 4-H shows and events for such a period as determined appropriate.

Appeals and Complaints

Finality of Decisions

The decision of the judge is final. All horses and ponies cannot win, so the judge's decision, on whatever it may be, should be accepted in the true spirit of sportsmanship and 4-H membership. When an exhibitor or exhibitor's parent, leader, or agent is guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct, the show management may suspend such exhibitor's rights to participate in future classes or shows for such period as judged appropriate. The exhibitor's parent, leader, friend, or agent can and will be barred from the show grounds for unsportsmanlike conduct or improper behavior.

Appeals and Complaints

Appeals and complaints must be directed by an exhibitor, a grievance committee designated by show management, or a spokesperson for the exhibitor and should be registered with the steward or show management.

A verbal protest, accompanied by \$50 cash, must be filed with the show office by the complaining party within the time the protested class is announced or until the gate is closed for the next class, whichever comes first. A written protest must be submitted within 15 minutes. If the appeals committee upholds the protest, the deposit will be refunded. If the protest is overruled, the deposit shall be forfeited to the NC 4-H Horse Program Fund.

The show committee will serve as the appeals committee. This committee will confer with the steward and act upon any protested class. The North Carolina 4-H Horse Program does permit protesting of all animals including animals with a permanent height card. When a protest occurs, the animal must be made available for re-measurement prior to the end of the event. If the animal is not presented for measurement, the entry is disqualified from the event, and the current measurement card is revoked. If the animal was originally measured unshod (noted on eligibility card), it may be presented unshod for re-measurement. It is the sole responsibility of the owner/exhibitor to have the shoes removed prior to re-measurement. If the shoes of a previously measured unshod animal are not removed, the animal will be measured shod with no adjustment made for shoe thickness. This also is in accordance with current USEF rules. If an animal is measured unshod, exhibitors have the option to add a shoe and exhibit the animal shod after the height has been certified. The 4-H exhibitor should retain the measurement card for future 4-H and open shows and should transfer the card with the animal to the new owner if sold.

Exclusions

Eligibility of exhibitors and horses and the judges' decision cannot be protested. All youths and horses must have been certified by local county Extension agents and club leaders to participate in 4-H classes or 4-H shows. A judge's decision is final in regard to suitability.

Judge may disqualify anyone mistreating an animal or demonstrating unsportsmanlike conduct.

Tack, Attire, and Equipment

Overview

Rules in this book will have precedence over all other rules. In the event a tack and attire rule is not covered in this book, the following rulebooks will be deferred to:

- US Equestrian (USEF) - Equitation, hunt seat, saddle seat, and dressage
- American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) - western, ranch, drill, and speed events.
- Walking Horse Owners Association (WHOA) - non-trotting
- American Miniature Horse Association (AMHA) - miniature horses

Appointments

Riding Safety Headgear Policy

All riders and drivers must wear protective headgear that meets or surpasses current applicable ASTM/SEI standards while riding or driving during all county, district, and state 4-H horse program sponsored events and activities. This headgear must be properly fitted, properly worn on the top of the head, and worn with the harness securely fastened. **Go-Pro cameras or other types of devices are not permitted to be attached or affixed to the helmet.** [Please see the Statement of Responsibility section for more information.](#)

Personal Appointments and Clothing

All riding and driving during 4-H activities must be done in the following:

- Approved riding helmets as described above
- Boots with a functional heel, which is defined as a heel that stops the forward movement of the boot through the stirrup
- Back number must be worn at all times when riding or driving on the show grounds

For all events, the following are optional and should not be penalized:

- Safety or flack vests (may be worn under or over approved riding attire)

Electronic communication devices are prohibited for all events.

In all events, the stirrup, stirrup leather, or foot may not be tied or secured in any manner, including rubber bands.

Hunter Divisions

Required

- Clothing must be clean, neat and appropriate for hunter classes. Riders must wear coats, boots, breeches, and helmets. Shirts must have a choker, similar collar, or tie. Breeches may be buff, canary, tan, rust, or white.

Optional

- Crops or bats
- Spurs of the un-roweled type, made of smooth metal or plastic
- Gloves (however, these are preferred and encouraged in equitation classes)

Prohibited

- Whips longer than 30"

Western Divisions

Required

- Clothing must be clean, neat and appropriate for western classes. Riders must wear helmets, long-sleeved shirts with a collar, long pants, and boots.

Optional

- Spurs
- Chaps

Ranch Divisions

Required

- Clothing should be clean and neat and should be traditional western attire that reflects the true ranch lifestyle. Riders should wear helmets and western style boots; a western style hat or helmet is required to be worn when exhibiting in ranch ground handling. Shirts with a collar and long sleeves are required. Clothing with excessive crystals, glitter, and/or sequins are discouraged.

Optional

- Spurs
- Chaps/chinks
- Scarves

Speed Events

Required

- Riders should dress neatly. Long sleeved shirts with a collar and boots are required. Riders shall wear helmets.

Optional

- Spurs

- Riding crops
- Whip (may not exceed two feet in length excluding over and unders which must be attached to the saddle)

Prohibited

- Exhibitors may not be tied, buckled, or fastened to the tack or horse by any means.
- Rubber bands are NOT permitted

Non-Trotting Division

Required

- Riders may show in western, hunter, or saddle seat attire as it conforms to the standards of the breed they are exhibiting and must wear a helmet.
- Attire should be appropriate for the time of day and conservative and well-fitting
- If English, a day coat with appropriate jodhpurs are acceptable in both rail classes and equitation

Optional

- Spurs
- Whips
- Gloves

Prohibited

- Mixing western, hunter, or saddle seat attire

Tack and Equipment

Showmanship and Ranch Ground Handling

Western Divisions

- Clean and properly adjusted halter made of nylon, leather, or rope.
- Lead shanks/ropes should be 6 to 7 feet long and should be adjusted to the point where a youth does not have to hold a hand on the chain (if used). The shank needs to be short enough to assure maximum control and responsiveness from the horse. Judges may penalize a youth who uses a chain over the horse's nose.

Ranch Divisions

- Clean and properly adjusted halter made of nylon, leather (no silver), or rope.
- Lead ropes may not have a chain
- No training sticks or aids are permitted

Hunt Seat Divisions

- Clean and properly adjusted halter or hunt seat bridle (exhibitors should conform to breed standards).
- If using a halter, lead shanks/ropes should be 6 to 7 feet long and should be adjusted to the point where a youth does not have to hold a hand on the chain (if used). The shank needs to be short enough to assure maximum control and responsiveness from the horse. Judges may penalize a youth who uses a chain over the horse's nose.

Non-Trotting Divisions

- Clean and properly adjusted halter (exhibitors should conform to breed standards).

Prohibited Equipment for all Divisions

- Hackamores
- Whips, crops, and bats
- Spurs
- Chaps

Halter or In-Hand Classes

Stock Type Halter

- Halter made of leather, rope, or nylon

Hunter In Hand

- Halter made of leather or nylon or hunt seat bridle

Non-Trotting In Hand

- Halter made of leather or nylon or bridle

Miniature Halter

- Halter of any type

Prohibited Equipment for all Divisions

- Whips or bats of any type will not be allowed, except in non-trotting in hand if wearing English attire

Hunter Divisions

Required

- Clean English forward, hunting, or dressage type saddles. Sidesaddles are considered appropriate with proper saddle attire for ladies.
- Regulation snaffle, pelham, or full bridle with a cavesson noseband

Optional

- Breastplates
- Martingales in over fences classes
- Boots and bandages in equitation classes only
- Safety stirrups which have closed branches when the release mechanism is not activated

Prohibited

- Martingales in hunter hack and flat classes
- Draw reins
- Hackamores
- Non-conventional bits
- Boots and bandages in non-equitation classes
- Peacock-style safety stirrups

Western Divisions

Required

- Western type saddle that must fit the rider
- Exhibitor numbers are required on both sides of the saddle pad
- Silver equipment will not count over a good working outfit.
- Horses are to be shown in a plain headstall (browband, shaped ear, or split ear)
- Legal bits and curb straps
 - Snaffles: Only smooth ring snaffles are permitted with a broken mouthpiece (conventional O-ring, egg butt, or D-ring) with a ring no larger than 4 inches and no smaller than 2 inches. A loose leather curb strap, attached below the reins, is optional.
 - Curbs: A curb bit shall have a solid or broken mouthpiece, have shanks and acts with leverage. All curb bits must be free of mechanical devices and should be considered a standard western bit. The description of a legal, standard western bit includes: 8 1/2" maximum length, shanks may be fixed or loose; bars must be round, oval or egg shaped, smooth and unwrapped metal of 5/16" to 3/4" in diameter, measured 1" from the cheek. However, wire on the sway bars (above the bars and attaching to the spade) of a traditional spade bit is acceptable. They may be inlaid but must be smooth or latex wrapped. Nothing may protrude below the mouthpiece (bar), such as extensions or prongs, including upward prongs on solid mouthpieces. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces. The port must be no higher than 3 1/2" maximum, with rollers and covers acceptable. Broken mouthpieces, half breeds and spades are standard.
 - Curb straps or chains: Must be flat and not less than 1/2 inch wide
 - Bosal: A braided rawhide or leather bosal may be used in lieu of a snaffle bit no larger than 3/4 inch in diameter at the cheek. There must be a minimum of two

finger spaces (approximately 1 1/2 inches) between the bosal and nose. Absolutely no metal under the jaw or the noseband in connection with the bosal will be permitted. Hackamores shall be round in shape and constructed of uniform, smooth, braided rawhide or leather and have a non-metal flexible core. There must be at least 5½ inches on the underside of the noseband before any braided buttons.

- Legal use of the reins
 - Junior horses or ponies aged 5 or younger or any Rookie Western entry may be shown with a snaffle bit or bosal, using 2 hands on the reins. Standard leather split reins are mandatory with a snaffle and must be attached above the curb strap (if used)
 - Senior horses or ponies aged 6 years and over must be ridden in a curb bit with one hand on the reins (split or romal) and the hands may not be changed. The hand is to be around the reins; however, the index finger only is permitted between split reins. In all western classes, excess rein(s) may be straightened or disentangled anytime during the class, provided the rider's free hand used to straighten or disentangle remains behind the rein hand. Romal means an extension of braided or round material attached to closed reins. This extension shall be carried in the free hand with a 16-inch (40 cm) spacing between the reining hand and the free hand holding the romal. When using romal reins, the rider's hand shall be around the reins with the wrists kept straight and relaxed, the thumb on top and the fingers closed lightly around the reins. When using a romal, no fingers between the reins are allowed. The romal shall not be used forward of the cinch or to signal or cue the horse in any way.

Optional

- Breast collars
- Ropes
- Riata
- Western Rookie only may choose to ride a horse of any age in split reins and a snaffle bit with two hands
- Cloverbud exhibitors may choose to ride a horse of any age in split or closed reins and a snaffle bit with two hands

Prohibited

- Tie-downs
- Gag bits
- Draw reins
- Martingales
- Nosebands or cavessons
- Leg wraps, bandages, or bell boots
- Mechanical hackamores (any hackamore with metal under the jaw or metal used in a leverage action)
- Wire curb straps

- Other training devices or equipment
- The judge or show officials may disqualify any entry using equipment that they deem too severe or request the alteration of such equipment.

Ranch Divisions

Required

- Western type saddle that must fit the rider and should be suitable for ranch work. Silver adorned equipment is discouraged.
- Exhibitor numbers are required on both sides of the saddle pad
- Horses are to be shown in a plain headstall (browband, shaped ear, or split ear)
- Legal bits and curb straps
 - Snaffles: Only smooth ring snaffles are permitted with a broken mouthpiece (conventional O-ring, egg butt, or D-ring) with a ring no larger than 4 inches and no smaller than 2 inches. A loose leather curb strap, attached below the reins, is optional.
 - Curbs: A curb bit shall have a solid or broken mouthpiece, have shanks and acts with leverage. All curb bits must be free of mechanical devices and should be considered a standard western bit. The description of a legal, standard western bit includes: 8 1/2" maximum length, shanks may be fixed or loose; bars must be round, oval or egg shaped, smooth and unwrapped metal of 5/16" to 3/4" in diameter, measured 1" from the cheek. However, wire on the sway bars (above the bars and attaching to the spade) of a traditional spade bit is acceptable. They may be inlaid but must be smooth or latex wrapped. Nothing may protrude below the mouthpiece (bar), such as extensions or prongs, including upward prongs on solid mouthpieces. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces. The port must be no higher than 3 1/2" maximum, with rollers and covers acceptable. Broken mouthpieces, half breeds and spades are standard.
 - Curb straps or chains: Must be flat and not less than 1/2 inch wide
 - Bosal: A braided rawhide or leather bosal may be used in lieu of a snaffle bit no larger than 3/4 inch in diameter at the cheek. There must be a minimum of two finger spaces (approximately 1 1/2 inches) between the bosal and nose. Absolutely no metal under the jaw or the noseband in connection with the bosal will be permitted. Hackamores shall be round in shape and constructed of uniform, smooth, braided rawhide or leather and have a non-metal flexible core. There must be at least 5 1/2 inches on the underside of the noseband before any braided buttons.
- Legal use of the reins
 - Junior horses or ponies aged 5 or younger or any Rookie Ranch entry may be shown with a snaffle bit or bosal, using 2 hands on the reins. Standard leather split reins are mandatory with a snaffle and must be attached above the curb strap (if used)

- Senior horses or ponies aged 6 years and over must be ridden in a curb bit with one hand on the reins (split or romal) and the hands may not be changed. The hand is to be around the reins; however, the index finger only is permitted between split reins. In all western classes, excess rein(s) may be straightened or disentangled anytime during the class, provided the rider's free hand used to straighten or disentangle remains behind the rein hand. Romal means an extension of braided or round material attached to closed reins. This extension shall be carried in the free hand with a 16-inch (40 cm) spacing between the reining hand and the free hand holding the romal. When using romal reins, the rider's hand shall be around the reins with the wrists kept straight and relaxed, the thumb on top and the fingers closed lightly around the reins. When using a romal, no fingers between the reins are allowed. The romal shall not be used forward of the cinch or to signal or cue the horse in any way.

Optional

- Breast collars
- Ropes, hobbles, slickers, or similar ranch type equipment
- Riata
- Protective boots and leg wraps in ranch reining only
- Ranch Rookie only may choose to ride a horse of any age in split reins with a snaffle bit and two hands
- Cloverbud exhibitors may choose to ride a horse of any age in split or closed reins and a snaffle bit with two hands

Prohibited

- Braided or banded manes
- Hoof polish
- Tail extensions
- Tie-downs
- Draw reins
- Martingales
- Gag bits
- Nosebands
- Protective boots or leg wraps (except for ranch reining)
- Mechanical hackamores (any hackamore with metal under the jaw or metal used in a leverage action)
- Wire curb straps
- Other training devices or equipment
- The judge or show officials may disqualify any entry using equipment that they deem too severe or request the alteration of such equipment.

Speed Events

Required

- Western type saddle that must fit the rider.
- Exhibitor numbers are required and may be worn either on the rider's back or on both sides of the saddle pad.
- Legal bits and curb straps
 - Snaffles: Only smooth ring snaffles are permitted with a broken mouthpiece (conventional O-ring, egg butt, or D-ring) with a ring no larger than 4 inches and no smaller than 2 inches. A loose leather curb strap, attached below the reins, is optional.
 - Curbs: A curb bit shall have a solid or broken mouthpiece, have shanks and acts with leverage. All curb bits must be free of mechanical devices and should be considered a standard western bit. The description of a legal, standard western bit includes: 8 1/2" maximum length, shanks may be fixed or loose; bars must be round, oval or egg shaped, smooth and unwrapped metal of 5/16" to 3/4" in diameter, measured 1" from the cheek. However, wire on the sway bars (above the bars and attaching to the spade) of a traditional spade bit is acceptable. They may be inlaid but must be smooth or latex wrapped. Nothing may protrude below the mouthpiece (bar), such as extensions or prongs, including upward prongs on solid mouthpieces. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces. The port must be no higher than 3 1/2" maximum, with rollers and covers acceptable. Broken mouthpieces, half breeds and spades are standard.
 - Curb straps or chains: Must be flat and not less than 1/2 inch wide
 - Bosal: A braided rawhide or leather bosal may be used in lieu of a snaffle bit no larger than 3/4 inch in diameter at the cheek. There must be a minimum of two finger spaces (approximately 1 1/2 inches) between the bosal and nose. Absolutely no metal under the jaw or the noseband in connection with the bosal will be permitted. Hackamores shall be round in shape and constructed of uniform, smooth, braided rawhide or leather and have a non-metal flexible core. There must be at least 5 1/2 inches on the underside of the noseband before any braided buttons.
 - Slip/Gag Bits: Slip or gag bits are permitted in speed events.

Optional

- Tie-downs or bonnets (must be made of rope, flat nylon webbing, or leather only with a minimum 3/8" diameter)
- Mechanical hackamore (nosepiece must be covered in leather and cannot have visible or bare metal in contact with the horse's head)
- Protective boots and leg wraps
- Martingales

Prohibited

- Headstalls made of metal (even if encased in a protective material)
- The judge or steward may prohibit the use of any bit or equipment considered inhumane or would tend to give a horse/rider an unfair advantage
- Fenders and stirrups may not be connected by string or other material to the saddle or girth

Non-Trotting Division

Required

- Unless specified, all exhibitors may show in western, hunter, or saddle seat tack as it conforms to the standards of the non-trotting breed they are exhibiting

Optional

- Western exhibitors are permitted to use cavessons and use two hands on the reins

Prohibited

- Whips and braids with western tack
- Mixing of tack or attire
- Hoof bands
- Leg wraps or bandages

Showmanship

Overview and Purpose

The same scorecard and class procedures will be used for all exhibitors in Showmanship classes. The exhibitor uses the horse as a means to display his or her ability to fit and show properly. Showmanship is considered a performance, not a conformation class.

The real purpose of showmanship is to learn the best way to fit and train a horse so that its best attributes can be seen easily by the judge or potential buyer. All youths are encouraged to participate and learn. Showmen are reminded that they are being judged on the fitting, training, and showing of their horses. The horse's conformation is not to be considered in the judging of this class.

Appointments

Each exhibitor should be neat, clean, well groomed, attentive, courteous, and in appropriate attire for the division. [Refer to Tack, Attire, and Equipment.](#)

Personal Appointments

Appropriate hunt seat, western, or non-trotting attire. A hat or helmet is required to be worn.

Acceptable Appointments

- Gloves

Prohibited Appointments

- Chaps
- Spurs
- Whips or crops

Tack and Equipment

All tack and equipment should be clean and well-fitted, and appropriate for the division. [Refer to Tack, Attire, and Equipment.](#)

Acceptable Equipment

- Bridles (hunt seat classes only; snaffle bridle only for stock type hunter)
- Chain lead shanks

Prohibited Equipment

- Protective boots, leg wraps, and bandages

Presentation of Horse

Cleanliness

The horse should be clean and well groomed. Fitting for a show is a year-round job. No amount of fitting or grooming oils will cover up a poor job of feeding or an unhealthy, unsound horse.

Daily grooming and good nutrition are very important to the hair coat. Just before entering the show ring, the showman should rub the horse down with a grooming cloth to remove any dust that may have accumulated since brushing. Avoid using an oily grooming cloth because oil will accumulate dust. Wipe about the ears, eyes, nostrils, lips, sheath, and dock with a damp cloth or sponge.

Clipping

Horses should be clipped according to breed standard and appear neat, professional, and tidy.

Mane and Tail

The mane and tail must be combed and styled as appropriate to the type of horse. A bridle path should be clipped. Stock horses may have the mane completely roached, leaving a forelock from the headstall forward. A small lock of mane is left over the withers to help balance the neck and cushion some of the wear from a saddle. The tail should be appropriate for the particular breed.

For hunters, manes and tails may be braided or unbraided. All manes and tails should be neat and properly thinned. If the mane is braided, however, the tail should also be braided.

Feet

The horse's feet should be trimmed and properly shod (trimming and shoeing should be done approximately 10 days before a show). The hooves should be clean. Exhibitors may wish to use hoof dressing or other treatment to improve the appearance of the feet.

Method of Showing

Leading

Be able to walk, trot, turn, stop, and back as directed by ring officials or the posted pattern.

Always lead from the left side at an alert walk, following the judge's directions. When showing at a walk, always walk by the horse's left side, **never in front of him**. The horse's head should be slightly in front of your shoulder. The horse should be trained to move willingly with his body (head, neck, back, and hindquarters) in a straight line in the direction being traveled. Showmen will need to give the horse enough lead to allow him to travel straight but keep the lead short enough to assure precise control. Exhibitors must have the right hand on the lead when leading their horse. The left hand will contain the remainder of the reins of lead in a loosely coiled loop or figure-eight-fold. Horses should walk in a brisk, alert manner and give the appearance that the exhibitor and horse are a team.

Run by the left side of the horse when showing at a trot. When leading, your horse should travel alertly and willingly with his head up but not too high. You should run with good posture and vitality.

When a particular show ring procedure used by a judge requires a horse to be reversed, the horse should always be turned to the right. Turn in as small an area as possible and attempt to keep the hind feet in one place while turning; this allows you to keep the horse lined up with the judge. All turns should be made naturally and as directed by ring officials and should be made to the right.

Always move your horse **directly** toward or away from the judge unless specific instructions are made indicating the judge would like a side view of your horse.

Posing

Keep your horse posed at all times and know where the judge is and what the judge wants. A good showman always gives the judge the best view of the horse. Make it easy for the judge to see your horse at its best advantage. When the judge is down the line, let your horse stand, if posed reasonably well, without undue fussing.

Western and stock type hunter horses should be posed square (front feet and hind feet even) and hunter horses may be posed square or with the front feet even and the hind feet slightly separated. Non-trotting horses should be posed either square or parked out as appropriate for the breed. Position your horse by the pressure on the lead strap. Never kick or position the leg with your hand while in the class. When the judge is observing other animals, let your horse stand if posed reasonably well.

When posing your horse, stand toward the front, facing the horse at a 45-degree angle to the eye, but never **directly** in front of the horse. Always be in a position where you can **observe your horse and keep an eye on the judge**. The “Quarter Method” is the suggested method of showmanship. The following guidelines are meant to serve as an illustration of movement around the horse while showing in showmanship at halter and are for the exhibitors’ information:

- A. Imaginary lines bisect the horse into four equal parts as seen in Figure I below. The quadrants are numbered I, II, III, and IV for ease of identification. One line runs across the horse just behind the withers. The other imaginary line runs from head to tail.
- B. When the judge is in quadrant I, the handler should be in IV. As the judge moves to II, the handler should move to I. As the judge moves up the horse to III, the handler returns once more to IV. When the judge moves up to IV, the handler returns to I. This method is based on safety as the handler can keep the horse’s hindquarters from swinging toward the judge should the horse become fractious.

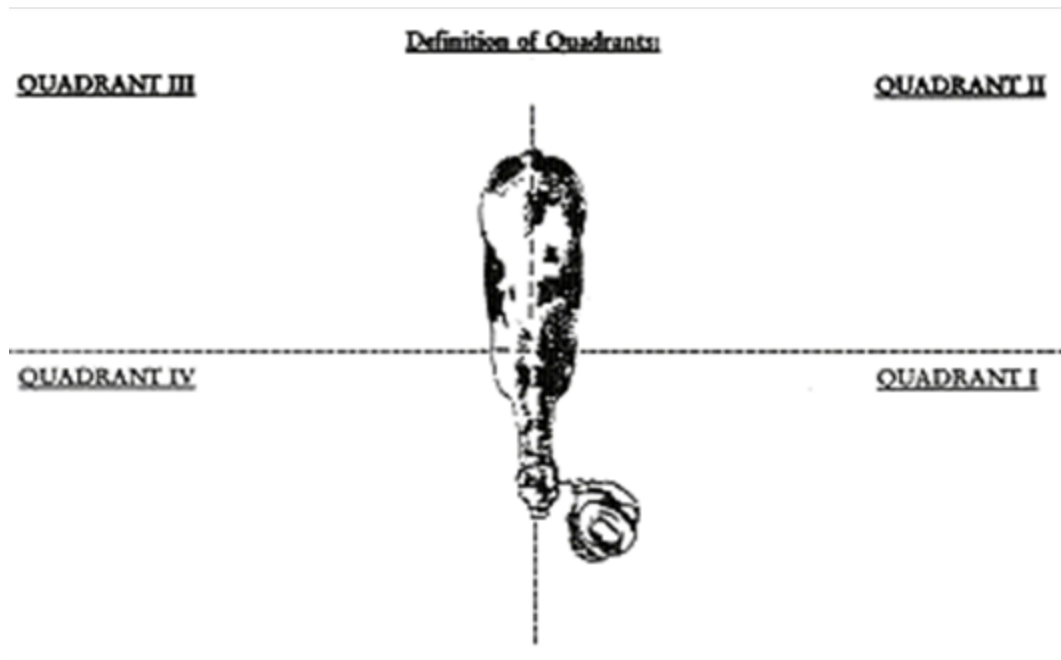


Figure I: Posing: Definition of Quadrants

Keep your position in line and allow reasonable space (at least 6 feet) between your horse and the others. Never allow your horse to interfere with other horses. If requested to change position in line, back your horse out of the line and approach the new position from the rear. Be careful when walking behind other horses and allow yourself plenty of room to enter.

Keep alert and be aware of the judge's position at all times. Don't be distracted by people or things outside the ring. Always show the animal, not yourself.

Respond quickly to requests from the judge and officials. Quickly recognize and correct any faults in your horse. Move easily, quietly, and with confidence when showing your horse. Be courteous; respond promptly to directions and always display good horsemanship. Keep showing until the entire class has been placed and excused from the ring. Be natural. Over showing, undue fussing, and maneuvering are objectionable.

Class Routines

The following judging procedure will be used for all classes: Exhibitors will individually enter the ring and be scored on the fitting, leading, and posing of their horses as well as pattern precision. After the completion of individual judging, the judge may give the finalists additional work before final placings and awards are made. A show manager may elect to modify or change the above ring procedure at his or her own discretion.

Scoring

Scoring for all classes is based on current AQHA rules. Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. Patterns will be divided into 6 to 10 maneuvers, as specified by the judge, and each maneuver will be scored from +3 to -3 with

1/2-point increments acceptable that will be added or subtracted from 70. Maneuver scores should be determined independent of penalties and should reflect equal consideration of both performance of the exhibitor's pattern and the form and effectiveness of the exhibitor and presentation of horse to result in the following scores: +3 Excellent, +2 Very Good, +1 Good, 0 Average or Correct, -1 Poor, -2 Very Poor, -3 Extremely Poor. Exhibitors' overall form and effectiveness should also be scored from 0 to 5 with 0 to 2 Average, 3 Good, 4 Very Good, 5 Excellent.

Penalties

An exhibitor should be penalized in the pattern independent of maneuver scores and deducted from the final score as follows:

Three (3) point penalties include:

- Break of gait at walk or trot for up to two strides
- Over or under turning up to 1/8 of a turn
- Ticking or hitting cone
- Sliding a pivot foot
- Lifting a pivot foot during a pivot or set-up and replacing it in the same place
- Lifting a foot in a set-up and replacing it in the same place after presentation

Five (5) point penalties include:

- Not performing the gait or not stopping within 10 feet of designated area
- Break of gait at walk or trot for more than 2 strides
- Splitting the cone (cone between the horse and handler)
- Horse stepping out of or moving the hind end significantly during a pivot or turn
- Horse stepping out of set-up after presentation
- Horse resting a foot or hipshot in a set-up
- Over or under turning 1/8 to 1/4 turn

Five (5) point penalties include:

- Exhibitor is not in the required position during inspection
- Exhibitor touching the horse or kicking or pointing their feet at the horse's feet during the set-up
- Standing directly in front of the horse
- Loss of lead shank, holding chain or two hands on shank
- Blatant disobedience including kicking, rearing or pawing; horse continually circling exhibitor
- Horse stepping out of or moving the hind end significantly during a pivot or turn more than one time

Disqualifications (should not be placed) include:

- Loss of control of horse that endangers exhibitor, other horses, or judge
- Horse becomes separated from exhibitor
- Failure to display correct number

- Willful abuse
- Excessive schooling or training; use of artificial aids
- Illegal equipment
- Off pattern, including knocking over or wrong side of cone or marker; never performing designated gait; over or under turning more than 1/4 turn

In Rookie classes only:

Exhibitor's going off pattern, knocking over or on the wrong side of cone, never performing specified gait, or overturning more than ¼ than designated, shall not be disqualified, but must always place below exhibitors not incurring a disqualifying fault.

Non-Trotting Division

Overview

These classes are designated for non-trotting horses and ponies such as walking horses, racking horses, Rocky Mountains and Paso Finos. Horses and ponies will compete in the same class. Horses will be required to perform gaits appropriate to their respective breed. Non-Trotting Division championships include points accumulated in all Non-Trotting Division classes. **Refer to shoeing guidelines as outlined by the [Walking Horse Owner's Association \(WHOA\)](#). Hoof bands and action devices are prohibited on the show grounds.**

All Non-Trotting Division entries are subject to inspection by a DQP (designated qualified person appointed by WHOA) prior to the class to detect any incidences of soring. Class winners are required to report to the DQP immediately after the class. Exhibitors failing an inspection will not be permitted to show.

Appointments

[Refer to the Tack, Attire, and Equipment section.](#)

In all classes, if riders are competing in western tack and attire, 2 hands are permissible on the reins with a curb bit.

General Appearance

The proper equitation seat should be relaxed and supple yet erect in the saddle and in tune with the horse's natural motion. Any excessive motion in the saddle or swinging of the arms and legs should be penalized. An artificial or unnatural appearance in the saddle also should be penalized.

Basic Position

The rider's basic seat should be deep in the saddle with back erect and legs in line with the body. The arms should be relaxed with hands in a natural position that will allow maximum use of the hands as an aid to the horse. Reins should be held in the crossed-closed position. A rider should not be penalized for using the legs as an aid in executing gaits, but any excessive motion or pumping should be penalized.

Class Routines

Non-Trotting Showmanship At Halter

[Refer to the standard showmanship class procedures rules.](#)

Non-Trotting Mares and Geldings In Hand

Horses or ponies are judged on conformation, soundness, transmissible weaknesses, quality, breed character, and movement. [Refer to the Halter and In-Hand section for more information.](#)

Horses or ponies will be shown in appropriate equipment as indicated for their respective breed being exhibited. Horses must be shown and handled by only one club member.

Non-Trotting Equitation

To be judged on the rider's performance and horsemanship skills with emphasis on the proper use of hands, legs, and seat.

Exhibitors will complete a pattern individually and will exhibit both directions on the rail. Gait calls for this class will be walk, pleasure gait, and extended pleasure gait.

English Non-Trotting 2-Gait

To be judged as a pleasure class based on manners, consistency, and way of going. Exhibitors must be in English tack and attire.

Horses will be required to work both ways of the ring at a walk, pleasure gait, and extended pleasure gait (A canter is not allowed.) Horses may be required to stand quietly or back, or both.

This class is for Tennessee Walking Horses, Racking Horses, and Spotted Saddle Horses. Horses in this class may not cross enter into Other Non-Trotting Horse 2 Gait English Pleasure.

Other Non-Trotting Horse 2 Gait English Pleasure

To be judged as a pleasure class based on manners, consistency, and way of going. Exhibitors must be in English tack and attire. Junior and Senior riders compete in the same class.

Horses will be required to work both ways of the ring at a walk, pleasure gait, and extended pleasure gait (A canter is not allowed.) Horses may be required to stand quietly or back, or both.

This class is for gaited breeds other than Tennessee Walking Horses, Racking Horses, or Spotted Saddle Horses. Horses in this class may not cross enter into English Non-Trotting 2-Gait.

Western Non-Trotting 2-Gait

To be judged as a pleasure class based on manners, consistency, and way of going. Exhibitors must be in western tack and attire.

Horses will be required to work both ways of the ring at a walk, pleasure gait, and extended pleasure gait (A canter is not allowed.) Horses may be required to stand quietly or back, or both.

Three-Gait Pleasure Class

A horse must select one of the following 3-gait pleasure classes and may not cross enter. Refer to the gait calls for each class to determine which is appropriate for your horse. If you have a Spotted Saddle Horse, they should exhibit in either the walking horse or racking horse type class, based upon the gait they perform.

Walking Horse Pleasure 3-Gait

To be judged as a pleasure class based on manners, consistency, and way of going. Exhibitors may be in English or western tack and attire.

Horses will be required to work both ways of the ring at a flat walk, running walk, and canter. Horses will be required to stand quietly and back.

Junior and Senior riders will compete in the same class.

A horse in this class cannot enter Racking Horse Pleasure 3-Gait nor Other Non-Trotting Horse Pleasure 3-Gait.

Racking Horse Pleasure 3-Gait

To be judged as a pleasure class based on manners, consistency, and way of going. Exhibitors may be in English or western tack and attire.

Horses will be required to work both ways of the ring at a walk (may either be a trail walk or a show walk) and a pleasure rack. Horses will be required to stand quietly and back.

Junior and Senior riders will compete in the same class.

A horse in this class cannot enter Walking Horse Pleasure 3-Gait nor Other Non-Trotting Horse Pleasure 3-Gait.

Other Non-Trotting Pleasure 3-Gait

This class is for horses that do not perform a racking or walking gait (ex. Paso Finos, Missouri Fox Trotters, etc.). To be judged as a pleasure class based on manners, consistency, and way of going. Exhibitors may be in English or western tack and attire.

Horses will be required to work both ways of the ring at a walk, pleasure gait, and extended pleasure gait as appropriate for the breed. For example, Paso Finos should exhibit a walk, corto, and largo. Horses will be required to stand quietly and back.

Junior and Senior riders will compete in the same class.

A horse in this class cannot enter Walking Horse Pleasure 3-Gait nor Racking Horse Pleasure 3-Gait.

Hunter Divisions

Overview

The rules in this book will have precedence over all other rules. US Equestrian Federation (USEF) rules will be used for any hunt seat rules not covered in this book.

Appointments

[Refer to the Tack, Attire, and Equipment section.](#)

Divisions

Hunter classes are divided into divisions based on rider experience and fence height. **Cross-entry between divisions is not allowed.** For quick reference, refer to the [Qualifying Divisions Chart](#).

Rookie Hunter Walk/Trot

Riders must be 4-H members in their first year of showing hunt seat at the 4-H level as a junior or higher division. The intention of this division is to serve as a safe introductory experience to the hunt seat discipline. Riders are only permitted one year to show at this level. Open to horses and ponies. Four-H members showing exclusively in this division may not compete in the Versatility Class and are not eligible to show at Southern Regionals.

Short Stirrup

Riders must be 4-H members ages 8 to 13. Three years of participation in the division is allowed, with no more than 2 years showing over fences. This division is specifically designed for the inexperienced Junior riders in the Hunt Seat Division. Open to horses and ponies.

Long Stirrup

Riders must be 4-H members ages 14-18. Two years of participation in the division is allowed. Open to horses and ponies. Participants in this division may not have previously shown over fences for more than 2 years.

Junior Hunter

Riders must be 4-H members ages 8 to 13. Open to horses and ponies. In over fences classes, riders select their fence height based on the ability of the rider and the mount. In Working Hunter and Equitation Over Fences, an exhibitor may show one horse and one pony in the same class and the pony must be measured.

Senior Hunter

Riders must be 4-H members ages 14 to 18. Open to horses and ponies. In over fences classes, riders select their fence height based on the ability of the rider and the mount. In

Working Hunter and Equitation Over Fences, an exhibitor may show one horse and one pony in the same class and the pony must be measured.

Stock Type Hunter

This division is open to junior and senior riders and they will compete in the same classes. This division is for stock type horses who do not compete over fences and follows AQHA rules. Entries in this division may not cross-enter into any other hunter division and may not show over fences, including crossrails or hunter hack. [Refer to the Stock Type Hunter section of the rulebook for more details.](#)

Fence Heights

The minimum and maximum heights (as measured from the height of the fence on the standards) of fences shall be the following:

Hunter Hack

- Rookie W/T: 18" cross rails
- Short Stirrup: 2' (no oxers)
- Long Stirrup: 2' (no oxers)
- Junior Hunter: 2'3"
- Senior Hunter: 2'3"

Working Hunter Over Fences and Equitation Over Fences

- Cross Rails: 18"
- Short Stirrup: 2' (no oxers)
- Long Stirrup: 2' (no oxers)
- Junior Hunter: this shall be evaluated as one class, however exhibitors may select their height division to jump. Exhibitors must compete in the same height division for both equitation over fences and working hunter over fences. If an exhibitor is competing on a horse and a pony in these classes, they must declare their fence height for each entry
 - A: 2'-2'3"
 - B: 2'3"-2'6"
 - C: 2'6"-2'9"
- Senior Hunter: this shall be evaluated as one class, however exhibitors may select their height division to jump. Exhibitors must compete in the same height division for both equitation over fences and working hunter over fences. If an exhibitor is competing on a horse and a pony in these classes, they must declare their fence height for each entry
 - A: 2'-2'3"
 - B: 2'3"-2'6"
 - C: 2'6"-2'9"

Rider Position

General Appearance

Riders should have a workmanlike appearance, with light, supple seat and hands that convey the impression of complete control should any emergency arise. The eyes should be up and shoulders back. Toes should be out at an angle best suited to the rider's conformation, ankles flexed in, heels down, and calf of leg in contact with the horse and slightly behind girth. Iron may be either under the toe, under the ball of the foot, or slightly behind the ball of the foot.

Position in Motion

At the walk, sitting trot, and canter, the rider's body should be a couple of degrees in front of the vertical; at posting trot, inclined forward; and at galloping and jumping, at the same inclination as the posting trot.

Hands should be over and in front of the horse's withers, knuckles 30 degrees inside the vertical with hands making a straight line from horse's mouth to rider's elbow. Hands should not be held tightly together. Method of holding reins is optional, and the bight of the reins may fall on either side, but it is more acceptable for the bight of the reins to lie on the off side. The rider should maintain light contact with the horse's mouth at all times except when standing still.

The rein of a snaffle bridle may be held either outside the little finger or between the third and little finger. The snaffle rein of a Pelham or full bridle should be held outside the little finger and curb rein between the third and little finger or between the second and third fingers. In either case, reins should be picked up at the buckles by the right hand, then straightened and separated in correct order by the fingers of the left hand, then pulled taut and adjusted to even pressure in both hands.

Mounting and Dismounting

To mount, take up the reins in your left hand and place your hand on the withers. Grasp stirrup leather with your right hand, and insert left foot in stirrup and mount. To dismount, either step down or slide down. The rider's size must be considered.

Class Routines

The below are the class routines for Rookie W/T Hunter, Short Stirrup, Long Stirrup, Junior Hunter, and Senior Hunter. [Refer to the Stock Type Hunter rulebook for those division rules.](#)

Hunter Showmanship

[Refer to the standard showmanship procedure rules.](#)

Hunter Mares and Geldings In-Hand

Horses are judged on conformation, soundness and transmissible weaknesses, quality, condition, breed character, and way of going at the judge's discretion. Horses will be shown in an acceptable hunting bridle or a suitable halter. Horses must be handled and shown by only one club member. [Refer to the halter and in hand section for more information.](#)

Hunt Seat Equitation On the Flat

Each rider's performance and skills are being judged. The rider's basic position, use of hands and legs, and his or her ability to control and show the horse are important. The horse's and the rider's performance and execution of tests must be considered. **Riders will be tested on the rail only during the preliminary heats. Finalists will be required to perform individual patterns.**

The judge will evaluate each rider on his or her individual skills and execution of the tests. The final riders will be required to perform a pattern and may be required to perform additional work on the rail to determine final placings. Riders shall enter the ring at the direction of the ring steward. If additional rail work is requested, the riders will proceed at least once around the ring at each gait (walk, trot, and canter; walk, trot only for Rookie Hunter W/T division) at least one direction of the ring, and, on command, reverse and repeat. The riders may be requested to gallop in safe groups (of eight horses or less) and perform additional tests. The reverse may be executed by turning either toward or away from the rail.

Riders will not be required to jump.

The following optional tests may be used:

- Answer any questions on horses, tack, or riding.
- Execute a working trot sitting, working trot rising, or a working trot showing a lengthening of stride (either sitting or rising).
- Walk, back
- Walk from a gallop with the emphasis on the rider's hands.
- Halt from a canter.
- Dismount and remount in the lineup.
- Ride without stirrups.
- Maintain a counter-canter.
- Demonstrate a half turn on forehand, a half turn on the haunches, or both.

Hunter Under Saddle

Horses are to be judged on performance, way of going, manners, and suitability of horse and rider at the judge's discretion. All animals will be shown both directions of the ring at a walk, trot, and canter (walk, trot only for Rookie W/T). The judge may request any or all animals to hand gallop in groups that will be safe for mounts and riders. Emphasis will be placed on the mount's performance and way of going.

Mounts must back easily and stand quietly. Mounts should perform without undue restraint, but light contact with the mouth should be maintained. Mounts should be under control at all times.

Large numbers in this class may necessitate elimination heats to accommodate all entries. It is suggested that no more than 25 horses compete per heat, regardless of arena size.

Bridle Path Hack

Horses will be judged on their **ability to give a pleasurable ride**, manners, performance, and suitability to purpose. Emphasis will be placed on ability to give a pleasurable ride and manners. Horses are shown on the flat at a walk, trot, or canter (walk, trot only for Rookie W/T) on a reasonably loose rein **without loss of contact with the horse's mouth**.

Horses must work both ways of the ring at all gaits to demonstrate their ability with different leads. Entries shall be penalized for being on wrong lead but not necessarily disqualified.

Horses may be required to go from one gait to another gait or extend any gait at the judge's discretion. The judge may ask finalists to hand gallop, but never more than a safe number of horses should gallop at one time (a suggested maximum of eight).

Horses will be required to back easily and stand quietly. Any portion of a class or heat may be placed on the rail for extra work by the judge at any time. Any extra rail work must be conducted in both directions.

Excessive speed, breaking gait, tossing of head, and going sideways are to be penalized.

Hunter Hack

Horses will first be required to negotiate two jumps in accordance with the Fence Heights listed above, with a minimum of 48 feet between jumps. Jump distances may be set greater than 48 feet apart but must be in increments of 12 feet. Martingales are not allowed.

A minimum of the top 15 horses and all ties will be selected by the judge to be judged on the rail, according to Hunter Under Saddle Class rules. The judge will have the option to work horses and ponies both directions of the ring; however, only one direction will be required.

When considering final placings, horses should be evaluated on 70% fence work, 30% flat work.

Equitation Over Fences

Riders will be judged on hands, seat, use of aids, and control. Each entry will individually execute a course consisting of 6 to 10 jumps with a minimum of four obstacles.

Except for jumping disobediences, jumping faults of the horse are not to be considered unless they are the rider's responsibility. Three cumulative disobediences; fall of the horse, rider, or

both; or going off course will result in automatic elimination. Eliminated riders will leave the ring immediately unless given permission to take one schooling jump when leaving.

The course should be designed by the show committee or qualified horseman and must meet the approval of the judge. The course diagram should be posted 1 hour before the class is called and should contain at least one change of direction.

Fences must conform to those listed for working hunters. The first fence must be vertical (brush or post and rail) and should be set at the minimum fence height for the division as listed previously.

Following the jumping performance, any or all of the entries may be called back to perform at a walk, trot, and canter on the rail and to execute any appropriate test listed under the Hunt Seat Equitation on the Flat section.

Riders who place first or second in the following classes at a qualifying show are eligible to compete in the [Hunt Seat Equitation Medal Class](#) at the state horse show

- Junior Hunter Equitation Over Fences
- Senior Hunter Equitation Over Fences

Scoring

Competition begins immediately when entry comes through the in-gate. Scoring shall be on the basis of 0-100, with a suggested breakdown as follows (faults are scored according to the judge's opinion and depending on severity or division, may be considered minor or major faults):

- 90-100: Excellent equitation, position and presentation; meets all fences squarely and at proper distance; uses all options to their advantage.
- 80-89: Minor equitation faults, i.e. long, weak distance, deep distance, one step landing at the counter-canter. Rider still maintains a quality ride. Smooth.
- 70-79: More problems occur, equitation suffers, i.e., rounded shoulders, heels are not down, hands incorrect, lacks the style and presence. Once major fence problem, i.e. chip with a ride up the neck, or discreet swap out, jumping off one side of the jump. No dangerous fences, not a flowing course, out of rhythm riding (minor miss/ "chip"), additional minor faults (refer to minor faults below)
- 60-69: Major position faults, poor body position, loose legs and seat, failure to obtain or maintain trot to a trot fence approach, two or three misses at the fence. Cross canter or no change (60), extra stride in a measured line (61-64), multiple distance mistakes.
- 50-59: Refer to major faults below.
- 40-49: Disobedience (refer to disobedience chart below in Working Hunter).
- 10-39: Avoids elimination; 2 disobediences, knockdowns, dangerous fences, accumulative major faults

Minor Faults (suggested 2–5-point deduction per occurrence):

- A jump out of rhythm (minor miss/ “chip”)
- Obvious pace changes
- One step of cross canter (1 point for each stride up to 4 strides, additional cross canter strides is a major fault)
- Swap lead in front of jump
- Rail (4-point deduction per rail)
- Wrong diagonal up to 2 steps
- Hands not at a 45-degree angle
- Ahead or behind motion at jump
- Canter trot jump one stride or less

Major Faults (suggested 10–20-point deduction per occurrence):

- Canter trot jump more than 2 strides
- No lead change (60)
- Kicking out (50)
- Dangerous jumping/excessive speed
- Using stick on horse in ring (50)
- Manners
- Major out of rhythm (major miss/ “chip”)
- Loss of stirrup (50)
- Loss of reins (50)
- First disobedience (40)
- Second disobedience (30)
- Wrong diagonal over 2 steps
- Holding reins incorrectly

Elimination (does not place):

- Fall of horse or rider
- Three disobediences
- Off course
- Bolting from ring

Hunt Seat Equitation Medal Class

This class is offered only at the State Show for exhibitors that placed first or second in Junior Hunter Equitation Over Fences and Senior Hunter Equitation Over Fences at a district show.

Fence heights will be set according to the height division (A, B, or C) selected on the entry form of the exhibitor.

This class does not offer points toward Southern Regional qualification or division champion awards.

Courses will consist of two changes of direction. The class will be judged as an equitation class over fences first, followed by equitation on the flat. A minimum of the top 10 riders and all ties may be selected from the fence work to return for flat work on the rail.

If an exhibitor is eligible to show both a horse and a pony in the Medal, they must choose which mount to exhibit, as flat work is required in this class.

Working Hunter Over Fences

Horses will be judged on performance, manners, hunting pace, style of jump, and way of moving as well as suitability for actual use in the hunting field. All horses must be serviceably sound. Hunter courses are required to conclude with a hunter circle at the trot on a light rein for the judge to assess soundness.

Each horse will individually negotiate a course consisting of at least eight jumps with a minimum of four obstacles, in accordance with the Fence Heights listed previously. At least one change of direction is recommended. The course diagram should be posted 1 hour before the class is called. Judging will start when the horse enters the arena and end when the horse leaves the arena.

Management must provide at least one practice jump. This jump should be in a warm-up ring or arena. The use of additional practice jumps is encouraged.

Cross Rail Working Hunter Over Fences is a non-point class that is open to Juniors and Seniors, horses and ponies. Riders in this class may not cross-enter into any other working hunter or equitation over fences class. This class will be an introductory working hunter class to be performed at the canter over 18" cross rail fences only. Simple lead changes are permitted in this class.

Hunter Courses

Selected jumps may be of the following type:

- Brush
- Post and rail
- Chicken coop
- Gate
- Stone wall
- White board fence
- Ascending oxers (Back element must be 3 inches higher and preferably 6 inches.) are permissible in all divisions except rookie, short stirrup, and long stirrup.

Chicken coops hinged at the top and free at the bottom, hogbacks, triple bar jumps, striped rails, parallel bars, square oxers and targets are prohibited.

The first jump must be a brush or vertical set at the minimum fence height for the division. In-and-outs and oxers are prohibited as the first jump. All jumps should appear solid. Adequate poles and cups are needed to fill in blank spaces. Ground lines should be placed on the ground in front of all fences.

When designing a working hunter course, the jumps should be spaced a minimum of 48 feet apart, but all intervals must be in multiples of 12 feet (for example, 48 feet, 60 feet, 72 feet, or 84 feet) from the base of the fence on the landing side of the first obstacle to the base of the fence on the take-off side of the second obstacle in the line.

Scoring

Competition begins immediately when entry comes through the in-gate. Scoring shall be on the basis of 0-100, with a suggested breakdown as follows (faults are scored according to the judge's opinion and depending on severity or division, may be considered minor or major faults):

- 90-100: An excellent performer and good mover that jumps the entire course with cadence, balance, and style.
- 80-89: A good performer that jumps all fences reasonably well; an excellent performer that commits one or two minor faults; smooth.
- 70-79: The average, fair mover that makes no serious faults, but lacks the style, cadence, and good balance of the scopier horses; the good performer that makes a few minor faults; out of rhythm riding (minor miss/ "chip"), additional minor faults (light rub/rubs).
- 60-69: Poor movers that make minor mistakes; fair or average movers that have one or two poor fences but no major faults or disobedience. Cross canter or no change (60), extra stride in a measured line (61-64), multiple distance mistakes, rail on the lip of the cup/displaced rail.
- 50-59: Trot, poor manners, dangerous jumping, extra stride in and out, elimination of a stride in a measure line, hang a leg, or drop a leg.
- 30-49: Disobedience (refer to disobedience chart below).
- 10-29: A horse that avoids elimination but jumps in such an unsafe and dangerous manner as to preclude a higher score; 2 disobediences

Minor Faults (suggested 2–5-point deduction per occurrence)

- A jump out of rhythm (minor miss/ "chip")
- Obvious pace changes
- One step of missed lead (1 point for each stride up to 4 strides, additional cross canter strides is a major fault)
- Landing on cross canter for one stride (2 points)
- Swap lead in front of jump
- Wrong lead once competition round has begun (5 points)
- Ahead or behind motion at jump

Major Faults (suggested 10–20-point deduction per occurrence)

- Canter trot jump more than one stride (75-70)
- Cross cantering within the line up to two strides (10 pt penalty per occurrence)
- Missed lead change 4 strides or more
- No lead change (60)
- Trot on course (55)
- Kicking out (50)
- Dangerous jumping (50)
- Using stick on horse in ring (50)
- Knockdown (45)
- First disobedience (40)
- Second disobedience (30)
- Poor manners
- Major out of rhythm (major miss/ “chip”)

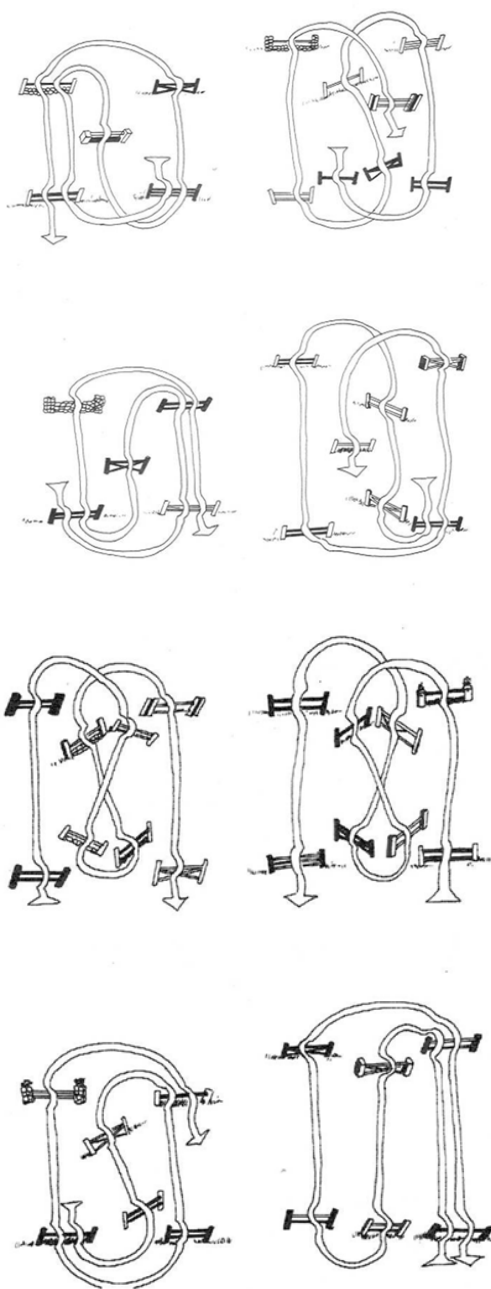
Disobediences (major faults):

- A. Refusal. When a horse stops in front of an obstacle (whether or not the obstacle is knocked down or altered), it is a refusal unless the horse then immediately jumps the obstacle without backing one step. If a horse takes one step backwards it is a refusal. After refusal, if the horse is moved toward the obstacle but does not attempt to jump, it is considered another refusal.
- B. Run-out. A run-out occurs when the horse evades or passes the obstacle to be jumped; jumps an obstacle outside its limiting markers; or when the horse or exhibitor knocks down a flag, standard, wing, or other element limiting the obstacle (without the obstacle being jumped).
- C. Loss of Forward Movement. Failure to maintain trot, canter, or gallop after crossing the in gate, except when it is a refusal, a run-out, or due to uncontrollable circumstances, such as when an obstacle is being re-set.
- D. Unnecessary circling on course. Any form of circle or circles, whereby the horse crosses its original track between two consecutive obstacles anywhere on course, except to retake obstacle after refusal or run-out.

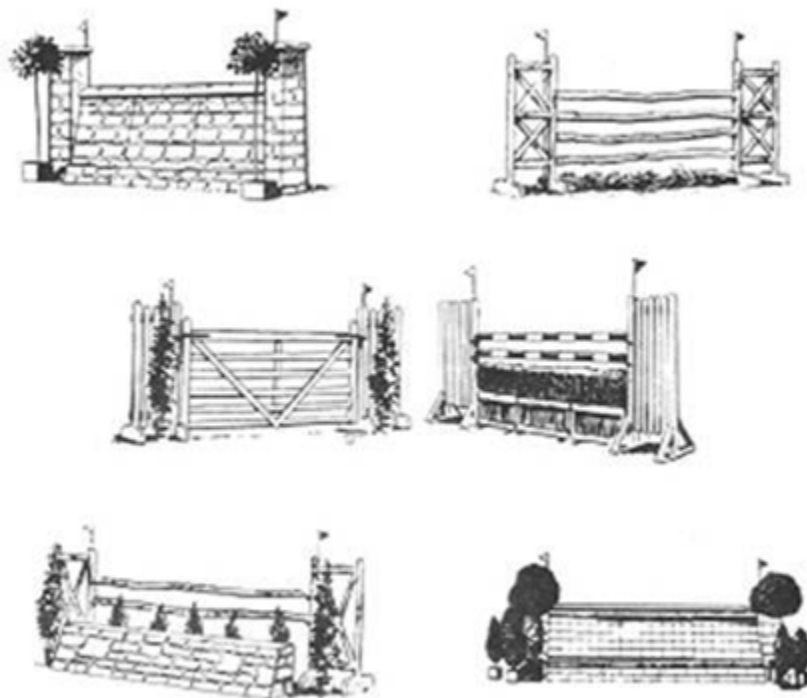
Elimination. The following will result in elimination (does not place):

- A total of three disobediences that can include any of the following: refusal, stop, run-out, or extra circle
- Jumping an obstacle before it is reset
- Bolting from the arena
- Off course
- Falling of horse and/or rider (rider shall not remount in the ring)

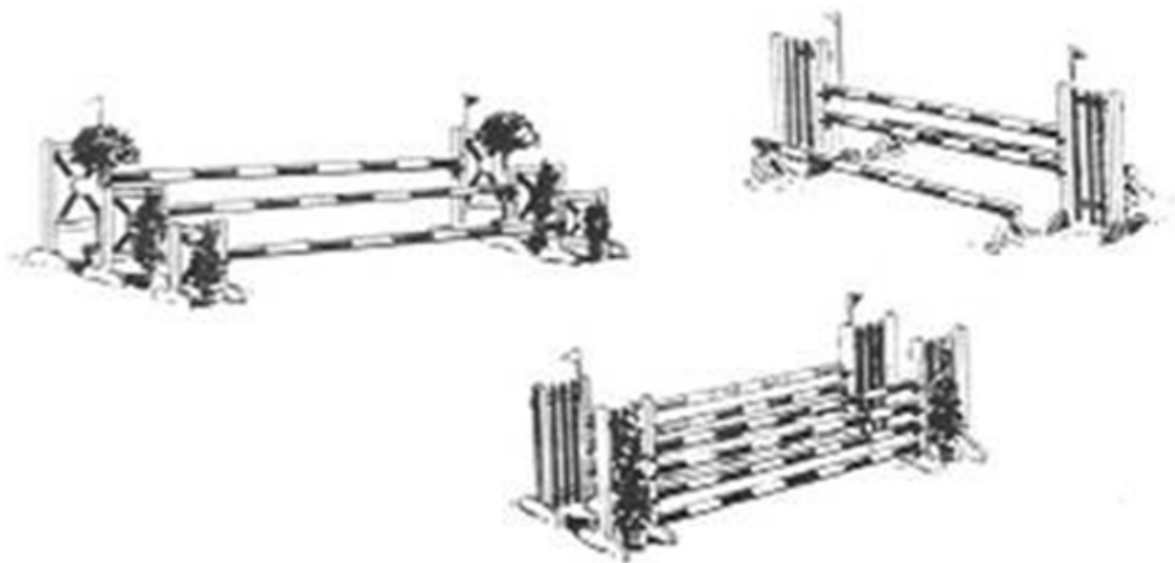
Suggested Hunter Courses:



Acceptable Hunter Class Fences:



Illegal Hunter Class Fences:



Stock Type Hunter Division

Overview

Rules in this book will have precedence over all other rules. American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) rules will be used for any Stock Type Hunter Division rule not covered in this book. This division is open to Junior and Senior riders on horses and ponies. **Entries in this division may not cross enter into any other hunter division and may not show over fences (including hunter hack).**

Appointments

[Refer to the Tack, Attire, and Equipment section.](#)

Class Routines

Showmanship

[Refer to the standard showmanship procedure rules.](#)

Hunter Under Saddle

The purpose of the hunter under saddle horse is to present or exhibit a horse with a bright, alert expression, whose gaits show potential of being a working hunter. Therefore, its gait must be free-flowing, ground covering and athletic. Hunters under saddle should be suitable to purpose. Hunters should move with long, low strides reaching forward with ease and smoothness, be able to lengthen stride and cover ground with relaxed, free-flowing movement, while exhibiting correct gaits that are of the proper cadence. The quality of the movement and the consistency of the gaits is a major consideration. Horses should be obedient, have a bright expression with alert ears, and should respond willingly to the rider with light leg and hand contact. Horses should be responsive and smooth in transition. When asked to extend the trot or hand gallop, they should move out with the same flowing motion. The poll should be level with, or slightly above, the withers to allow proper impulsion behind. The head position should be slightly in front of, or on, the vertical.

The class will be judged on performance, condition, and conformation. Maximum credit should be given to the flowing, balanced, willing horse. Horses are to be shown under saddle at the walk, trot, and canter both ways of the ring. Judge may request a hand gallop. Horses must back and stand quietly. Horses should be reversed to the inside away from the rail. Horses will not be required to jump.

Faults are to be scored accordingly, but not necessarily cause disqualification during the rail work:

- Quick, short, or vertical strides
- Being on the wrong lead
- Breaking gait
- Excessive speed at any gait

- Excessive slowness in any gait, loss of forward momentum
- Failure to take the appropriate gait when called for
- Head carried too high
- Head carried too low (such that poll is below the withers)
- Over flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical
- Excessive nosing out
- Failure to maintain light contact with horses' mouth
- Stumbling
- If a horse appears sullen, dull, lethargic, emaciated, drawn, or overly tired
- Consistently showing too far off the rail

Equitation

The purpose of this class is to evaluate the ability of the hunter rider to perform various maneuvers on his/her horse which provides a base for natural progression to over fence classes. The communication between horse and rider through subtle cues and aids should not be obvious. Equitation is judged on the rider and his/her effect on the horse. Hunt seat equitation on the flat provides a base for a natural progression to over fence classes. Riders will not be asked to jump in this class. The poll should be level with, or slightly above the withers, to allow proper impulsion behind. The head should not be carried behind the vertical, giving the appearance of intimidation, or be excessively nosed out, giving a resistant appearance.

The rider's performance and equitation skills will be judged. The rider's basic position, use of hands and legs, and ability to control and show a horse are important, but the horse and rider's performance and execution of a pattern must be considered.

Each entry will first, individually, execute a posted pattern and be scored. Failure to execute or complete the pattern within the designated time will not result in disqualification but will be scored accordingly. Individual scores will be posted upon completion of the class if possible. Judges will use current AQHA Equitation scoring rules and guidelines for this class.

The pattern to be used should be posted at least 1 hour before the class begins. The judge and show committee should work together to design a pattern that will objectively test the rider's skill. The judge will use the pattern scores in determining which riders will be given additional individual or rail work.

Entries that are selected for rail work will enter the ring in a counterclockwise direction. Riders will proceed at once around the ring at each gait (walk, trot, and canter) at least one direction of the ring but may be asked to reverse and repeat. Entries may be requested to gallop in safe groups (maximum of eight entries) and perform additional work. Judges may request riders to perform an upward or downward transition to or from any gait. Horses will be requested to reverse only at a walk or trot. The finalists must be given rail work before final placing.

The optional tests for Stock Type Hunter Equitation riders are as follows (tests may be combined):

- Answer any questions about horses, tack, or equitation.
- Back.
- Dismount and mount.
- Sitting or two-point trot.
- Serpentine at the trot or canter.
- Turn on the haunches or forehand.
- Execute a figure eight at a trot.
- Canter and stop.
- Execute a figure eight at a canter on the correct leads, demonstrating a simple change of lead. A simple change of lead is when the horse is brought back into a walk or jog at the center of the circle and restarted into a lope on the opposite lead.
- Ride without stirrups.
- Execute a figure eight at a canter, demonstrating a flying change of leads.
- Change leads down a straight line, demonstrating a simple change of leads.
- Leg-yield
- Execute an extended trot or hand gallop.

Scoring

Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. Patterns will be divided into 6 to 10 maneuvers, as specified by the judge, and each maneuver will be scored from +3 to -3 with 1/2-point increments acceptable that will be added or subtracted from 70.

Maneuver scores should be determined independent of penalties and should reflect equal consideration of both performance of the exhibitor's pattern and the form and effectiveness of the exhibitor and presentation of horse to result in the following scores: +3 Excellent, +2 Very Good, +1 Good, 0 Average or Correct, -1 Poor, -2 Very Poor, -3 Extremely Poor.

Exhibitors' overall form and effectiveness should also be scored from 0 to 5 with 0 to 2 Average, 3 Good, 4 Very Good, 5 Excellent.

Exhibitors should also be judged on the rail, and their pattern score and/or ranking may be adjusted as appropriate.

An exhibitor should be penalized in the pattern independent of maneuver scores and deducted from the final scores as follows:

Three (3) Point Penalties

- Break of gait at the walk or jog up to 2 strides
- Over or under turn from 1/8 to 1/4 turn
- Tick or hit of cone
- Missing a diagonal up to 2 strides in the pattern or on the rail

Five (5) Point Penalties

- Not performing the specified gait or not stopping within 10 feet of designated location
- Incorrect lead or break of gait at the lope (except when correcting an incorrect lead)
- Break of gait at the walk or jog for more than 2 strides
- Complete loss of contact between the rider's hand and the horse's mouth
- Loss of iron
- Head carried too low and/or clearly behind the vertical while the horse is in motion, showing the appearance of intimidation
- Obviously looking down to check leads or diagonals
- Missing a diagonal for more than 2 strides in the pattern or on the rail

Ten (10) Point Penalties

- Loss of rein
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise while on pattern or during rail work
- Holding saddle with either hand
- Spurring or use of the crop in front of girth
- Blatant disobedience including kicking, pawing, bucking, and rearing

Disqualifications

- Failure to display correct number
- Abuse of horse or schooling
- Fall by horse or exhibitor
- Illegal equipment or illegal use of hands on the reins
- Use of prohibited equipment
- Off pattern, including knocking over or wrong side of cone or marker; never performing designated gait or lead; over or under turning more than ¼ turn

Stock Type Hunter All-Around Pleasure Pattern

This class will be open to Juniors and Seniors riding Stock Type Hunter Division horses and ponies and will be a point class towards the Stock Type Hunter Division high point. The purpose of this class is to demonstrate the versatility of the English pattern horse. The horse should reflect the versatility, attitude, and movement of the hunter under saddle horse and should be well trained, relaxed, quiet, soft, and cadenced at all gaits. The horse should be ridden on light contact without requiring undue restraint and should travel with forward movement and demonstrate an obvious lengthening and collecting of stride at all gaits. The ability to make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner, quality of movement, and the maneuvers are of primary consideration. Movement, expression, and attitude are of utmost importance.

Each horse will work individually through a pattern.

Required Maneuvers

Required maneuvers:

- Walk, trot, and canter, with at least 2 collected and extended gaits
- Backing
- 2 lead changes, one of each direction
- Pattern shall consist of 10 to 15 maneuvers
- Any poles or markers used must have measurements shown on the patterns.
- Any of the patterns provided in this rulebook may be used.

Scoring

Scores will be between 0-100 points and automatically begins the run with a score of 70 points. The horse/rider team is scored on the quality of each maneuver (-1 ½ extremely poor, -1 very poor, -½ poor, 0 average, +½ good, +1 very good, +1 ½ extremely good). Maneuver evaluations and penalty applications will be determined independently.

One-half (½) point penalties:

- Each tick of log, pole, cone, plant, or obstacle

One (1) point penalties:

- Over-bridled (per maneuver)
- Out of frame (per maneuver)
- Break of gait at the walk or jog for 2 strides or less
- Wrong lead or out of lead for 2 strides or less
- Each hit, bite or stepping on a log, pole, cone, plant, or any component of the obstacle
- Both front or hind feet in a single-strided slot or space at a walk or jog
- Skipping over or failing to step into the required space
- Split pole in cantering over poles
- Failure to meet the correct strides on trot-over and canter-over pole obstacles
- Loss of forward motion during transitions

- Quick, short, vertical strides (per maneuver)

Three(3) point penalties

- Break of gait at the walk or jog for more than 2 strides
- Break of gait at the lope, except when correcting an incorrect lead
- Wrong lead or out of lead for more than 2 strides
- Knocking down an elevated pole, cone, barrel, plant, standard, obstacle, or severely disturbing an obstacle
- Trotting three or more strides in a lope departure from a stop or walk
- Over-canted at the canter (outside hind leg consistently carried further than inside front leg) per maneuver
- Stepping outside the confines of, falling or jumping off of an obstacle with designated boundaries with one foot once the foot has entered the obstacle, including missing one element of an obstacle on a line of travel with one foot
- Loss of cadence at any gait per maneuver
- Over flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical per maneuver
- Opening mouth excessively per maneuver
- A back that is poor, reluctant, or with hesitation
- Excessive nosing out per maneuver
- Excessive movement of the topline at the trot or canter per maneuver
- Head carried too low (tip of ear consistently below the withers)
- Head carried too high (tip of ear consistently above the withers)
- Excessive slowness at any gait, loss of forward momentum

Five (5) point penalties

- Blatant disobedience (kick, bit, buck, rear, etc.)
- Each refusal of a maneuver or obstacle
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise
- Spurring in front of the girth
- Stepping outside the confines of, falling or jumping off or out of an obstacle with designated boundaries with more than one foot once the foot has entered the obstacle, including missing one element of an obstacle on a line of travel with more than one foot
- A horse which appears sullen, dull, lethargic, intimidated, emaciated, drawn, or overly tired

Disqualifications

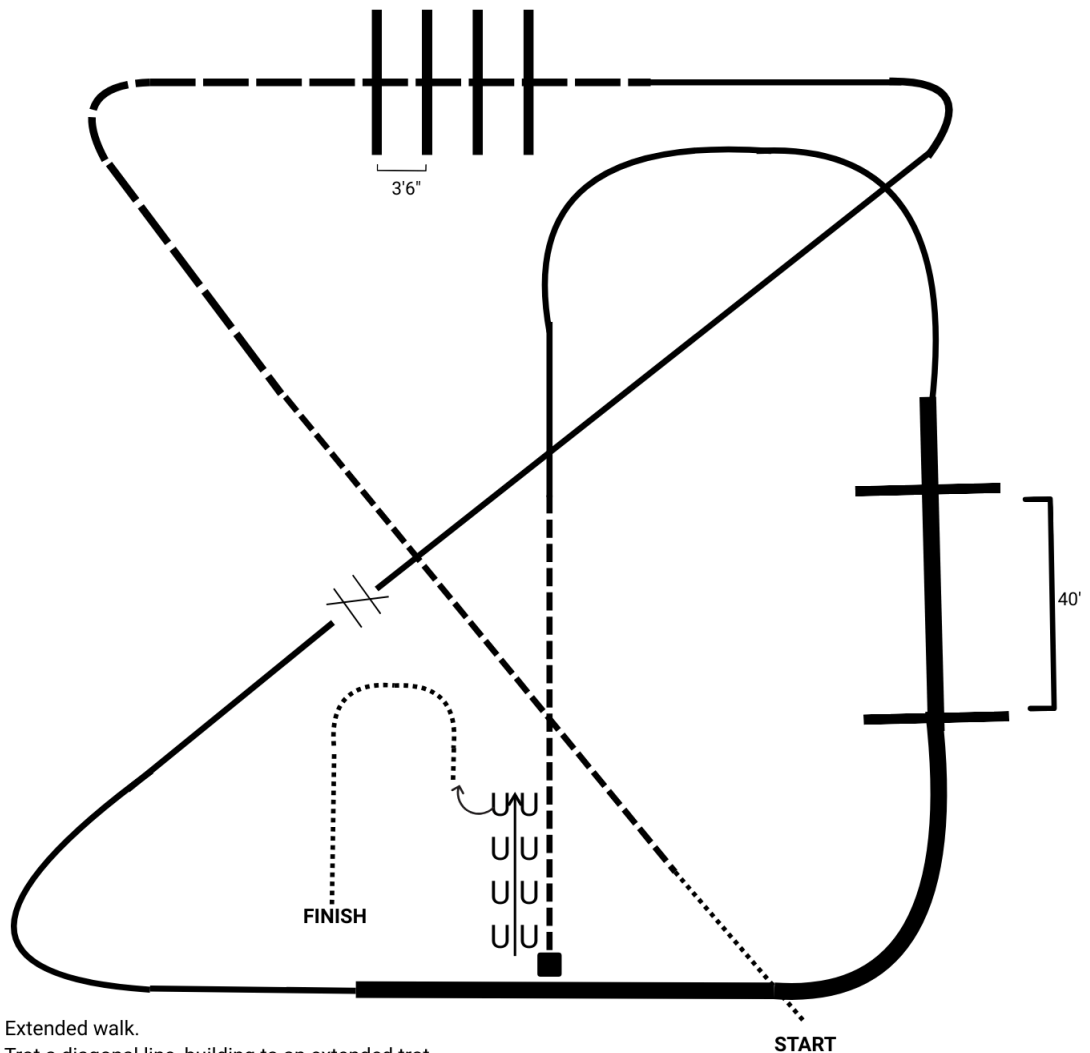
- Eliminating or adding maneuver
- Incomplete maneuver
- Off pattern
- Repeated blatant disobedience
- Third cumulative refusal, balk, or evading an obstacle by shying or backing over entire course

- Failure to ever demonstrate correct leads and/or gait as designated
- Failure to complete obstacle
- Fall of horse or exhibitor
- Excessive schooling, pulling, turning, or backing anywhere on course
- No attempt to perform an obstacle
- Equipment failure that delays completion of the pattern
- Excessively or repeatedly touching the horse on the neck to lower the head
- Failure to enter, exit, or work obstacle in any manner other than how its described, including over or under turns by more than ¼ turn
- Failure to follow the correct line of travel between obstacles
- Illegal equipment
- Willful abuse
- Lameness
- Unsportsmanlike conduct

Patterns

Patterns shall be selected from the following:

Stock Type Hunter All Around Pleasure Pattern 1



1. Extended walk.
2. Trot a diagonal line, building to an extended trot.
3. Extended Trot.
4. Extended trot over 4 poles.
5. Canter right lead.
6. Lead change (simple or flying).
7. Left lead canter, building to hand gallop.
8. Canter over poles.
9. Collect the canter.
10. Collected Trot.
11. Halt and back.
12. Forehand turn right 90 degrees.
13. Walk to exit as shown.

Western Divisions

Overview

Rules in this book will have precedence over all other rules. American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) rules will be used for any Western Division rule not covered in this book.

Appointments

[Refer to the Tack, Attire, and Equipment section.](#)

Divisions

Western classes are divided into divisions based on rider experience. **Cross-entry between divisions is not allowed.** For quick reference, refer to the [Qualifying Divisions Chart](#).

A horse/rider combination may not enter both the western division and the ranch division.

Rookie Western

The Rookie Western Division is specifically designed for inexperienced Western riders (ages 8-18) who are in their first two years of showing Western, excluding Cloverbud classes. All classes in this division are walk/jog, with one walk/jog/lope pleasure class available. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie, Junior, or Senior Ranch. Members competing exclusively in this division are ineligible for the Versatility Class and Southern Regionals.

Exhibitors in this division are permitted to exhibit in a snaffle bit with two hands on split reins regardless of the age of the horse.

Junior Western

Riders must be 4-H members aged 8-13. Open to horses and ponies. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie or Junior Ranch.

Senior Western

Riders must be 4-H members aged 14-18. Open to horses and ponies. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie or Senior Ranch.

Rider Position

General Appearance

Riders shall convey a neat, workmanlike position with complete and easy control over their horses. The rider should sit in a comfortable, balanced, relaxed, and flexible manner. The rider should sit in the middle of the saddle with thigh, knee, and upper calf in contact with the horse. Lower legs may hang straight down from the knee forward to the stirrup or with a slight bend

in the knee, depending on the type of saddle. In either position, stirrups should be just long enough for heels to be lower than the toes. Feet should be placed in stirrups with boot heels touching stirrups or on the balls of the feet. Riding with one's weight on the toes will be penalized. Toes should be turned only slightly out with ankles flexed in toward the horse in a comfortable position. The lower legs and feet should be kept close to the horse's body but not in contact, except when applying aids. When in proper position, the rider should maintain a straight line from the shoulders through the hips and along the back at a trot.

Arms and hands should be held in an easy, relaxed manner. Upper arms should be held in a straight line with the body. Only one hand is to be used for reining, and hands shall not be changed on reins. One hand should be around the reins with one finger between split reins. Use of romal reins is permitted without a finger between the reins. Reins are to be carried immediately above to slightly in front of the saddle horn. Reins should be gathered such that light contact in the horse's mouth is maintained. The tails of the reins should fall on the same side of the horse as the rein hand. At a walk, the freehand and lower arm may hang naturally to the side or be carried parallel to the belt. At a trot and lope, the free arm and hand should be kept quiet and relaxed. (Arms should not be rigid and unnatural, but excessive jumping with the free arm will be penalized.)

Position in Motion

The rider shall sit to the trot and not post. At the lope he should be close to the saddle. The rider should lean forward with increasing speed, keeping the upper part of the body parallel with the horse's line of thrust. All movements of the horse should be governed by the use of imperceptible aids. Exaggerated shifting of the rider's weight is not desirable and will be discriminated against in the judging.

Mounting and Dismounting

Control the horse by taking up the reins in your left hand and adjusting them to feel the bit and hold the horse steady.

It is preferred that the rider stands on the horse's left side with his or her back to the horse's head, twisting the near stirrup with the right hand and placing the left foot in the stirrup. The left hand will hold the reins with light contact maintained on the horse's mouth, resting in front of the withers, with the right hand on the saddle horn. The rider should spring up with the right leg, keeping his or her body close to the horse and settling easily into the saddle. Riders may mount facing toward the horse's head and stepping up into the saddle without discrimination or penalty, but horses must stand quietly and be under control.

Slip the right foot into the off stirrup and assume basic position. The horse should stand while mounting until given the signal to move out.

To dismount, reverse the above procedures and step down, facing the horse's head

Class Routines

Western Showmanship

[Refer to the standard showmanship procedure rules.](#)

Western Stock Type Mares or Geldings at Halter

Horses will be judged on conformation, soundness and heritable weaknesses, condition, quality, breed character, and way of going at the judge's discretion. Emphasis will be placed on structural correctness, soundness, and the relationship of form to function.

Horses must be shown in a clean, properly fitted halter. Horses must be shown and handled by only one club member. [Refer to the halter and in hand section for more information.](#)

Western Horsemanship

The rider's performance and horsemanship skills will be judged. The rider's basic position, use of hands and legs, and ability to control and show a horse are important, but the horse and rider's performance and execution of a pattern must be considered.

Each entry will first, individually, execute a posted pattern and be scored. Individual scores will be posted upon completion of the class if possible. Judges will use current AQHA Western Horsemanship scoring rules and guidelines for this class.

The pattern to be used should be posted at least 1 hour before the class begins. The judge and show committee should work together to design a pattern that will objectively test the rider's skill. The optional list of tests is listed later in this section and should be used as a guide in designing a pattern. Tests may be combined.

The judge will use the above scores in determining which riders will be given additional individual or rail work.

Entries that are selected for rail work will enter the ring in a counterclockwise direction. Riders will proceed at once around the ring at each gait (walk, jog, and lope - walk/jog only for Rookie Western) at least one direction of the ring but may be asked to reverse and repeat. Entries may be requested to perform additional work. Judges may request riders to perform an upward or downward transition to or from any gait. Horses will be requested to reverse only at a walk or jog. The finalists must be given rail work before final placing.

The optional tests for Western Horsemanship Class riders are as follows:

- Answer any questions about horses, tack, or equitation.
- Back.
- Dismount and mount.
- Execute a figure eight at a trot.
- Lope and stop.
- Execute a figure eight at a lope on the correct leads, demonstrating a simple change of lead. A simple change of lead is when the horse is brought back into a walk or jog at the center of the circle and restarted into a lope on the opposite lead.
- Ride without stirrups.

- Execute a figure eight at a lope, demonstrating a flying change of leads.
- Change leads down a straight line, demonstrating a simple change of leads.
- Demonstrate a rollback.
- Demonstrate a sliding stop.
- Execute a 180-degree turn.
- Execute a 360-degree turn or spin.
- Execute an extended trot or hand gallop.
- Execute a sidepass.
- Pivot—both ways.
- Lope circles of varying sizes and at varying speeds.

Scoring

Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. Patterns will be divided into 6 to 10 maneuvers, as specified by the judge, and each maneuver will be scored from +3 to -3 with 1/2-point increments acceptable that will be added or subtracted from 70.

Maneuver scores should be determined independent of penalties and should reflect equal consideration of both performance of the exhibitor's pattern and the form and effectiveness of the exhibitor and presentation of horse to result in the following scores: +3 Excellent, +2 Very Good, +1 Good, 0 Average or Correct, -1 Poor, -2 Very Poor, -3 Extremely Poor.

Exhibitors' overall form and effectiveness should also be scored from 0 to 5 with 0 to 2 Average, 3 Good, 4 Very Good, 5 Excellent.

Exhibitors should also be judged on the rail, and their pattern score and/or ranking may be adjusted as appropriate.

An exhibitor should be penalized in the pattern independent of maneuver scores and deducted from the final scores as follows:

Three (3) Point Penalties

- Break of gait at the walk or jog up to 2 strides
- Over or under turn from 1/8 to 1/4 turn
- Tick or hit of cone

Five (5) Point Penalties

- Not performing the specified gait or not stopping within 10 feet of designated location
- Incorrect lead or break of gait at the lope (except when correcting an incorrect lead)
- Break of gait at the walk or jog for more than 2 strides
- Loss of stirrup
- Bottom of boot not touching pad of stirrup at all gaits including backup
- Head carried too low and/or clearly behind the vertical while the horse is in motion, showing the appearance of intimidation

- Obviously looking down to check leads

Ten (10) Point Penalties

- Loss of rein
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise while on pattern or during rail work
- Holding saddle with either hand
- Cueing with the end of the romal
- Blatant disobedience including kicking, pawing, bucking, and rearing
- Spurring in front of the cinch

Disqualifications

- Failure to display correct number
- Abuse of horse or schooling
- Fall by horse or exhibitor
- Illegal equipment or illegal use of hands on the reins
- Use of prohibited equipment
- Off pattern, including knocking over or wrong side of cone or maker; never performing designated gait or lead; over or under turning more than ¼ turn

Horsemanship Medal Class

This class is offered only at the State Show for exhibitors that placed first or second in Western Horsemanship or Ranch Horsemanship at a qualifying show. This class does not offer points toward Southern Regional qualification or division champion awards.

This class will be judged on the rider's equitation in accordance with Western Horsemanship and Ranch Horsemanship rules. Exhibitors will be scored on their horsemanship skills while individually performing a prescribed pattern. The rider's equitation and ability to control their horses throughout the pattern will be evaluated.

The judge will use the above scores to select a minimum of 10 riders to be judged on their equitation on the rail. Riders will be worked both directions. The final placing will be the cumulative placing of the pattern work (50 percent) and rail work (50 percent).

If an exhibitor is eligible to show both a western and ranch horse in the Medal, they must choose which mount to exhibit, as flat work is required in this class.

Western Pleasure

Horses will be judged on manners, performance, and suitability for giving a pleasurable ride. Horses are shown at a walk, jog, and lope (Rookie Western will have a walk-jog only class also) on a reasonably loose rein without undue restraint. Horses must work both ways of the ring at all three gaits, demonstrating their ability with different leads. Head carriage should be quiet

and natural. Horses will be penalized for carrying their heads excessively low, behind the vertical or nosing out.

Horses must back easily and stand quietly. At the judge's discretion, only the finalists may be requested to back. Horses should be reversed to the inside of the ring. The judge may request the horses to reverse at a walk or jog.

The judge may request an exhibitor to change from any gait to any other or extend the jog. Horses will not be required to hand gallop. Judges may request any horse(s) to perform additional rail work of the same nature.

Large numbers in this class may necessitate elimination heats to accommodate all entries. It is suggested that no more than 25 horses compete per heat, regardless of arena size.

Trail

Each horse will individually work through an obstacle course designed to test the manners, performance, and intelligence of a good trail riding horse. Trail class exhibitors will not be worked on the rail. Each entrant's quality of movement at the walk, jog, and lope will be evaluated while on course.

Course

The course shall consist of at least six obstacles. Three of the obstacles will be mandatory, and the others should be selected from the optional list. No dangerous objects will be used as an obstacle or part of an obstacle. Rider safety is of utmost importance and must be considered first. The course diagram should be posted at least 1 hour before the class is called.

Unacceptable obstacles:

- Tires
- Animals
- Hides
- PVC pipe
- Dismounts
- Jumps
- Ground Ties
- Rocking or moving bridges
- Water box with floating or moving parts
- Flames, dry ice, fire extinguishers, and similar items
- Logs or poles elevated in a manner that permits them to roll

Mandatory obstacles are as follows:

- Open, pass through, and close a gate (only if a gate that will not endanger horse or rider is available).

- Ride over at least four (4) logs or rails.
- Back through an obstacle.

Optional obstacles are as follows:

- Water hazard (ditch or small pond). No metal or slick-bottom boxes will be used. When a water hazard/box is used, it shall remain dry at all times in all divisions.
- Serpentine obstacles at walk or jog. Spacing to be minimum of 6' (1.8 meters) for jog.
- Carry object from one part of arena to another. (Only objects which reasonably might be carried on a trail ride may be used.)
- Ride over wooden bridge. (Suggested minimum width shall be 36" (91 cm) wide and at least 6' (1.8 meters) long. Bridge should be sturdy, safe and negotiated at a walk only.
- Put on and remove slicker.
- Remove and replace materials from mailbox.
- Side pass (may be elevated to 12" (30 cm) maximum).
- An obstacle consisting of four logs or rails, laid in a square. Minimum width of the square should be 6' (1.8 m). Each contestant will enter the square by riding over log or rail as designated. When all four feet are inside the square, rider should execute a turn, as indicated, and depart.
- Any other safe and negotiable obstacle which could reasonably be expected to be encountered on a trail ride and meets the approval of the judge may be used.
- A combination of two or more of any obstacle is acceptable.

Scoring

Scoring will be on the basis of 0-infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each obstacle will receive an obstacle score that should be added or subtracted from 70 and is subject to a penalty that should be subtracted. Each obstacle will be scored on the following basis, ranging from plus 1 1/2 to minus 1 1/2: -1 1/2 extremely poor, -1 very poor, -1/2 poor, 0 correct, +1/2 good, +1 very good, +1 1/2 excellent. Obstacle scores are to be determined and assessed independently of penalty points.

Maneuver evaluations and penalty applications are to be determined independently. The following penalties will be applied to each occurrence and be deducted from the final score:

One-half (½) Point Penalties

- Each tick or contact of a log, pole, cone, plant, or any component of an obstacle

One (1) Point Penalties

- Each hit, bite, or stepping on a log, cone, plant or any component of the obstacle
- Incorrect or break of gait at walk or jog for two strides or less
- Both front or hind feet in a single-strided slot or space at a walk or jog
- Skipping over or failing to step into required space
- Split pole in lope-over

- Incorrect number of strides, if specified

Three (3) Point Penalties

- Incorrect or break of gait at walk or jog for more than two strides
- Out of lead or break of gait at lope (except when correcting an incorrect lead)
- Knocking down an elevated pole, cone, barrel, plant, obstacle, or severely disturbing an obstacle
- Falling or jumping off or out of a bridge or a water box with one foot once the horse has got onto or into that obstacle
- Stepping outside of the confines of an obstacle with designated boundaries (i.e. back through, 360-degree box, side pass) with one foot once the horse has entered the obstacle.
- Missing or evading a pole that is a part of a series of an obstacle with one foot

Five (5) Point Penalties

- Dropping slicker or object required to be carried on course
- First or second cumulative refusal, balk, or evading an obstacle by shying or backing
- Letting go of gate or dropping rope gate
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise
- Falling or jumping off or out of a bridge or a water box with more than one foot once the horse has got onto or into that obstacle
- Stepping outside of the confines of an obstacle with designated boundaries (i.e. back through, 360-degree box, side pass) with more than one foot once the horse has entered the obstacle.
- Missing or evading a pole that is a part of a series of an obstacle with more than one foot
- Blatant disobedience (including kicking out, bucking, rearing, striking)
- Holding saddle with either hand

Off-Pattern (OP) - Rookie Western Division Only. Any exhibitor receiving an OP may still receive a placing, but must place below horses performing all maneuvers:

- Performing the obstacle incorrectly or other than in specified order
- No attempt to perform an obstacle
- Entering or exiting an obstacle from the incorrect side or direction
- Working obstacle in the incorrect direction (including overturns of more than ¼ turn)
- Third cumulative refusal, balk, or evading obstacle by shying or backing
- Failure to ever demonstrate correct gait as designated
- Failure to open and shut gate or failure to complete gate

Disqualifications

- Use of two hands (except in snaffle bit or hackamore on junior horse) or changing hands on reins; except that it is permissible to change hands to work an obstacle or to straighten reins when stopped.

- Use of romal other than as outlined in tack and equipment
- Performing the obstacle incorrectly or other than in specified order
- No attempt to perform an obstacle
- Equipment failure that delays completion of pattern
- Excessively or repeatedly touching the horse on the neck to lower the head
- Entering or exiting an obstacle from the incorrect side or direction
- Working obstacle the incorrect direction; including overturns of more than 1/4 turn
- Riding outside designated boundary marker of the arena or course area
- Third cumulative refusal, balk, or evading an obstacle by shying or backing
- Failure to ever demonstrate correct lead and/or gait as designated
- Failure to follow the correct line of travel between obstacles
- Excessive schooling, pulling, turning, stepping or backing anywhere on course

Distances

When the distances and spaces are measured between all obstacles, the inside base to inside base measurement of each obstacle considering the normal path of the horse should be the measuring point. The height should be measured from the ground to the top of the element. Enough space must be provided for a horse to jog at least 30 feet and lope at least 50 feet for the judges to evaluate these gaits.

Pole spacing:

- Walkovers - 20" to 24" and may be elevated to 12". Elevated walkovers should be at least 22" apart
- Trot overs - 3' to 3'3" and may be elevated to 8"
- Lope overs - 6' to 6 ½' or increments thereof, and may be elevated to 8"
- Sidepass pole - elevated 12" max
- Square - minimum width of 6'

Backing Obstacle:

- Spaced at a minimum of 28". If elevated, 30" is required. May be elevated no more than 24"

Serpentine:

- Minimum of 6' for a jog

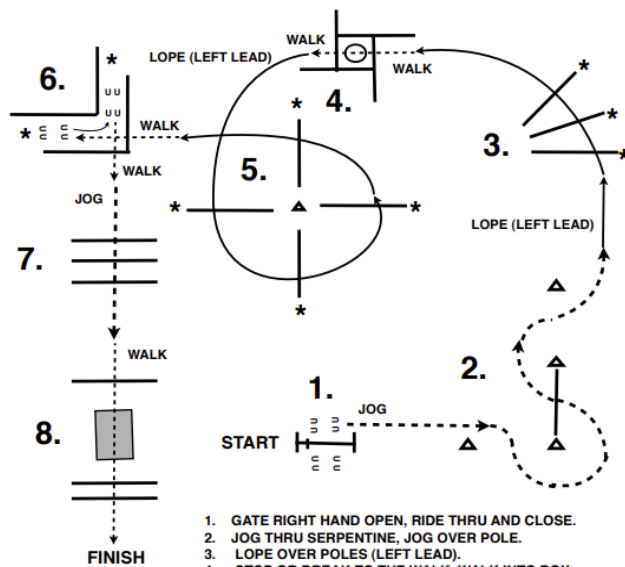
Bridge:

- Minimum width of 36" and at least 6' long

Sample Pattern and Measurements

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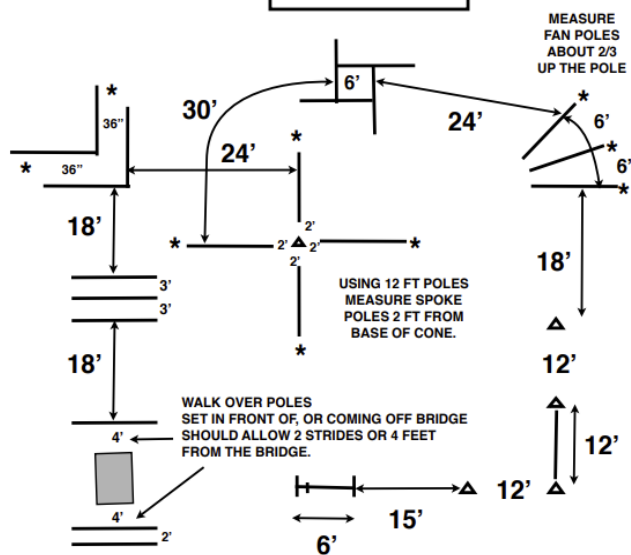
SAMPLE TRAIL



1. GATE RIGHT HAND OPEN, RIDE THRU AND CLOSE.
2. JOG THRU SERPENTINE, JOG OVER POLE.
3. LOPE OVER POLES (LEFT LEAD).
4. STOP OR BREAK TO THE WALK, WALK INTO BOX, 360° TURN EITHER DIRECTION, WALK OUT BOX.
5. LOPE OVER SPOKE (LEFT LEAD).
6. STOP OR BREAK TO THE WALK, WALK INTO "L" BACK AROUND CORNER, WALK OUT "L".
7. JOG OVER POLES.
8. STOP OR BREAK TO THE WALK, WALK OVER POLES AND OVER BRIDGE.

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SAMPLE TRAIL



A STANDARD BRIDGE SHOULD BE AT LEAST 3 FEET IN WIDTH AND AT LEAST 6 FT IN LENGTH

A STANDARD GATE SHOULD BE AT LEAST 6 FEET IN WIDTH INSIDE THE OPENING.

Western All-Around Pleasure Pattern

This class will be open to Juniors and Seniors riding Western Division horses and ponies and will be a point class towards the Western Division high point. The purpose of this class is to demonstrate the versatility of the western pattern horse. The horse should reflect the versatility, attitude, and movement of the western pleasure horse and should be well trained, relaxed, quiet, soft, and cadenced at all gaits. The horse should be ridden on light contact without requiring undue restraint and should travel with forward movement and demonstrate an obvious lengthening and collecting of stride at all gaits. The ability to make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner, quality of movement, and the maneuvers are of primary consideration. Movement, expression, and attitude are of utmost importance.

Each horse will work individually through a pattern in the following classes:

- Western All-Around Pleasure Pattern - Sr
- Western All-Around Pleasure Pattern - Jr

Required Maneuvers

Required maneuvers:

- Walk, jog, and lope, with at least 2 collected and extended gaits
- Backing
- 2 lead changes, one of each direction
- Pattern shall consist of 10 to 15 maneuvers
- Any poles or markers used must have measurements shown on the patterns.
- Any of the patterns provided in this rulebook may be used.

Scoring

Scores will be between 0-100 points and automatically begins the run with a score of 70 points. The horse/rider team is scored on the quality of each maneuver (-1 ½ extremely poor, -1 very poor, -½ poor, 0 average, +½ good, +1 very good, +1 ½ extremely good). Maneuver evaluations and penalty applications will be determined independently.

One-half (½) point penalties:

- Each tick of log, pole, cone, plant, or obstacle

One (1) point penalties:

- Over-bridled (per maneuver)
- Out of frame (per maneuver)
- Break of gait at the walk or jog for 2 strides or less
- Wrong lead or out of lead for 2 strides or less
- Each hit, bite or stepping on a log, pole, cone, plant, or any component of the obstacle
- Both front or hind feet in a single-strided slot or space at a walk or jog
- Skipping over or failing to step into the required space
- Split pole in cantering over poles
- Failure to meet the correct strides on jog-over and lope-over pole obstacles

- Loss of forward motion during transitions
- Quick, short, vertical strides (per maneuver)

Three (3) point penalties

- Break of gait at the walk or jog for more than 2 strides
- Break of gait at the lope, except when correcting an incorrect lead
- Wrong lead or out of lead for more than 2 strides
- Knocking down an elevated pole, cone, barrel, plant, standard, obstacle, or severely disturbing an obstacle
- Jogging three or more strides in a lope departure from a stop or walk
- Over-canted at the lope (outside hind leg consistently carried further than inside front leg) per maneuver
- Stepping outside the confines of, falling or jumping off of an obstacle with designated boundaries with one foot once the foot has entered the obstacle, including missing one element of an obstacle on a line of travel with one foot
- Loss of cadence at any gait per maneuver
- Over flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical per maneuver
- Opening mouth excessively per maneuver
- A back that is poor, reluctant, or with hesitation
- Excessive nosing out per maneuver
- Excessive movement of the topline at the jog or lope per maneuver
- Head carried too low (tip of ear consistently below the withers)
- Head carried too high (tip of ear consistently above the withers)
- Excessive slowness at any gait, loss of forward momentum

Five (5) point penalties

- Blatant disobedience (kick, bit, buck, rear, etc.)
- Each refusal of a maneuver or obstacle
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise
- Spurring in front of the girth
- Stepping outside the confines of, falling or jumping off or out of an obstacle with designated boundaries with more than one foot once the foot has entered the obstacle, including missing one element of an obstacle on a line of travel with more than one foot
- A horse which appears sullen, dull, lethargic, intimidated, emaciated, drawn, or overly tired

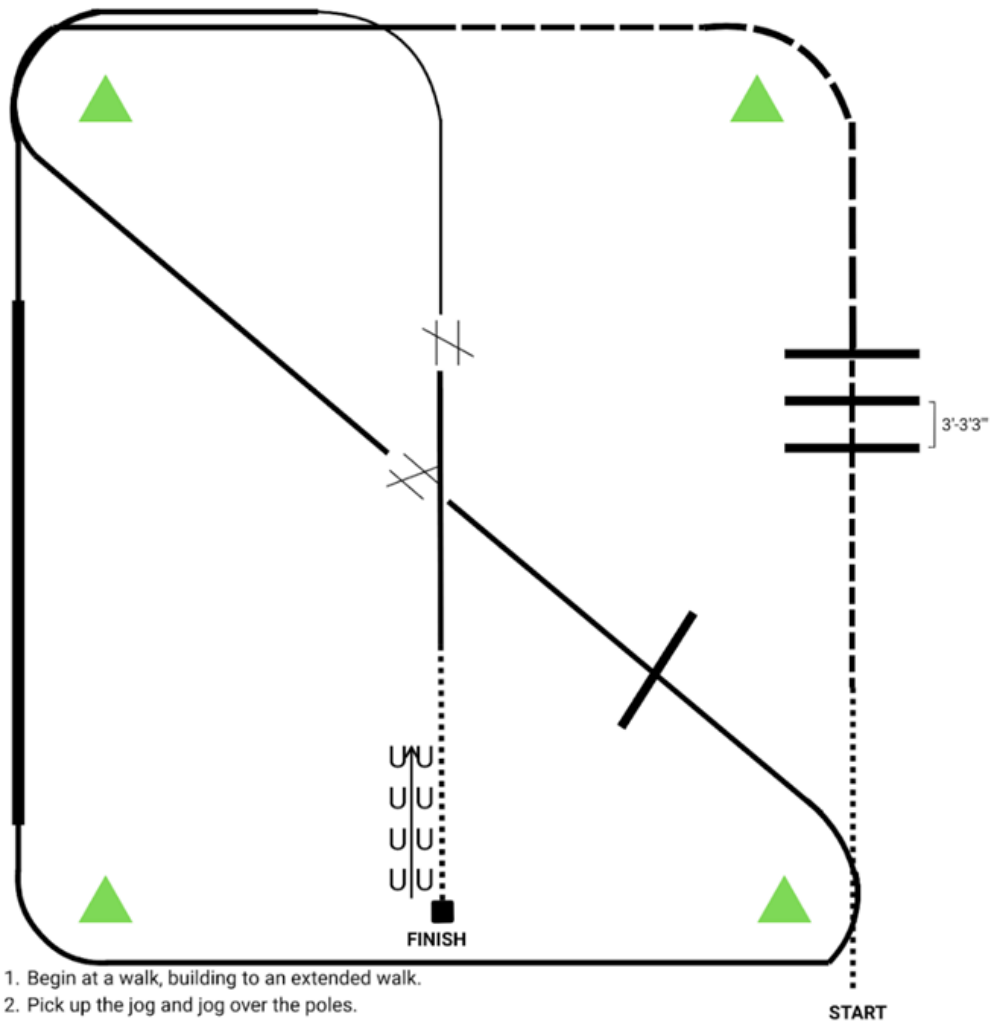
Disqualifications

- Eliminating or adding maneuver
- Incomplete maneuver
- Off pattern
- Repeated blatant disobedience
- Third cumulative refusal, balk, or evading an obstacle by shying or backing over entire course
- Failure to ever demonstrate correct leads and/or gait as designated
- Failure to complete obstacle
- Fall of horse or exhibitor
- Excessive schooling, pulling, turning, or backing anywhere on course
- No attempt to perform an obstacle
- Equipment failure that delays completion of the pattern
- Excessively or repeatedly touching the horse on the neck to lower the head
- Failure to enter, exit, or work obstacle in any manner other than how its described, including over or under turns by more than ¼ turn
- Failure to follow the correct line of travel between obstacles
- Illegal equipment
- Willful abuse
- Lameness
- Unsportsmanlike conduct

Patterns

Patterns shall be selected from the following:

Western All Around Pleasure Pattern 1



1. Begin at a walk, building to an extended walk.
2. Pick up the jog and jog over the poles.
3. Moderately extend the jog.
4. Lope left lead- continue around the cone and across the diagonal.
5. Lead change (simple or flying).
6. Right lead lope, lope the pole.
7. Right lead lope, building to an extended lope.
8. Collect the lope.
9. Lead change (simple or flying).
10. Left lead lope.
11. Walk, then collect the walk.
12. Halt and back.

Ranch Divisions

Overview

Rules in this book will have precedence over all other rules. American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) rules will be used for any Western Division rule not covered in this book.

Appointments

[Refer to the Tack, Attire, and Equipment section.](#)

Divisions

Ranch classes are divided into divisions based on rider experience. **Cross-entry between divisions is not allowed.** For quick reference, refer to the [Qualifying Divisions Chart](#).

A horse/rider combination may not enter both the ranch division and the western division.

Rookie Ranch

The Rookie Western Division is specifically designed for inexperienced Ranch riders (ages 8-18) who are in their first two years of showing Ranch, excluding Cloverbud classes. All classes in this division are walk/trot, with one walk/trot/lope pleasure class available. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie, Junior, or Senior Western. Members competing exclusively in this division are ineligible for the Versatility Class and Southern Regionals.

Exhibitors in this division are permitted to exhibit in a snaffle bit with two hands on split reins regardless of the age of the horse.

Junior Ranch

Riders must be 4-H members aged 8-13. Open to horses and ponies. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie or Junior Western.

Senior Ranch

Riders must be 4-H members aged 14-18. Open to horses and ponies. The same horse/rider combo cannot cross enter into Rookie or Senior Western.

Rider Position

General Appearance

Hands: Upper arms to be in a straight line with body, one hand holding reins should be bent at the elbow. Reins may be held in two hands if the horse qualifies to be ridden in a snaffle, hackamore or snaffle bit with mecate.

Basic Position: Exhibitor should sit in the saddle with legs hanging straight and slightly forward to stirrups or knees bent slightly and weight directly over the ball of feet. In either position the stirrups should be just short enough to allow heels to be lower than toes. Body should always appear comfortable, heels relaxed and flexible. Feet should be placed in stirrups with the weight on the ball of the foot. Consideration, however, should be given to the width of stirrups, which may vary on western saddles.

The rider's back should be flat, relaxed, and supple. An overly stiff and/or overly arched back will be penalized. The shoulders should be back, level, and square. Those exhibitors that can maintain the proper position throughout the maneuvers should receive more credit. Both hands and arms should be held in a relaxed, easy manner, with the upper arm in a straight line with the body. The arm holding the reins should be bent at the elbow forming a line from the elbow to the horse's mouth. The free hand and arm may be carried bent at the elbow in a similar position as the hand holding the reins or straight down at the riders' side. Excessive pumping of the free arm as well as excessive stiffness will be penalized. The rider's wrist is to be kept straight and relaxed, with the hand held at about 30 to 45 degrees inside the vertical. The rein hand should be carried immediately above or slightly in front of the saddle horn. The reins should be adjusted so that the rider has light contact with the horse's mouth, and at no time shall reins require more than a slight hand movement to control the horse. Excessively tight or loose reins will be penalized.

Position in Motion

Exhibitors should sit the regular trot and lope. Standing in the stirrups at the extended trot and extended lope or posting the extended trot is acceptable. Touching or holding the saddle horn is acceptable (except in Ranch Horsemanship, where it incurs a penalty). All movements of horses should be governed by the use of imperceptible aids. Exaggerated shifting of the exhibitor's weight is not desirable.

The rider's head should be held with the chin level and the eyes forward and may be directed slightly toward the direction of travel. Excessive turning of the head to the inside of the circle, or down at the horse's head or shoulders should be penalized.

Gaits

In all ranch division classes, the ideal gaits shall be defined as those described below. In all gaits, movement of the ranch horse should simulate a horse needing to cover long distances, softly and quietly, like that of a working ranch horse. The following terminology shall apply:

Walk

The walk is a natural, flat-footed, four-beat gait. The gait is rhythmic and ground-covering. As in all gaits, the horse should display a level, or slightly above level topline with a bright, attentive expression.

Extended Walk

The extended walk is an obvious lengthening of stride that will naturally increase the pace. The horse should move in a natural manner (not a running walk) as if it were moving across an open pasture.

Trot

The trot is a natural two-beat gait demonstrating more forward motion than the western pleasure jog. The trot should be steady, soft and slow enough for riding long distances. Trots which are rough and hard to sit should be penalized. Excessively slow and un-cadenced trots should also be penalized. Sitting the trot is recommended.

Extended Trot

The extended trot is an obvious lengthening of stride with a definite increase in pace. The horse should be moving in a manner as if it were covering a large area on a ranch with an above level topline. The extended trot should be level, flat and steady with the appearance that the horse could hold this gait for an extended distance. Riders may post to this gait or may stand in the stirrups and hold the saddle horn with one hand.

Lope

The lope is a three-beat gait that should be relaxed and smooth with a natural, forward moving stride. It should be cadenced, straight and steady and is comfortable to ride over long distances. Excessively slow or 4 beat lope should be penalized. Sitting the lope is recommended.

Extended Lope

The extended lope is not a run or a race, but should be an obvious lengthening of the stride, demonstrating forward, working speed. The horse should display an above level topline with a bright, attentive expression. The gait needs to be steady, quiet, and maintaining the increased speed while being under control.

Class Routines

Ranch Ground Handling

This class tests the handler's ability to communicate with the horse from the ground by judging a series of maneuvers that require the horse to yield to pressure – forward, backward, and laterally. Maneuvers are selected to be realistic in their application to everyday training. Exhibitor movements should be workmanlike and efficient, and the horse should be obedient and cooperative. Evaluating safe and effective ground handling will take priority to the quality of attire or tack.

Pattern

Each exhibitor will perform a pattern that will consist of no less than seven (7) of the maneuvers listed below. Exhibitors may be asked to work from both the left and right side of the horse during any of the listed maneuvers (switching hands on the lead is permitted).

- Square horse for inspection; judge will only walk in front of the horse.
- Lead the horse at a walk, trot, or back in a straight or curved* line, or a combination of straight and curved* lines.
- Extension of walk or trot.
- Stop
- Answer questions from the judge
- Pivots, moving the forehand up to 270°
- Move the hindquarters, up to 270° (turn on forehand)
- Step away from the horse to the end of the lead while horse remains still
- Lower the horse's head (pulling down on the lead or pressure on the poll)
- Demonstrate a sidepass
- Back the horse while handler remains stationary
- Send horse in a circle (either direction), around a marker, or over a pole.

(*Curve = any non-straight line including but not limited to any change of direction from gradual turns to distinct turns, circles or portions of circles, or multiple curves to create a shape.)

Poles, barrels, and cones may be used as markers to define maneuver locations and/or parameters. However, the pattern should not take on the appearance of an "In-hand Trail" class. Hitting/touching/moving these objects will not be scored as penalties but taken into account when scoring the handler's abilities.

Exhibitors may be asked to work from both the left and right side of the horse during any of the listed maneuvers (switching hands on the lead is permitted). Exhibitors may touch the horse to initiate any lateral movement, and when asked to lower the horse's head. The judge will recognize added degree of difficulty of not touching the horse and this will be reflected in the maneuver score.

Scoring

Scoring will be on the basis of 0 to 100 with 70 denoting an average performance. Judges will assess each maneuver on a scale from -1 ½ to +1 ½ with ½ point increments in between. In addition to the maneuver score, exhibitors can incur penalty points as listed below.

One-half (½) point penalties:

- Break of gait (walk or trot) up to 1 full stride

One (1) point penalties:

- Touching horse other than when allowed. It is acceptable to touch the horse to side-pass, move the hindquarters, and lower the head.
- Horse moving 1 step during any portion when it should be standing still

Two (2) point penalties:

- Freeze up: complete loss of forward, backward or lateral movement within a maneuver
- Break of gait (walk or trot) for more than 1 full stride
- Horse moving more than 1 step during any portion when it should be standing still
- Stepping out of obstacle or over any unintended pole (or other obstacle marker) with one foot, accruing with each additional step
- Use of hand on halter in any manner
- Touching horse with lead (first offense)
- Incorrect or incomplete answer to the judge's question
- Artificial or overdone showing

Five (5) point penalties:

- Inappropriate Body condition score: Clearly below a 4 or clearly above a 7
- Balking, continued spooking, kicking, biting, rearing, striking
- Failure to complete a maneuver
- Touching horse with end of lead (second offense)

Zero (0) score:

- Consistent Lameness
- Illegal attire
- Illegal tack
- Abuse
- Off Pattern

Western Stock Type Mares or Geldings at Halter

Horses will be judged on conformation, soundness and heritable weaknesses, condition, quality, breed character, and way of going at the judge's discretion. Emphasis will be placed on structural correctness, soundness, and the relationship of form to function.

Horses must be shown in a clean, properly fitted halter. Horses must be shown and handled by only one club member. [Refer to the halter and in hand section for more information.](#)

Ranch Horsemanship

Ranch horsemanship is designed to evaluate the rider's ability to execute, in concert with their horse, a set of maneuvers prescribed by the judge with precision and smoothness while exhibiting poise and confidence, and maintaining a balanced, functional, and fundamentally correct seat. The ideal horsemanship pattern is extremely precise with the horse and rider working in complete unison, executing each maneuver with subtle aids and cues. Exhibitors will be judged on seat, hands, ability to control and show horse and suitability of horse and

rider. Results as shown by the performance of the horse are not to be considered more important than the method used by the rider to obtain them.

The horse's body condition and overall health and fitness should be assessed. The horse should appear to be fit and carry weight appropriate for the body size. A horse which appears sullen, dull, lethargic, emaciated, drawn over overly tired should be penalized according to severity.

Tack should fit the horse properly and be neat, clean and in good repair.

Each entry will first, individually, execute a posted pattern and be scored. The pattern to be used should be posted at least 1 hour before the class begins. The judge and show committee should work together to design a pattern that will objectively test the rider's skill. The optional list of tests are listed later in this section and should be used as a guide in designing a pattern. Tests may be combined.

The judge will use the above scores in determining which riders will be given additional individual or rail work.

Entries that are selected for rail work will enter the ring in a counterclockwise direction. Riders will proceed at once around the ring at each gait (walk, trot, extended trot, lope, extended lope - walk, trot, and extended trot only for Rookie Ranch) at least one direction of the ring but may be asked to reverse and repeat. Entries may be requested to perform additional work. Judges may request riders to perform an upward or downward transition to or from any gait. Horses will be requested to reverse only at a walk. The finalists must be given rail work before final placing.

The optional tests for Ranch Horsemanship Class riders are as follows:

- Answer any questions about horses, tack, or equitation.
- Back in a curved or straight line
- Walk, trot, lope, extended trot in a straight line, curved line, serpentine, circle or figure 8, or a combination of these gaits and maneuvers
- Stop
- Turn or pivot, including spins and rollbacks on the haunches and/or on the forehand
- Sidepass
- Two-track or leg-yield
- Flying or simple lead changes
- Counter-canter
- Ride without stirrups
- Judge should not ask exhibitors to dismount and mount

Scoring

Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. Patterns will be divided into 6 to 10 maneuvers, as specified by the judge, and each maneuver will be scored from +3 to -3 with 1/2-point increments acceptable that will be added or subtracted from 70.

Maneuver scores should be determined independent of penalties and should reflect equal consideration of both performance of the exhibitor's pattern and the form and effectiveness of the exhibitor and presentation of horse to result in the following scores: +3 Excellent, +2 Very Good, +1 Good, 0 Average or Correct, -1 Poor, -2 Very Poor, -3 Extremely Poor.

Exhibitors' overall form and effectiveness should also be scored from 0 to 5 with 0 to 2 Average, 3 Good, 4 Very Good, 5 Excellent.

Exhibitors should also be judged on the rail, and their pattern score and/or ranking may be adjusted as appropriate.

An exhibitor should be penalized in the pattern independent of maneuver scores and deducted from the final scores as follows:

Three (3) Point Penalties

- Break of gait at the walk or trot/extended trot up to 2 strides
- Over or under turn from 1/8 to 1/4 turn
- Tick or hit of cone

Five (5) Point Penalties

- Not performing the specified gait or not stopping within 10 feet of designated location
- Incorrect lead or break of gait at the lope (except when correcting an incorrect lead)
- Break of gait at the walk or trot/extended trot for more than 2 strides
- Loss of stirrup
- Bottom of boot not touching pad of stirrup at all gaits including backup
- Head carried too low and/or clearly behind the vertical while the horse is in motion, showing the appearance of intimidation
- Obviously looking down to check leads

Ten (10) Point Penalties

- Loss of rein
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise while on pattern or during rail work
- Holding saddle with either hand
- Cueing with the end of the romal
- Blatant disobedience including kicking, pawing, bucking, and rearing
- Spurring in front of the cinch

Disqualifications

- Failure to display correct number
- Abuse of horse or schooling
- Fall by horse or exhibitor
- Illegal equipment or illegal use of hands on the reins
- Use of prohibited equipment
- Off pattern, including: knocking over or wrong side of cone or maker; never performing designated gait or lead; over or under turning more than ¼ turn

Horsemanship Medal Class

This class is offered only at the State Show for exhibitors that placed first or second in Western Horsemanship or Ranch Horsemanship at a district show. This class does not offer points toward Southern Regional qualification or division champion awards.

This class will be judged on the rider's equitation in accordance with Western Horsemanship and Ranch Horsemanship rules. Exhibitors will be scored on their horsemanship skills while individually performing a prescribed pattern. The rider's equitation and ability to control their horses throughout the pattern will be evaluated.

The judge will use the above scores to select a minimum of 10 riders to be judged on their equitation on the rail. Riders will be worked both directions. The final placing will be the cumulative placing of the pattern work (50 percent) and rail work (50 percent).

If an exhibitor is eligible to show both a western and ranch horse in the Medal, they must choose which mount to exhibit, as flat work is required in this class.

Ranch Rail Pleasure

Horses will be judged on manners, performance, and suitability.

Horses are shown at a walk, trot, and lope (Rookie Ranch will have a walk-trot-extended trot only class also). Horses must work at least one way of the ring at the extended trot and extended lope (Rookie Ranch may not be asked to extend the lope). At the option of the judge, horses may be asked to extend their stride at the walk for all divisions.

Horses must back easily and stand quietly. At the judge's discretion, only the finalists may be requested to back. Horses should be reversed to the inside of the ring. The judge may request the horses to reverse at a walk or trot (walk only for Rookie Ranch).

The ranch rail pleasure class measures the ability of the horse to be a pleasure to ride and should reflect the versatility, attitude, and movement of a working horse. The horse should be well-broke, relaxed, quiet, soft and cadenced at all gaits. The movement of the ranch rail horse should simulate a horse needing to cover long distances, softly and quietly. The overall

manners and responsiveness of the horse and the horse's quality of movement are the primary considerations. Maximum credit should be given to the horse that has a natural flowing stride and consistent, ground covering gaits. Transitions should be performed when requested, with smoothness and responsiveness. The ideal ranch rail pleasure horse should have a natural head carriage at each gait. The horse should be ridden on a relatively loose rein with light contacts and without requiring any undue restraint while being responsive to the rider and making timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner. The horse should be soft in the bridle, yield to contact and shall not be shown on a full drape of rein. Riders are encouraged to use adequate space given the extension of gaits required. This class should show the horse's ability to work at a forward, working pace while under control by the rider. The horse shall be balanced and appear willing and a pleasure to ride in a group situation.

At the extended trot and lope, the exhibitor may post or stand in the stirrups. Touching or holding the saddle horn during any extended gait is acceptable.

Large numbers in this class may necessitate elimination heats to accommodate all entries. It is suggested that no more than 25 horses compete per heat, regardless of arena size.

Faults

To be scored according to severity:

- Too slow (any gait)
- Excessive speed (any gait)
- Over-bridled (nose behind the vertical)
- Head carried too low such that the poll is below the withers
- Out of frame
- Head carried too high
- Break of gait
- Wrong lead or out of lead
- Failure to take the appropriate gait when called
- Opening mouth excessively
- Draped reins
- Use of spurs forward of the cinch
- Canted at the lope
- Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, buck, rear, etc.)

Faults which shall be cause for **disqualification**: head carried too low and/or clearly behind the vertical excessively and consistently while the horse is in motion, or otherwise showing the appearance of intimidation

Ranch Trail

This class is designed to show the horse's ability to navigate and cope with the various situations and obstacles encountered in everyday ranch work. It is designed to show a horse's ability to perform these obstacles with a willing attitude. The horse is judged on cleanness and

promptness with which the obstacles are negotiated, ability to negotiate obstacles correctly, and attitude and mannerisms exhibited by the horse while negotiating the course.

The horse will be shown at the ranch gaits between the obstacles and credit will be given for performing these gaits on the correct lead with an alert attitude. The walk may be judged as part of an obstacle. Only one hand may be used on the reins and the hands must not be changed, except to work an obstacle. Two hands may be used when using a snaffle bit or bosal on a horse or pony 5 years of age or younger. No additional credit will be given for unnecessary/additional maneuvers (such as side-passing to and from an obstacle).

Course

Whenever possible, realistic or natural obstacles should be used. The course can be laid outside of the arena using natural terrain. However, if a ground tie is specified in the course, the course must be set up in an enclosed arena.

The judge must walk the course and has the right and duty to alter the course in any manner. The judge may remove or change any obstacle he deems unsafe or non-negotiable prior to the start of the class. If at any time a trail obstacle is deemed to be unsafe by the judge, it shall be repaired or removed from the course. If it cannot be repaired and horses have completed the course, the score for that obstacle shall be deducted from all previous works for that class.

At least two or three obstacles will be designated as tie breakers and shall be selected prior to the beginning of the competition. One of the mandatory obstacles should be used as the first tie breaker.

The judge may ask a rider to move on to the next obstacle if the horse/rider is unable to complete the maneuver in a reasonable time or if the judge deems that the rider is, or will be, in an unsafe situation.

Six to ten obstacles will be used. Three will be mandatory, and the remaining will be selected from the optional list. Gaits between obstacles will be scored as part of the next obstacle.

Mandatory obstacles are as follows:

- Opening, passing through, and closing a gate. This gate may not be a rope gate, unless the only safe option is a rope gate.
- Ride over obstacles on the ground (usually logs). Walk, trot or lope may be used but only one gait is required. The formation may be straight, curved, zigzagged or raised and no more than 2 may be used in succession.
- Back through an obstacle, such as backing through and around 3 markers, L, V, U or straight shaped course.

Optional obstacles are as follows:

- Mailbox – Rider will open and close a mailbox when mounted.
- Bridge – Horse should walk willingly over a stationary bridge.

- Slicker – The rider shall show the ability to handle the horse while simulating putting on a slicker. The rider may also be asked to carry the slicker from point A to point B.
- A jump obstacle whose center height is not less than 14 inches high or more than 25 inches high. Holding the saddle horn is permissible for this obstacle
- Water hazard with a non-slick bottom
- Sidepass – Straight, one direction, may or may not be elevated.
- Carry object from one part of the arena to another.
- Trot through cones
- Ground Tie – Rider must be able to dismount and walk a minimum of 5 paces away with the horse in a designated spot. If used, this must be the last obstacle of the course (no remount) and class must be held in an enclosed arena. If a rider is using a one-piece rein (romal, roping rein, etc.), it should be unsnapped from the bit on one side while ground-tying.
- Pick up front feet – The rider must be able to dismount and pick up both front feet in an easy, time efficient manner. If used, this must be the last obstacle of the course (no remount). May be used in succession with ground tie so rider only dismounts once per course.
- Stand to mount with mounting block
- Swing rope or throw rope at a dummy steer head.
- Any other safe and negotiable obstacle which could reasonably be found in everyday ranch work and meets the approval of the judge.

If disrupted, the course shall be reset. In the case that an obstacle is used in combination, the obstacle cannot be reset until the contestant finishes the entire combination.

Scoring

Scoring will be on the basis of 0-100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each obstacle will receive an obstacle score that should be added or subtracted from 70 and is subject to a penalty that should be subtracted. Each obstacle will be scored on the following basis, ranging from plus 1 ½ to minus 1 ½: -1 ½ extremely poor, -1 very poor, -½ needs improvement, 0 correct, +½ good, +1 very good, +1 ½ excellent. Natural ranch horse appearance will also be evaluated ranging from +1 ½ to -1 ½.

Obstacle scores are to be determined and assessed independently of penalty points. Penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:

One (1) Point Penalties

- Over bridled (per maneuver)
- Out of frame (per maneuver)
- Each bite of or hit of or stepping on a log, cone, plant or any component of the obstacle.
- Incorrect or break of gait at walk or trot for two strides or less
- Both front or hind feet in a single-strided slot or space at a walk or jog.
- Skipping over or failing to step into required space.

- Split pole in lope over
- Incorrect number of strides, if specified
- One to two steps on mount/dismount or ground tie except shifting to balance
- Wrong lead or out of lead for two strides or less

Three (3) Point Penalties

- Wrong lead or out of lead for more than two strides
- Draped reins
- Break of gait at lope (except when correcting an incorrect lead).
- Break of gait at walk or trot for more than 2 strides
- Three to four steps on mount/dismount or ground tie
- Trotting for more than 3 strides in lope departures or exiting a rollback into a lope from a stop or walk
- Knocking down or over or severely disturbing an obstacle
- Stepping out of or fall off an obstacle with one foot
- Missing or evading part of a log/obstacle with one foot

Five (5) Point Penalties

- Spurring in front of the cinch
- Blatant disobedience (including kicking out, bucking, rearing, striking).
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise.
- Knocking over, stepping out of or falling off of an obstacle with more than 1 foot
- Dropping an object required to be carried
- Each refusal, balk, or evading an obstacle by shying or backing
- Letting go of gate
- Five or more steps on mount/dismount or ground tie
- Missing or evading part of a log/obstacle with more than one foot

Fifteen (15) Point Penalties

- Failure to complete an obstacle once attempted

Twenty (20) Point Penalties

- First occurrence of failing to complete an obstacle or failing to attempt an obstacle

Off-Pattern (OP) - Exhibitors cannot be placed above others who complete pattern correctly

- Breaking pattern (including performing the obstacle or essential element incorrectly or other than in specified order, and incorrect line of travel)
- Incomplete, eliminating or adding maneuver
- Repeated blatant disobedience
- Use of two hands (except junior horse in snaffle bit/hackamore), more than one finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins
- Failure to open/shut gate, failure to complete gate

Disqualifications

- Second occurrence of failing to complete an obstacle or failing to attempt an obstacle (a judge may excuse a rider from the arena after the 2nd obstacle with three refusals)
- Equipment failure that delays completion of the pattern
- Lameness
- Abuse
- Leaving working area before pattern is complete
- Illegal equipment
- Disrespect or misconduct
- Fall of horse or rider

Distances

When the distances and spaces are measured between all obstacles, the inside base to inside base measurement of each obstacle considering the normal path of the horse should be the measuring point. The height should be measured from the ground to the top of the element. Enough space must be provided for a horse to trot at least 30 feet and lope at least 50 feet for the judges to evaluate these gaits.

Pole spacing:

- Walkovers - May be no more than four logs no more than 10" high and spacing between 26" – 30".
- Trot overs - May be no more than four logs no more than 10" inches high and spacing between 36"-42".
- Lope overs - May be no more than three logs no more than 10" high and spacing between 6'-7'.

Backing Obstacle:

- Spaced at a minimum of 28". If elevated, 30" is required. May be elevated no more than 24"

Jump

- Center height is 14"-25"

Serpentine

- Trot serpentine cones 6' or more apart

Ranch Riding

The purpose of the ranch riding class is to measure the ability of the horse to be a pleasure to ride while being used as a means of conveyance from performing one ranch task to another. The horse should reflect the versatility, attitude and movement of a working ranch horse riding outside the confines of an arena. The horse should be well trained, relaxed, quiet, soft and cadenced at all gaits. The ideal ranch horse will travel with forward movement and demonstrate an obvious lengthening of stride at extended gaits. The horse can be ridden with light contact or on a relatively loose rein without requiring undue restraint but not shown on a full drape of reins. The overall manners and responsiveness of the ranch riding horse to make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner, as well as the quality of the movement are

of primary considerations. The ideal ranch riding horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail in each maneuver.

The overall cadence and performance of the gaits should be smooth, with an emphasis on **forward movement, free-flowing, and ground covering for all gaits. Transitions** should be performed where designated, with **smoothness** and **responsiveness**.

There is no time limit. One of the 15 AQHA approved patterns must be used. See pages 136-150 in the [AQHA Rulebook](#) for patterns for the Junior and Senior Division. Patterns for the Rookie Division can be found on Pages 151-155 of the [AQHA Rulebook](#). The use of natural logs is required.

Sitting the regular trot and lope is recommended; though standing in the stirrups at the extended trot and extended lope, or posting the extended trot is acceptable. Touching or holding the saddle horn is acceptable.

Scoring

Each horse will work individually, performing both required and optional maneuvers, and scored on the basis of 0 to 100, with 70 denoting an average performance.

Each maneuver will be scored on the following basis, ranging from plus 1 ½ to minus 1 ½: -1 ½ extremely poor, -1 very poor, -½ needs improvement, 0 correct, +½ good, +1 very good, +1 ½ excellent. Natural ranch horse appearance will also be evaluated ranging from +1 ½ to -1 ½.

Maneuver scores are to be determined and assessed independently of penalty points. Penalties should be assessed per occurrence as follows:

One (1) point penalties:

- Too slow (per gait)
- Over-bridled (per maneuver)
- Out of frame (per maneuver)
- Break of gait at walk or jog for 2 strides or less
- Wrong lead or out of lead for 2 strides or less

Three (3) point penalties:

- Break of gait at walk or jog for more than 2 strides
- Break of gait at lope, except when correcting an incorrect lead
- Wrong lead or out of lead for more than two strides
- Draped reins (per maneuver)
- Out of lead or cross-cantering more than 2 strides when changing leads
- Trotting for more than 3 strides in lope departures or when exiting a rollback into a lope from a stop or walk
- Severe disturbance of any obstacle

Five (5) point penalties

- Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, buck, rear, etc.) for each refusal

(OP) Placed below horses performing all maneuvers

- Eliminates or adds maneuver
- Incomplete maneuver
- Repeated blatant disobedience
- Use of two hands (except in junior horses shown in a snaffle bit/hackamore), more than one finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except in the two-rein).

Zero (0) score

- Illegal equipment including hoof black, braided or banded manes, or tail extensions
- Willful abuse
- Lameness
- Leaving working area before pattern is complete
- Disrespect or misconduct
- Improper western attire
- Fall of horse/rider

No specific penalties will be incurred for nicks/hits on logs and over/under spins but deduction may be made in the maneuver score.

Ranch Reining

The ranch reining class measures the ability of the stock horse to perform basic handling maneuvers. To rein a horse is not only to guide him but also to control his every movement. The best reined horse should be willingly guided or controlled with little or no apparent resistance and dictated to completely. Any movement on his own must be considered a lack of control. All deviations from the exact written pattern must be considered a lack of or temporary loss of control and therefore a fault that must be marked down according to the severity of deviation. The horse/rider team's overall performance should be credited for smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness and authority of performing various maneuvers while using controlled speed which raises the degree of difficulty and makes the horse/rider team more exciting and pleasing to watch.

One of the AQHA approved patterns must be used. See pages 269-275 in the [AQHA Rulebook](#) for patterns for the Junior and Senior Division.

Scoring

All runs begin upon entering the pen and any infractions are subject to penalty at that time. horses will be scored from 0 to 100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each maneuver will receive a score ranging from plus 1 ½ to minus 1 ½, defined as follows: -1 ½ extremely

poor, -1 very poor, -½ poor, 0 correct, +½ good, + 1 very good, + 1 ½ excellent. Maneuver scores should be added or subtracted from 70 and are to be determined and assessed independently of any penalty points which may accrue. The following penalties will be applied to each occurrence and be deducted from the final score:

One-half (½) point penalties:

- Starting a circle or exiting a roll-back at a fog for up to two (2) strides
- Delayed change of lead by one stride where the lead change is required by the pattern description
- Failure to remain a minimum of twenty feet from the wall or fence when approaching a stop and/or roll-back
- Over-spin or under-spin up to 1/8 turn.

One (1) point penalties:

- Over-bridled (per maneuver)
- Out of frame (per maneuver)
- Out of lead in the circles, figure eights or around the end of the arena (this penalty is cumulative and will be deducted for each quarter of a circle the horse is out of lead)
- Over or under spinning 1/8 to 1/4 turn
- Slipping rein

Two (2) point penalties:

- Break of gait
- Freeze up in spins or roll-backs
- Failure to stop or walk before executing a lope departure on trot-in patterns
- Failure to be in a lope prior to the first marker on run-in patterns
- Failure to completely pass the specified marker before initiating a stop position
- Trotting beyond two strides but less than ½ circle or ½ length of the arena
- At end of pattern, failure to hesitate to demonstrate completion of pattern.

Five (5) point penalties

- Spurring in front of cinch
- Blatant disobedience
- Use of either hand to instill fear

(OP) Placed below horses performing all maneuvers

- Breaking pattern
- Inclusion of maneuver (e.g. over or under-spinning, backing more than two (2) strides, etc.)
- Trotting in excess of ½ circle or ½ length of the arena
- Repeated blatant disobedience
- Use of 2 hands (except when showing on junior horses in a snaffle bit/hackamore)
- More than 1 finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins

Disqualification

- Lameness
- Abuse
- Leaving working area before pattern is complete
- Illegal equipment
- Disrespect or misconduct
- Improper western attire
- Fall of horse/rider
- Out of control
- Dangerous
- Excessive schooling

Speed Events

Overview

Current American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) rules will be used in the Speed Events Division for any questions not covered in the Western Division rules or these rules. **The Western Division judge or a declared Speed Events Division judge must be present during the Speed Events Division classes.**

Appointments

[Refer to the Tack, Attire, and Equipment section.](#)

Exhibitors may not be tied, buckled, or fastened to the tack or horse by any means. Rubber bands are not permitted.

Divisions

Speed Events Division classes may be divided into Horse and Pony divisions. The Horse Division is open to animals that measure more than 14.2 hands. The Pony Division includes all animals that measure 14.2 hands (58 inches) or less. Horses and ponies will not be allowed to cross-enter between divisions if offered separately. If no separate classes are offered, a youth may show one horse and one pony in the same class and the pony must be measured.

Junior Speed

Riders must be 4-H members aged 8-13.

Senior Speed

Riders must be 4-H members aged 14-18.

Timing

An electric timer should be used for all classes when possible. Otherwise, at least two stopwatches shall be used with the average time of the watches to be official.

Timing shall begin as soon as the horse's nose reaches the starting line and will be stopped when the horse's nose passes over the finish line. If a rider crosses back over the timer line after the completion of their pattern, they will not be penalized.

If a tie occurs where points are involved, placing will be worked off if all tied exhibitors agree to participate in a run-off, if not, a coin toss will be used to separate the ties. The contestant declared the winner in the runoff must run the pattern in not more than 2 seconds over his original time, or the runoff must be held again.

Reruns

If a rerun is declared for an exhibitor, that exhibitor will be given the option of running immediately or at the end of the class.

No rerun will be given to any contestant if handicapped by an equipment/tack failure or an accident to the horse or rider. If timing equipment malfunctions, riders will be granted a rerun.

Gate and Control

All exhibitors must have their horses under complete control at all times.

Horses must be mounted when entering the ring. Riders must remain mounted at all times within the arena to avoid disqualification. Fall of a horse or rider at any point while in the arena will result in a disqualification.

No assistance to either horse or rider is permitted past the arena gate **and a rider may be disqualified if their horse is excessively unruly at the gate or refuses to enter the gate multiple times.**

After completing the course, each rider must have his or her horse under complete control before the gate is opened. Failure to adhere to this rule shall result in disqualification.

Spurring, striking, or beating the horse in any manner whatsoever forward of the cinch shall result in disqualification. (Touching the horse shall not be considered striking or beating the horse.) Excessive use of spurs, bats, crops or whips, or cruel treatment will result in disqualification.

Show management shall be responsible for creating a safe entryway based on the arena layout. Contestants must enter the arena under control (a controlled jig is acceptable) and may not begin to run until their horse has completely crossed the threshold of the designated starting area. The gate shall be shut behind them once they have entered the arena. Failure to adhere to this rule shall result in disqualification per the judge or show stewards. Horses will stop inside the arena and must be brought down to a walk under control before exiting the arena.

Drags

It is recommended that drags be conducted before the start and after every seven head. Show management may drag more frequently.

Class Routines

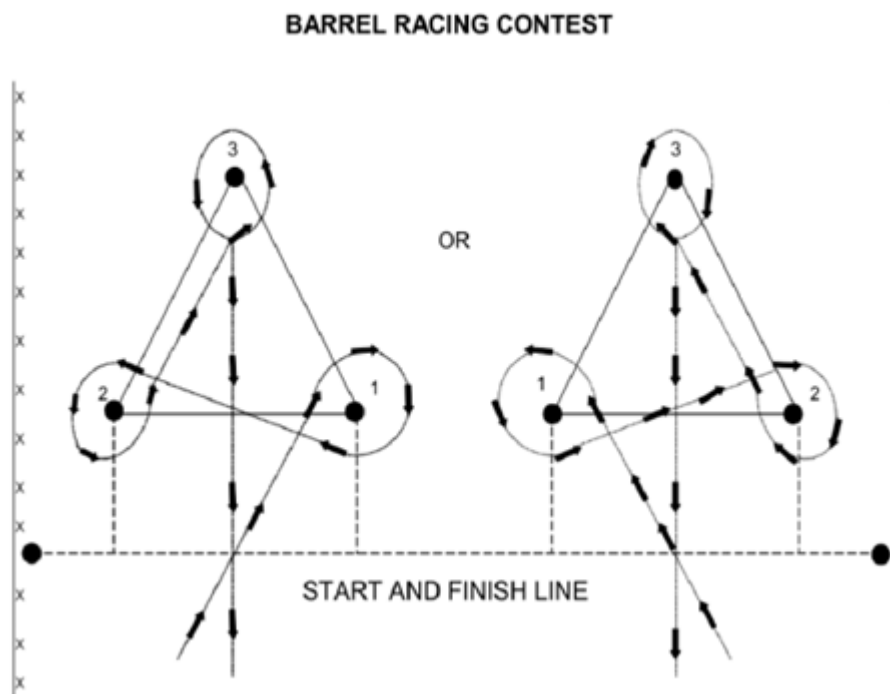
Barrel Racing

Pattern

Exhibitors race against the clock, following a course consisting of three barrels in a triangular “cloverleaf” pattern. Contestants must choose either the right or left barrel, circle it, and go to the next barrel, completing the course after circling the third barrel and running home.

The course must be set to fit the arena. The course should be set so that a horse may have ample room to turn and stop. All barrels must be a minimum of 18 feet from the arena wall and barrels 1 and 2 must be a minimum of 10 yards from the timers to the first barrel.

The contestant will run to barrel number 1, pass to the left of it, and complete an approximately 360 degree turn around it; then go to barrel number 2, pass to the right of it, and complete a slightly more than 360 degree turn around it; then go to barrel number 3, pass to the right of it, and do another approximately 360 degree turn around it; then sprint to the finish line, passing between barrel number 1 and 2. This barrel course may also be run to the left. For example, the contestants will start to barrel number 2, turning to left around this barrel, then to barrel number 1, turning to the right, then to barrel number 3, turning again to the right, followed by the final sprint to the finish line.



Penalties

Knocking over a barrel shall carry a 5-second penalty. A contestant may touch the barrel with his or her hands in barrel racing without penalty.

Disqualification:

- Failure to follow the exact course as drawn and described
- Excessive use of whip, rope, crop, bat, or reins anywhere on the horse per judge's discretion
- Illegal tack, attire, or equipment
- Fall of horse or rider
- Excessively unruly at gate/refuses to enter multiple times
- Spurring, striking, beating forward of the cinch
- Failure to start and stop the run inside the arena

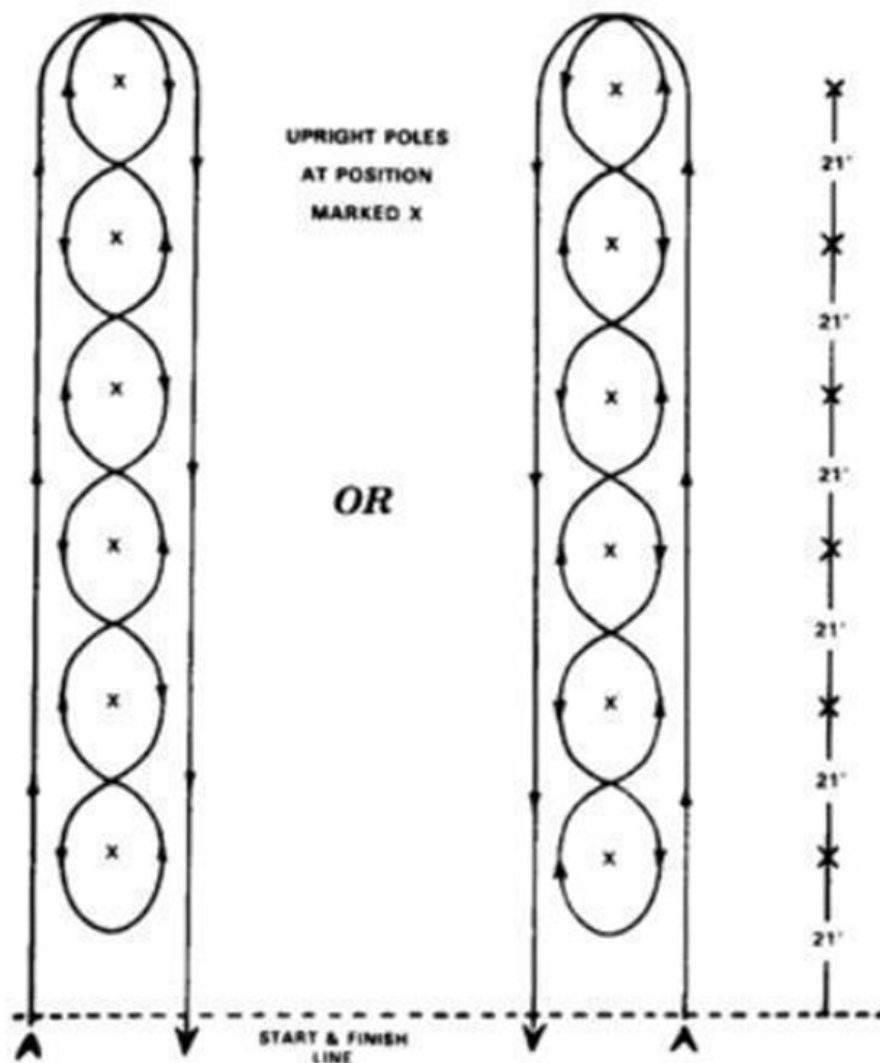
Pole Bending

Pattern

This timed event consists of a series of six poles, which horses and riders weave through. Horses run to the far end of the series of poles, turn and weave in and out as they work their way back to the front. Horses then complete a turn around the front pole and maneuver through the series again. At the last pole, they complete that turn and race toward the finish line.

Six poles are placed 21 feet apart, and the first pole must be 21 feet from the starting line. Each pole should be at least 6 feet in height. At least 75 feet are needed beyond the finish line for stopping horses.

The pole-bending contest pattern is illustrated below:



Penalties

Knocking over a pole shall carry a 5-second penalty. A contestant may touch the pole with his or her hands in barrel racing without penalty. If the original course is altered by a rider intentionally grasping a pole, a five-second penalty for each pole grasped will be assessed.

Disqualification:

- Failure to follow the exact course as drawn and described
- Excessive use of whip, rope, crop, bat, or reins anywhere on the horse per judge's discretion
- Illegal tack, attire, or equipment
- Fall of horse or rider
- Excessively unruly at gate/refuses to enter multiple times
- Spurring, striking, beating forward of the cinch
- Failure to start and stop the run inside the arena

Stake Race

Pattern

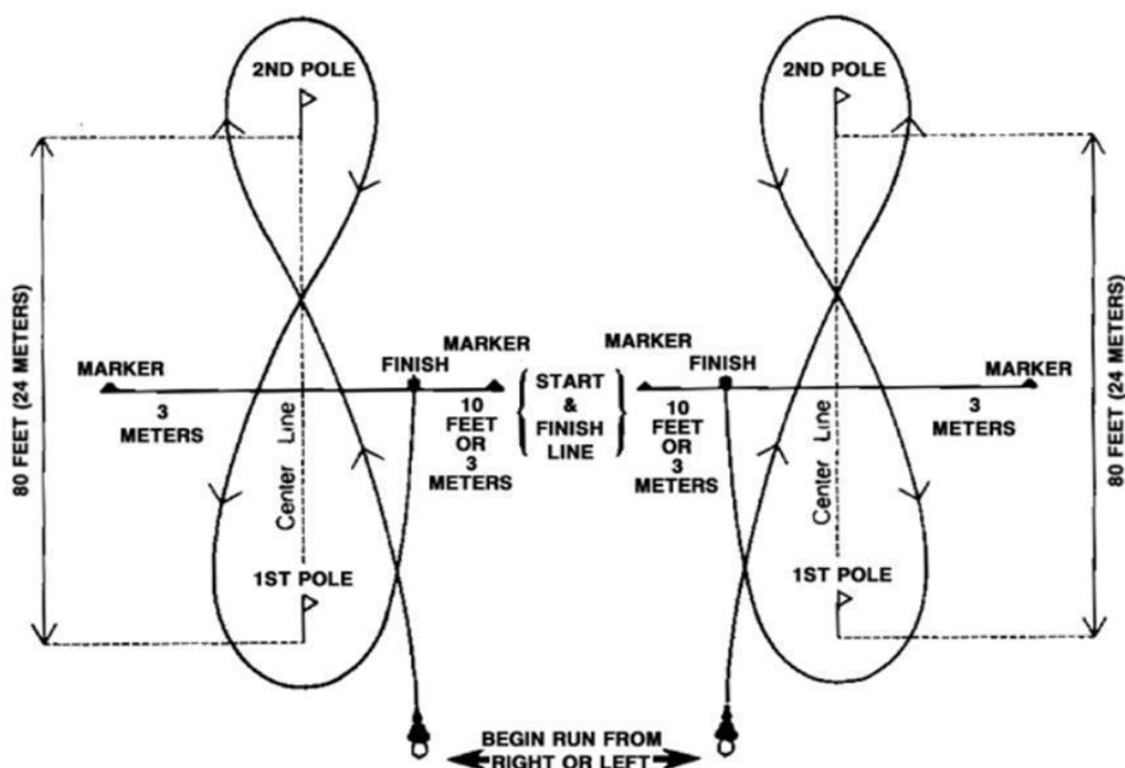
The stake race is a timed event consisting of markers set on either side of a center line. Contestants are given a running start to complete a figure eight pattern. They must cross the center line between upright markers, head to either the right or left of the first pole, make a 180-degree turn, head to the second pole, turn around it in the opposite direction and then to the center line to stop the clock.

The contestant is allowed a running start and may begin his run from either the left or right side of the first pole. Start by crossing the center line between the upright markers, turn around the second pole, cross over the centerline again between the markers, then around the first pole and run back across the finish line.

All horses must start from the same end of the arena.

The start and finish line is 20 feet (6 meters) wide and marked by two upright markers 10 feet (3 meters) on each side of the center line and short enough so as not to interfere with the timer if one is used. Short pylons or cones are recommended. The first and second poles marking the center line are each 40 feet (12 meters) from the start and finish line, making them a total of 80 feet (24 meters) apart.

The stake race contest pattern is illustrated below:



Penalties

Knocking over a pole shall carry a 5-second penalty. If the original course is altered by a rider intentionally grasping a pole, a five-second penalty for each pole grasped will be assessed.

Disqualification:

- Failure to follow the exact course as drawn and described
- Failure to cross the start and finish line between the markers
- Failure to cross over the center line between markers before turning the second pole and cross back over the centerline after turning the second pole
- Excessive use of whip, rope, crop, bat, or reins anywhere on the horse per judge's discretion
- Illegal tack, attire, or equipment
- Fall of horse or rider
- Excessively unruly at gate/refuses to enter multiple times
- Spurring, striking, beating forward of the cinch
- Failure to start and stop the run inside the arena

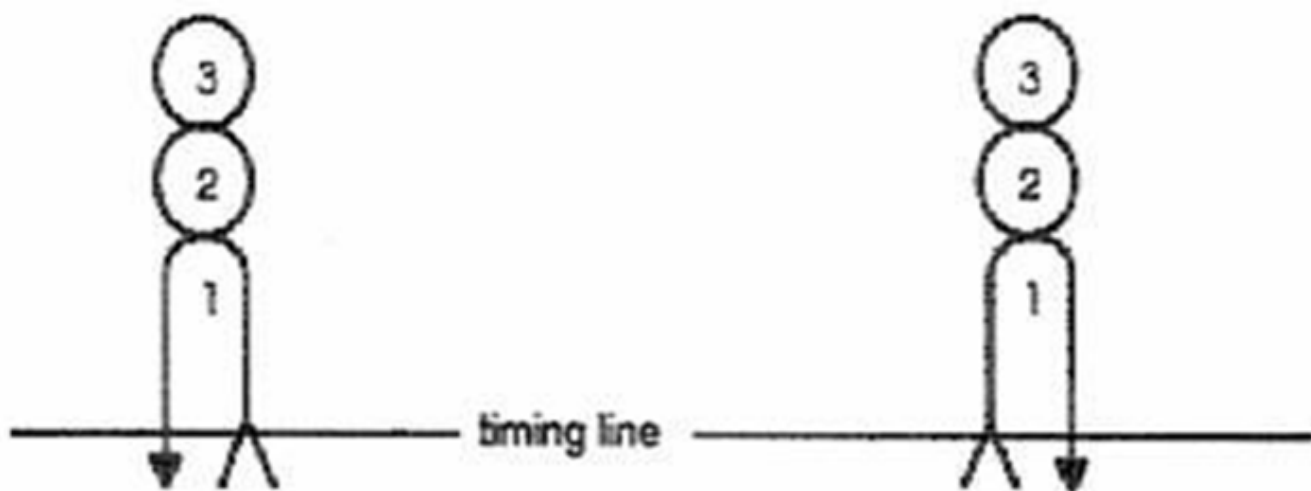
Texas Barrels

Pattern

The Texas Barrel race is a timed event consisting of three barrels placed in a straight line. Contestants are given a running start to complete a figure eight pattern. The exhibitor shall cross the timing line, pass the first barrel on either side, pass succeeding barrels on alternate sides, turn around the third barrel, and return in the same manner to cross the timing line.

Three barrels are placed in a straight line, 60 feet apart, the first barrel being 30 feet from the timing line, which is 20 feet long and marked by cones. (Measurements are to the center of the barrels.) The course must be measured exactly. If the course is too large for the available space, the pattern should be reduced by 5 feet between each barrel until the pattern fits the arena. At least 60 feet are required for a stopping area.

The Texas Barrels pattern is as follows:



Penalties

Knocking over a barrel shall carry a 5-second penalty. A contestant may touch the barrel with his or her hands.

Disqualification:

- Failure to follow the exact course as drawn and described
- Failure to cross the start and finish line between the markers
- Excessive use of whip, rope, crop, bat, or reins anywhere on the horse per judge's discretion
- Illegal tack, attire, or equipment
- Fall of horse or rider
- Excessively unruly at gate/refuses to enter multiple times
- Spurring, striking, beating forward of the cinch
- Failure to start and stop the run inside the arena

Flag Race

Pattern

The Flag Race is a timed event consisting of one barrel placed at the end of the arena. A bucket is on top of the barrel. Two different colored batons (with or without flags attached) will be used. Riders start from behind the start/finish line with a baton, run to the barrel at the far end of the arena, and switch batons **in the bucket**. Riders will return to the start/finish line with the new baton in hand. **The baton must be deposited inside the bucket, in an upright position.**

Contestants are given a running start to complete a figure eight pattern. The exhibitor shall cross the timing line, pass the first barrel on either side, pass succeeding barrels on alternate sides, turn around the third barrel, and return in the same manner to cross the timing line.

One barrel is positioned 150 feet from the start or finish line. A bucket filled ½ way with sand is placed on top of the barrel.

Any route may be used to and from the finish line. The exhibitor must make a complete pass, but is not limited to one pass around the barrel.

The Flag Race pattern is as follows:



Penalties

Knocking over a barrel shall carry a 5-second penalty. A contestant may touch the barrel with his or her hands.

Disqualification:

- Failure to follow the exact course as drawn and described
- Failure to maintain the baton in an upright position
- Failure to switch batons
- Failure to run behind the barrel
- Failure to place the baton in the bucket
- Knocking over the barrel
- Excessive use of whip, rope, crop, bat, or reins anywhere on the horse per judge's discretion
- Illegal tack, attire, or equipment
- Fall of horse or rider
- Excessively unruly at gate/refuses to enter multiple times
- Spurring, striking, beating forward of the cinch
- Failure to start and stop the run inside the arena

Special Interest Classes

Overview

The following classes are open to Junior and Senior riders who have qualified and are exhibiting their horse in one of the qualifying divisions at the State 4-H Horse Show. Exhibitors competing exclusively in a Rookie division are not eligible to participate in these classes. These classes are considered non-point classes and do not count towards high point awards, nor Southern Regional qualification.

Pleasure Pairs

Class entry will consist of two horses and two exhibitors. Each exhibitor must enter independently on their state show entry form. Junior and Senior riders will compete in the same class. Exhibitors exclusively showing in the Rookie divisions are not eligible for this class. Cloverbuds are not eligible to show in this class.

Pairs may be shown in [hunt seat, saddle seat, or western tack and attire](#) in accordance with the rules of the pleasure class in the respective riding divisions. Entries are permitted to have matching adornments, such as leg wraps, ear bonnets, saddle pads, etc.

Entries are to be shown abreast at a walk; jog, trot or pleasure gait; and lope, canter or extended pleasure gait, both ways in the ring. Horses may be asked to back and stand quietly. Judges may request additional tests.

Versatility

The Versatility Class is composed of four events, with each event counting equally toward the overall placement. Only one rider per horse will be permitted. Each event will be run in accordance to the rules governing that event, unless otherwise specified. Exhibitors exclusively showing in the Rookie divisions are not eligible to compete in this event.

Classes:

- Versatility, Senior Riders
- Versatility, Junior Riders

A fall by a horse or rider at any point will result in a disqualification from the Versatility Class and the horse and rider will be excused from the ring.

Anything resulting in a no-score or no-time from any one event will result in 0 points or no placement in that event but will not eliminate the entry from placement in other events in the class (for example, going off pattern in the precision pattern or receiving a no-time in the games portion).

Exhibitors disqualified from the Versatility Class may keep any awards earned in previous Versatility Class events, but all points will be forfeited. Should an exhibitor be disqualified,

points will not be redistributed. Ribbons will be awarded to first- through tenth-place entrants in each event and overall, depending on the number of entries.

Tack and Attire

Attire must appear to be in accordance with [the rules of the event](#) with the exception of boots. Western chaps or jeans over hunt seat boots or jodhpurs with straps over western boots are acceptable. For Texas Barrels, the saddle must be Western but other tack and attire is the rider's preference. However, exhibitors must wear a long-sleeved shirt with a collar.

Class Procedure

All horses and riders will remain in the arena for the entire class. Horses and riders will not be permitted to leave the arena between events or before the class is dismissed. Failure to follow this policy will result in disqualification from the versatility class. Large classes will be split in accordance with 4-H Horse Program rules. Horses not competing in a round of the finals of a split class will be maintained in a specified holding area and must not be spoken to or assisted by non-horse-show personnel. Unauthorized assistance at any time will result in disqualification from the class.

Two grooms per horse will be permitted in the ring at a designated time between events. The function of the groom is to assist the rider in changing tack and attire. Use of wheelbarrows or motorized vehicles during tack changes is prohibited. Grooms will not be permitted in the arena during the judging of the event and may only enter the arena when so designated by the announcer per their instructions. At the announcer's direction, the grooms will first be lined up down the middle of the ring at the cones; and, at the specified time, the grooms will be instructed to WALK to their respective exhibitors. There is a 5-minute limit for each tack and attire change. Failure to complete the tack and attire changes within the time limit will result in disqualification from the class.

Points

Points will be awarded for first- through tenth-place entrants in each event in the following order:

	Points Awarded by Competition Placement									
Number of Horses in Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	1									
2	2	1								
3	3	2	1							
4	4	3	2	1						
5	5	4	3	2	1					
6	6	5	4	3	2	1				
7	7	6	5	4	3	2	1			
8	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
9	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
10+	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Ties will be broken according to the following rules:

1. The horse and rider placing in the most events will win the tie.
2. The horse and rider with the highest finish in any one event will break the tie.
3. The final tiebreaker will be the fastest time accumulated in Texas Barrels.

Events

Western Pleasure

Horses may exhibit in [western or ranch attire](#) and will be judged according to the [Western Pleasure class rules](#). Gaits to be called: walk; jog/trot or pleasure gait; lope or extended pleasure gait, both ways of the ring.

English Pleasure

Horses will be judged as an open Pleasure Class entry at a walk; trot or pleasure gait; canter or pleasure gait, both ways of the ring. Horses may be shown in either [Hunt Seat or Saddle Seat Division attire](#).

Precision Pattern

Horses will be judged on their ability to perform a prescribed equitation-type pattern with emphasis placed on execution of movements, manners, and responsiveness to the rider, precision, and exactness of pattern. Cones will be used to denote movements within the pattern. Horses will not be required to do flying lead changes.

Rider's equitation will not be evaluated. Horses may be exhibited in either Western, Hunt Seat or Saddle Seat Division tack and attire, but a mixture of tack and attire is prohibited, with the exception noted above in the general rules for Versatility Class. Entries must conform to appointment rules for their respective divisions.

Texas Barrels

Horses will be judged according to the rules in the [Speed Events Division](#).

Invitational Classes and Divisions

Overview

The following classes and divisions are considered invitational, meaning that an exhibitor can participate in them without qualification at a qualifying show. These classes are considered non-point classes and do not count towards high point awards, nor Southern Regional qualification.

Halter or In-Hand Classes

[Refer to the Halter and In-Hand section.](#)

Costume

Participants will compete and be awarded in the following classes:

- Cloverbud Costume
- Junior Costume
- Senior Costume
- Miniature Costume

Judging to be based upon the originality to the costume as evidenced in the exhibitor's attire and horse's tack and equipment.

Participants in these classes may show mounted or dismounted (shown in hand) and no carts are allowed. Each entry will be allowed one handler in the ring. **If mounted, the rider's seat must be in direct contact with the horse or saddle. No person may be tied to the horse. All participants must wear boots with a functional heel and must wear a helmet if mounted.**

Dressage Division

[Refer to the Dressage Division rules.](#)

Miniature Division

[Refer to the Miniature Division rules.](#)

Drill Team

[Refer to the Drill Team rules.](#)

Adaptive Division

[Refer to the Adaptive Division rules.](#)

Cloverbud Division

[Refer to the Cloverbud rules.](#)

Halter and In-Hand Classes

Overview and Purpose

Horses are judged on conformation, soundness and transmissible weaknesses, condition, quality, breed character, and way of going at the judge's discretion. Halter and in-hand classes do not count towards division high point awards.

Appointments

Each exhibitor should be neat, clean, well groomed, attentive, courteous, and in appropriate attire for the division. [Refer to Tack, Attire, and Equipment.](#)

Personal Appointments

Appropriate hunt seat, western, or non-trotting attire. A hat or helmet is required to be worn.

Acceptable Appointments

- Gloves

Prohibited Appointments

- Chaps
- Spurs
- Whips or crops (permitted in non-trotting only)

Tack and Equipment

All tack and equipment should be clean and well-fitted, and appropriate for the division. [Refer to Tack, Attire, and Equipment.](#)

Acceptable Equipment

- Bridles (hunt seat or non-trotting classes only)
- Chain lead shanks

Prohibited Equipment

- Protective boots, leg wraps, and bandages

Class Routines

Horses are judged individually at a walk or trot/gait on the line and then standing. Horses are to be handled and shown by only one club member regardless of breed standards.

Horses will enter the ring at a walk in a counterclockwise direction unless instructed differently by the judge or ring officials. Subsequent procedures will be as directed by the judge, the ring steward, or both.

On completion of the judging, the top 6 to 10 horses will be lined up in order of placing so that the public may see how the horses placed.

Disqualifications (should not be placed) include:

- Loss of control of horse that endangers exhibitor, other horses, or judge

- Horse becomes separated from exhibitor
- Failure to display correct number
- Willful abuse
- Excessive schooling or training; use of artificial aids
- Illegal equipment

Cloverbud Division

Overview

The rules in this book will have precedence over all other rules. USEF rules will be used for any hunt seat or saddle seat rules not covered in this book. American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) rules will be used for any Western or Speed Events Division rule not covered in this book.

Classes in this division are open to those who have reached age 5 and who have not reached age 8 as of January 1 of the current year. All classes within this division are offered on a noncompetitive basis. Exhibitors will not be ranked but will receive participation ribbons. Classes with scored sheets will not be placed, but the sheets will be available to view in the show office for educational purposes. Youth competing in the Cloverbud Division classes are not eligible to participate in other classes. Horses and ponies will participate in the same class.

For all classes, exhibitors may have an assistant in the arena if desired. Youth showing in western attire may ride with 2 hands, if desired, using closed or split reins, and a legal snaffle bit regardless of the age of the horse.

All Cloverbud classes are walk/trot or jog. If a gaited horse is ridden, a pleasure gait will be performed instead of a trot or jog. If a Cloverbud is exhibiting a ranch horse, they should perform a trot (an extended trot will not be exhibited).

Appointments

[Refer to the Tack, Attire, and Equipment section.](#)

For English Cloverbud classes, exhibitors may be in saddle seat, dressage, or hunt seat attire. For western classes, exhibitors should be in western or ranch attire.

Exhibitors may not be tied, buckled, or fastened to the tack or horse by any means.

Class Routines

Showmanship

[Refer to the standard showmanship procedure rules.](#)

English Equitation and Western Horsemanship

Exhibitors will be judged according to the following scoring system:

Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. Patterns will be divided into 6 to 10 maneuvers, as specified by the judge, and each maneuver

will be scored from +3 to -3 with 1/2-point increments acceptable that will be added or subtracted from 70.

Maneuver scores should be determined independent of penalties and should reflect equal consideration of both performance of the exhibitor's pattern and the form and effectiveness of the exhibitor and presentation of horse to result in the following scores: +3 Excellent, +2 Very Good, +1 Good, 0 Average or Correct, -1 Poor, -2 Very Poor, -3 Extremely Poor.

Exhibitors' overall form and effectiveness should also be scored from 0 to 5 with 0 to 2 Average, 3 Good, 4 Very Good, 5 Excellent.

Exhibitors should also be judged on the rail, and their pattern score and/or ranking may be adjusted as appropriate.

An exhibitor should be penalized in the pattern independent of maneuver scores and deducted from the final scores as follows:

Three (3) Point Penalties

- Break of gait at the walk or jog up to 2 strides
- Over or under turn from 1/8 to 1/4 turn
- Tick or hit of cone
- Missing a diagonal up to 2 strides in the pattern or on the rail

Five (5) Point Penalties

- Not performing the specified gait or not stopping within 10 feet of designated location
- Incorrect lead or break of gait at the lope (except when correcting an incorrect lead)
- Break of gait at the walk or jog for more than 2 strides
- Complete loss of contact between the rider's hand and the horse's mouth (english)
- Loss of iron or stirrup
- Head carried too low and/or clearly behind the vertical while the horse is in motion, showing the appearance of intimidation
- Obviously looking down to check leads or diagonals
- Missing a diagonal for more than 2 strides in the pattern or on the rail

Ten (10) Point Penalties

- Loss of rein
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise while on pattern or during rail work
- Holding saddle with either hand
- Spurring or use of the crop in front of girth
- Blatant disobedience including kicking, pawing, bucking, and rearing

Disqualifications

- Failure to display correct number
- Abuse of horse or schooling
- Fall by horse or exhibitor
- Illegal equipment or illegal use of hands on the reins
- Use of prohibited equipment
- Off pattern, including knocking over or wrong side of cone or maker; never performing designated gait or lead; over or under turning more than ¼ turn

English and Western Pleasure

Pattern

Exhibitors will be judged according to Hunter Under Saddle, Western Pleasure, Ranch Rail Pleasure, or Non-Trotting Pleasure 2-gait rules, as appropriate for their respective division.

Barrel Racing

Exhibitors should have tack and attire in accordance with [Speed Events rules](#).

Exhibitors will complete the cloverleaf barrel racing pattern at the walk or trot in accordance with [Barrel Racing rules](#).

Trail

Tack and attire may be of any discipline or seat and exhibitors will be judged according to the rules set forward in the [Western Trail division](#).

The pattern shall be no less than 3 and no more than 5 obstacles.

Mandatory obstacles are ground poles and a backing element.

Optional obstacles include maneuvering through cones, turning in a box, and crossing a bridge.

Dressage

Tack and attire may be of any discipline or seat and exhibitors will be judged according to the rules set forward in the [Dressage Manual](#).

Exhibitors have the option of riding either USDF 2019 Intro Test A or WDAA Intro Level Test 2. Gaited horses may exhibit and substitute a pleasure gait for the trot or jog where called for.

Costume

[Refer to the Costume rules](#).

Adaptive Division

Overview

To provide an educational and therapeutic opportunity for physically or mentally handicapped 4-H members to demonstrate their horsemanship skills. To qualify for this division, the rider must have been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability, cognitive delays as measured by formal assessment, physical disability, or significant learning or vocational problems due to cognitive delay that require or have required specially designed instruction. Persons whose functional limitations are based solely on a physical, behavioral, or emotional disability, or a specific learning or sensory disability, are generally not eligible to participate in this division.

General Rules

Exhibitors in this division must meet the following requirements:

- They must be eligible members in a 4-H adaptive riding program. Participation is to be verified by an agent. The minimum participation age is 8.
- They are not eligible to participate in classes other than those offered in the Adaptive Riding Division.
- All classes offered under this division are invitational. Previous qualification at a qualifying show is not required. Divisional championships will be awarded.
- They are exempt from the management and ownership of project animals. Show management reserves the right to approve the suitability of all animals entered in this division.
- [They will submit a medical information form \(TRD-1\), a Parent Release form \(TRD-2\), and the Therapeutic Riding Division Form \(TRD-3\).](#)
- Riders with Downs Syndrome may not compete if they have a positive diagnosis for atlantoaxial subluxation or atlantoaxial instability.
- Aides may not give commands to the rider or the mount nor provide extra physical prompting, except in case of emergency. Special consideration, however, will be given to the visually impaired, hearing impaired, or severely disabled rider.
- Riders will be ranked in 1st through 10th places, depending on class entries as described in this manual. Class winners will receive an award and ribbon. Second-through tenth-place winners will receive ribbons.

Appointments

Tack

Riders are encouraged to use [appropriate tack and wear correct riding apparel](#). Style of tack is optional. Adaptive equipment may be used, **but in no way may the rider be attached to the horse or saddle**. Safety stirrups are advised.

Clothing

Jeans or other long pants and hard-soled shoes or boots are acceptable. Attire must be neat. Tank tops and halter-tops are not permitted by riders, horse handlers, or side walkers. Sneakers or other soft-soled shoes may be worn only with written permission of a physician.

Special Equipment

Riders and their respective club leaders are responsible for assuring that proper and safe special equipment, such as a mounting ramp, etc., is on hand to facilitate safe mounting procedures at all shows.

Riders will enter the arena mounted in all performance classes.

Levels

In riding classes, the following will be offered as separate levels. Riders are not permitted to cross-enter riding levels.

- Level 1
 - Riders require a horse handler and one to two side walkers. A horse handler is an individual who is positioned at the horse's head for safety. The side walkers may assist the rider during mounting and dismounting.
- Level 2
 - Riders require a horse handler during the trotting phase of the class only. The use of a side walker is optional.
- Level 3
 - Riders must ride independently. Assistance is prohibited. Unauthorized assistance will be penalized at the judge's discretion.

Class Routines

Showmanship

Exhibitors will be judged on their ability to exhibit a horse in accordance with [showmanship rules in this manual](#).

Entries will be judged solely on showmanship ability. Factors like grooming and trimming will not be considered.

Exhibitors in wheelchairs may exhibit with the assistance of a side walker pushing the wheelchair. Only the exhibitor, however, may use the lead shank to control the horse. Unnecessary assistance from the side walker that directly affects the control of the horse will be penalized by the judge.

Special considerations may be made depending upon medical information submitted on the [TRD-1 form](#).

The same horse may compete in this class more than once with different exhibitors.

Walk Only Equitation

This class will be offered for all three levels. Each rider's equitation will be judged on position, balance, use of natural aids, and control of the mount. Emphasis will be placed on each rider's ability to safely and independently control the horse.

Riders may be accompanied by horse handlers and one or two side walkers in Levels 1 and 2. Handlers and side walkers may assist only to assure the rider's safety. Continued or unnecessary assistance from aides will be penalized by the judge in all levels.

Riders will enter the arena at a walk in a counterclockwise direction. At the direction of the announcer, riders will walk, reverse at a walk, walk; stop; back. Riders will perform only at the walk.

Walk-Trot Equitation

This class will be offered for all three levels. Each rider's equitation will be judged on position, balance, use of natural aids, and control of the mount. Emphasis will be placed on each rider's ability to safely and independently control the horse.

Riders may be accompanied by horse handlers and one or two side walkers in Levels 1 and 2. Handlers and side walkers may assist only to assure the rider's safety. Continued or unnecessary assistance from aides will be penalized by the judge in all levels.

Riders will enter the arena at a walk in a counterclockwise direction. At the direction of the announcer, riders will walk, jog or trot, reverse at a walk, walk, jog or trot; stop; back. Riders will perform at the sitting trot, posting trot or jog as preferred.

Trail

This class will be offered for all three levels.

This class will be judged according to the Trail rules in the [Western Divisions Section](#), with the exception of rules that pertain to tack, attire, and its use.

Drill Team

Overview

The drill team competition will be a freestyle drill competition that is invitational at the State 4-H Horse Show. There is no qualification requirement at the district level, however all participants must have successfully submitted an eligibility card for the horse they will be exhibiting.

Appointments

Riders may perform in western, hunter, dressage, or saddle seat tack and appointments, however all riders must be in the same style of appointments, not a combination of different appointments (ex: all in western style tack and attire). All riders must wear helmets.

Personal Appointments

Required:

- Helmet, shirt with a collar, pants, boots.
- All riders on the team must wear their individual back number either affixed to both sides of the saddle pad or on their back.

Optional:

- Matching costumes, tack, or equipment.
- All adornments used must first be safe and shall not interfere with the ability of the horses or riders to see or perform safely and must be safely attached or fastened. A judge may penalize anything that they deem unsafe at their discretion.

Tack and Equipment

Required: All tack and equipment must follow one of the following division rules: speed events, western, ranch, hunter, dressage, non-trotting. [Refer to the tack and equipment section of the rulebook.](#)

Acceptable Optional Equipment

- Leg wraps
- Decorative tack and equipment that does not interfere with safety such as matching saddle blankets, breast collars, braids and ribbons, etc.
- Flags are optional. There is no size requirement for flags, but they should safely be of a size that will not interfere with the rider or equine's vision and action. It is mandatory that some form of flag holder must be attached to the stirrup for holding flags. Flag poles must be capped or have a secured topper.
- Crops or whips are permitted with huntseat or saddleseat appointments.

Prohibited Equipment

- The use of props other than flags.
- The use of obstacles within the arena.

Teams and Divisions

General

All riders must be North Carolina 4-H club members or members at large and in good standing.

Teams may be any combination of junior and senior riders. Cloverbuds are not permitted to participate in drill.

All members of the team must be actively involved in the entire drill.

A horse and rider combination may only participate in one drill event.

All riders must be seated in the tack at all times (no bareback or trick riding).

Divisions

- Green Small Team
 - Consists of 2-4 riders who compete at the walk and trot/gait only.
- Green Large Team
 - Consists of 5- 12 riders who compete at the walk and trot/gait only
- Small Drill Team
 - Consists of 2-4 riders who compete at the walk, trot/gait, and canter
- Large Drill Team
 - Consists of 5 -16 riders who compete at the walk, trot/gait, and canter

Class Routines

The show office will provide an assigned order of go. If at any point the judge(s) deem the performance to be unsafe, they are permitted to stop the performance and excuse the team. Space requirements: The space in which all maneuvers are to be executed shall be a maximum size of 224'x134' (the size of the outdoor arena) and no smaller than 240'x120' (size of the covered arena). The perimeter may be marked by cones or other suitable temporary markers immediately prior to the performance and removed immediately following the performance.

Schooling

Each team will be assigned a designated 15-minute schooling time in the competition space prior to the start of the event.

Music

Music is optional and must be provided by each drill team and formatted to how it is to be played. It is not the responsibility of the sound system operator to start and stop music at specific intervals. Music should reflect theme and be 4-H appropriate with no profanity and shall be submitted electronically according to the specifications on the entry form.

Performance and Timing

Each team is to develop their own drill. No obstacle shall be permitted within the drill team pattern area, interactive with the drill team.

Time begins when the first horse enters the arena and ends when the last horse exits the arena. If a salute is included in the routine, it must be at the end, and time will end with the salute.

Time requirements:

- Maximum of 8 minutes
- Incremental penalty points will begin for a drill lasting longer than 8 minutes. Any maneuvers or components of the drill occurring after the 8-minute mark has been passed will not be included with final scoring.

Signals from a mounted member may be used including hand, voice, or whistle commands. Please refer to the [NC 4-H Horse Program Drill Team Manual](#) for guidance on drill maneuvers and safely developing a routine.

Scoring

Each team will be scored up to 650 maximum points. The highest scoring team, regardless of division, shall be invited to perform their routine at the opening ceremonies on Friday evening.

In the event of a tie, the team with the least number of penalties will be placed higher. If both teams have no (or equal) penalties, the team with the highest number of points in the horsemanship category shall be the first tiebreaker, and the presentation category being the second tiebreaker

Scoring shall be based on execution, performance and manners of horses, content of drill, presentation, degree of difficulty, horsemanship, and general impression. Smoothness of maneuvers and pace consistent throughout the drill will be important. Lines should be straight and circles should be evenly rounded and centered. Basic horsemanship, equitation, and horse manners as a group will be judged.

Refer to the [NC 4-H Horse Program Drill Team Manual](#) for more thorough information on judging criteria.

Penalties

Disqualification

- Drill exceeds 10 minutes
- Fall by horse or rider
- Any action deemed unsafe by judge
- Illegal tack or equipment

50-point penalties

- Drill exceeds 9 ½ minutes but less than 10 minutes
- Incorrect flag protocol (refer to Drill Team Handbook) (per occurrence)
- Dropped flag (per occurrence)
- Regroup

25-point penalties

- Drill exceeds 9 minutes but less than 9 ½ minutes
- Outside coaching/giving direction (per occurrence)

20-point penalties

- Failure to show all required gaits

10-point penalties

- Harsh correction of horse (jerking reins, spurring harshly, etc.) (per occurrence)
- Bump contact (per occurrence)
- Exceeding a trot in the green division (per occurrence)
- Excessively out of position (one or more riders out of position during a maneuver or transition) (per rider, per occurrence)
- Broken tack, dropped item, costume failure (per occurrence)
- Drill exceeds 8 ½ minutes but less than 9 minutes

5-point penalties

- Drill exceeds 8 minutes but less than 8 ½ minutes

Maneuvers, Flag Etiquette, Safety, and Training

At all times correctness of protocol and maneuvers shall be desired over speed. [Refer to the Drill Team Handbook.](#)

Miniature Division

Overview

This division is for miniature horses and is an invitational division. Participants do not have to qualify at a qualifying show to participate. A miniature horse shall be considered to be 38" and under when measured at the withers. Horses must not be less than 3 years of age for miniature hunter. Miniature horses are eligible to compete in other in-hand or showmanship classes in other disciplines if they have appropriately qualified. Juniors and Seniors will exhibit in the same class. There is not a high point award for this division.

Appointments

Exhibitors can be attired [western, English, or hunter](#), but no combination thereof. Tennis shoes are permitted to be worn by the exhibitor in the hunter class.

Classes

Miniature Halter

All Horses are to be shown in hand at the walk and trot and must also be viewed from the side, front, and rear. They will be judged on the priority of conformation, quality, presence, way of going, and type. Horses are not to be shown stretched, meaning that all four feet are flat on the ground and at least one front and one rear cannon bone remain perpendicular to the ground. Horses must be shown in a halter and can be western, English, or hunter, but no combination thereof.

Showmanship

To be judged according to [showmanship rules](#).

Obstacle

To be judged on performance and way of going with emphasis on manners throughout the course. Horses should be responsive and willing with a positive attitude.

The course shall be a minimum of five and maximum of eight obstacles. A sixty-second limit is set to complete each obstacle. After time is used, the exhibitor will be directed to the next obstacle. Refusals of three obstacles shall be cause for disqualification. All obstacles shall be safe for exhibitors and horses.

Stair steps, tires, and jumps are prohibited. Baiting of horses to perform obstacles is cause of disqualification (use of treats or food rewards). Obstacles may range from backing up, bridges, 360-degree turn box, side passing, serpentines, picking up an item, or anything else deemed appropriate and safe.

Disqualifications:

- Refusal of three obstacles
- Off course

Hunter

Hunters are judged on style and form over fences, manners, way of going, and pace, in that order. They are not scored by faults nor by time. Judges must penalize unsafe jumping (charging, refusals, etc.) and poor form over fences. Circling once upon entering and exiting the ring is permissible. Horses may perform at a brisk trot or canter but should maintain the same gait throughout the course.

There shall be a minimum of four obstacles and horses must make a minimum of six jumps and a maximum of eight jumps. All jumps will be set based on the course provided and will be a minimum of 20 feet apart. Jumps will be set at a height no greater than 24" at the discretion of the judge and show management based on ring conditions. Jumps must have ground poles.

Minor faults scored by the judge based on severity:

- Light touch of an obstacle
- Hesitation before jumping (not a refusal)
- Excessively slow or fast pace
- Changes of gait for 1-2 strides
- Kicking
- Spooking or shying

Major faults (cannot be placed above horses with clean rounds or minor faults only):

- Circling while on course
- Knockdown of any part of an obstacle
- Refusals
- Showing obstacle to the horse

Elimination (not to be placed)

- Three refusals
- Off course
- Crossing your own path
- Unsoundness
- Jumping obstacle before it is reset
- Fall of horse or exhibitor
- Jumping of an obstacle by exhibitor
- Carrying a whip
- Baiting of horses (using a food reward to get them to jump)

Costume

Judging to be based upon the originality to the costume as evidenced in the exhibitor's attire and horse's tack and equipment.



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Updated February 2026

Hippology Contest

Objectives

- To provide participants with the opportunity to blend knowledge and skills acquired in horse judging, horse bowl, presentations, public speaking, and showing into one activity.
- To encourage participants to continue expanding their horse knowledge and participation.
- To recognize participants for their total involvement in the horse industry and their comprehensive knowledge of the horse industry.
- To teach good sportsmanship through a friendly and competitive environment.

Eligibility

Members

Any Cloverbud, Junior, or Senior 4-H member is eligible to participate in the 4-H Hippology Contest. Participants do not need to own a horse. A 4-Her is eligible for the Junior/Senior Rookie division if they are in their first year competing in hippology. The Rookie division is for individual competitors only.

Teams

Each county is eligible to enter any number of Junior or Senior teams of three or four members in the state contest. The total individual scores for the three high team members will constitute the team score and be used in determining team awards. Individual entries will be accepted. All participants in the contest will be eligible for individual awards or recognition.

Ages

Senior teams will be composed of participants who have reached age 14 and have not reached age 19 as of January 1. Junior teams are composed of members who have not yet reached age 14 as of January 1.

Prior Participation

Members of the champion team in the Junior or Senior (who were not selected to participate on the state team) divisions will be eligible to compete on future teams in that division as long as they meet the age and educational eligibility requirements. Members of the state team selected from the Senior Division and participating at the National 4-H Roundup will be ineligible to participate as individuals or members on any future county hippology teams.

Winning Individuals

Each highest-ranking overall Junior and Senior individual will be designated Horseman-of-the-Year. The winning Senior individual will be ineligible to compete in future North Carolina 4-H hippology contests.

Regulations

Conferring between Individuals

While the contest is in progress, there will be no conferring between participants or between a participant and anyone else except as directed by the chairman or his representatives. Failure to abide by this regulation will result in disqualification of the participant. Participants may speak to their group leader if they have any questions or problems.

Registration Fee

Each team or individual may be required to pay a registration fee. Check the entry form for details. Any entry form not completed in its entirety will be returned to the sender. Any entry form resubmitted after the deadline date may be assessed a late fee. In the event that late entries are prohibited, no late entries will be accepted.

Judging Phase

The classes will be at the discretion of the officials and may include halter and performance classes. The horses in each class will be of the same breed, sex, and approximate age. The showman of each horse shall wear a number for identification purposes. Classes will be selected from the list in the [Judging Contest](#) rules. In addition, any available light horse breed could be used in halter or performance classes. Fifty points shall constitute a perfect score for each class. Judges will be used to make the official placing on each class. Official placings will be given on completion of the contest.

1. Junior and Senior Rookie - one (1) halter, one (1) performance, with both classes multiplied two times for a total of 200 points
2. Junior and Senior - four (4) classes of a combination of halter and performance for a total of 200 points

Visual Identification/Slide IDs

Participants will visually identify items such as breeds, colors, parasites, anatomy, color patterns, horse activities, tack, feedstuffs, and horse-related equipment. These Identification items will be in the form of projected slides and will be in the form of a multiple-choice question with one correct answer.

1. Junior Rookie -20 IDs worth 80 points (will be combined with stations ID slide for a total of 100 points)
2. Senior Rookie - 40 IDs worth 80 points (will be combined with stations ID slide for a total of 100 points)
3. Junior - 25 IDs worth 100 points
4. Senior - 50 IDs worth 100 points

Written Exam

A written exam shall be given separately to Rookie Juniors, Rookie Seniors, Juniors and Seniors. Questions will consist of horse nutrition, health, breeding, management, genetics, horsemanship, and North Carolina 4-H Horse Program rules and regulations. The exam consists of multiple choice, matching, and true/false questions.

1. Junior Rookie -25 questions worth 100 points
2. Senior Rookie - 50 questions worth 100 points
3. Junior - 25 questions worth 100 points
4. Senior - 50 questions worth 100 points

Stations

This phase will consist of a series of stations or tables (or slides, if virtual) where at each, all contestants will respond to the requirements of the station. Examples of stations which might be used include: identification of tack, breeds, tools, feedstuffs, etc.; use of pulse rate, respiration rate, temperature, dehydration, anemia, etc. to assess horse health; measurements such as, but not limited to, wither height, shoe size, girth, collar size, gullet width, seat length of saddle, etc. may be required. Each contestant will have two (2) minutes to complete each station. For the Rookie Divisions, additional slides will be added to the end of the identification portion that are designed in this same fashion.

1. Junior Rookie - 1 station slide with 5 questions - 20 points (will be combined with ID score for a total of 100 points and counts towards ID score)
2. Senior Rookie - 2 station slides with 10 questions - 20 points (will be combined with ID score for a total of 100 points and counts towards ID score)
3. Junior - 10 stations with 10 questions each - 200 points
4. Senior - 10 stations with 10 questions each - 200 points

Team Problem

For junior and senior teams only. All teams within their division will be presented with the same problem. Each team will be given ten minutes to prepare, organize, and present their team problem. The team will be required to present an oral solution or series of suggested procedures related to the problem. Each member of each team should contribute to the oral presentation. The official may ask questions of any or all of the team members to clarify the presentation. Examples of possible team problems might include:

- Balancing a horse's ration.
- Farm management recommendations for specific, (i.e., breeding, training, boarding, nursery, lay-up, etc.) horse operations.
- Considerations for the establishment of a new horse facility
- Recommendations for selecting, locating and purchasing horses for specific uses
- Behavior problems-causes, management of and corrections.
- Explanation of use or assembly of specific equipment.
- Demonstrate skill or ability to use specific equipment.

Evaluation will be based on the understanding of the problem, completeness of the logic used, and presentation and participation of all teammates in presenting the oral response.

Participants will be given 10 minutes to prepare and present. Team members are permitted to have a basic method of timing (stopwatch, standard watch, etc.). The team problem will be worth 100 points.

Team problem scores will not be included in determining the rank of individuals in the contest but will be added to the team scores of the other three phases to determine overall team standing.

Scoring

Total individual scores will consist of combined scores from the horse judging classes, visual identification, written exams, and stations. Ties will be broken according to the following priorities:

1. Tie in Exam/ID: Higher Exam Score is TB#1; Higher ID Score is TB #2; Higher Stations Score is TB#3
2. Tie in Horse Judging: Higher Overall Score is TB#1; Higher combined Exam/ID Score is TB#2; Higher Exam/ID Score plus Halter Classes Total is TB#3
3. Tie in Stations: Higher Overall Score is TB#1; Higher Exam/ID score is TB#2; Higher Judging Score is TB#3
4. Tie in Overall: All ties overall, individual and team, will be broken using the following sequence: 1. Examination/ID scores 2. Station scores 3. Judging scores

Team scores will include the three highest individual scores plus the team problem score.

Awards and Recognition

The final results of the contest will be announced, and awards will be presented following the contest.

Junior (8-10 and 11-13) and Senior (14-18) Division Top Ten Individual Awards

1. Judging
2. Stations
3. Exam-Identification
4. Overall
 - a. The highest scoring Senior Individual will be named the 4-H Horseman-of-the-Year.
 - b. The second highest scoring Senior Individual will be named the Reserve 4-H Horseman-of-the-Year.

Junior (8-13) and Senior (14-18) Rookie Division Top Ten Individual Awards

1. Overall

Junior and Senior Team Awards

1. Team Problem (1st-6th)
2. Overall (1st-10th)

All contest tabulations will be declared official at the awards ceremony. If errors are found in the event tabulations within 24 hours from the award announcement, the youth who received the award incorrectly will return the award, which will then be awarded to the correct youth.

State Team Selection

Representation

An All-Star team composed of the high-scoring Senior individuals from the Senior Division will be tested to determine the state team and will represent North Carolina in national and regional competitions.

In the event a high Senior Hippology individual also is a high individual in the State Judging Contest or Horse Bowl Contest within the same year, that individual will have one week after completion of the State Horse Judging Contest to declare the event(s) in which he or she wishes to represent North Carolina at national contests.

The state Extension specialist will designate the next high-ranking individuals in the other contest(s) to represent North Carolina at nationals.

Expenses

The state is not responsible for providing expense money or transportation to the national contest but will attempt to assist.

Coach

The coach of the high-scoring Senior team will be designated the coach of the state 4-H Hippology team.

Special Assistant Coach

If appointed by the state committee, a special assistant coach will accomplish the following:

- Orient the coach to national rules and event procedures.
- Assist in the training, transportation, and management of both Hippology teams in national competition.
- Identify and secure funding before the State 4-H Hippology Contest, and assist the Hippology team coach, county agents, and team members with fund-raising projects.

Suggested References

The materials listed on the NC Horse Program Website are resources for the NC State 4-H Hippology contest: [Reference Books for Horsebowl & Hippology | NC State Extension](#)

It should be clearly understood that this listing does not constitute an official endorsement of these materials. The publications are typically marketed by veterinary supply companies.

For additional information consult the **NC 4-H Awards Handbook**: [North Carolina 4-H | NC State Extension](#)

Horse Bowl Contest

Objectives

- To offer an opportunity for young people interested in horses to display the knowledge they have gained in a competitive and friendly atmosphere. To encourage participants to continue expanding their horse knowledge and participation.
- To encourage youth and leaders to study and obtain a more thorough and complete knowledge of horses and related subject matter. Youth will gain confidence in their horse knowledge and be rewarded and recognized for their achievements. Local club, county, or inter-county competition is encouraged whenever feasible.
- To always provide an enjoyable educational experience for participants and spectators.

For anything not addressed in these rules, the rules for the [Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup Horse Bowl Contest](#) will be followed.

Eligibility

Members

Any Cloverbud, Junior, or Senior 4-H member is eligible to participate in the 4-H Horse Bowl Contest. Each contestant must be an actual 4-H club member approved by his or her county Extension office and horse club leader. Participants are not required to own a horse to participate.

Contestants may participate in only one division and on one team in a given year.

Members of 4-H are not eligible to participate in a regional or state contest if they have completed a secondary education course (college, community college, or technical school) related to Horse Bowl Contest subject matter.

Teams

If no district qualification is held, each county will be eligible to enter any number of Junior and Senior teams in the state contest. Mixed teams will be limited to two teams per county. Each team must have four eligible members. All team members must be present at the team seeding.

Ages

- Senior teams will be composed of participants who have reached age 14 and have not reached age 19 as of January 1.
- Junior teams are composed of members who have not yet reached age 14 as of January 1.
- A mixed team must contain at least two Junior members and one Senior member always seated in competition and may not have more than two Seniors seated at any time. (It is strongly encouraged that mixed division teams consist of at least two Junior members and two Senior members.)

Prior Participation

Members of the champion team in the Senior or Mixed division who were not selected to participate on the national team, will be eligible to compete on future teams in that division as long as they meet the age and educational eligibility requirements. Members of the state team selected from the Senior and Mixed divisions and participating at the National 4-H Roundup or Quarter Horse Congress will be ineligible to participate as members on any future county horse bowl teams.

Winning Individuals

The winning state team from the previous year will be eligible to assist as scorers and doorkeepers in the Junior or Mixed division of the current year at a regional or state contest.

District Qualification

Two state qualification procedures may be used at district contests:

1. District Elimination System

- A. District contests will use a double-elimination system to select the state qualified teams. The top two teams from each of the 5 districts will advance to the state contest.
- B. A total of 10 Junior, 10 Mixed and 10 Senior Division teams are eligible to compete in the State 4-H Horse Bowl Contest
- C. If there are remaining slots, in each division, for the State 4-H Horse Bowl contest will be selected based on the total points scored and win: loss ratio from the district qualifying contest.

2. No District Elimination System

- A. State contest competition will offer double elimination to an unlimited number of district qualified Junior and mixed division teams.
- B. Senior division competition will be open to an unlimited number of district qualified teams in a double-elimination competition.

Team members, including alternates, registered on a given team at the district event, cannot be substituted before or during the state contest. The same team members, including alternates who are entered at the district event, must compete at the State Horse Bowl Contest. Coaches will assign team members to specific chairs by the time of the coach's

meeting. Members must remain in those chairs, except for the alternate, for the duration of the contest.

Equipment

Game Panels: An appropriate device will be used that will provide a clear indication of the first participant to respond to a question.

Time Recorders: A stopwatch or other appropriate timing device will be required.

Scorekeeping Devices: Two devices will be needed.

1. Chalkboard, flip chart, or electronic light display, will be used to maintain team scores. It will be visible to the participants and, if possible, to the spectators.
2. A method to record individual participant scores.

Equipment Failure

1. It shall be the responsibility of each participant to ensure that all equipment is operating correctly at the start of the match.
2. If failure occurs during a match, the following rules apply:
 - A. If the device being used ceases to function during a match or is believed to be malfunctioning, a time-out may be called by any participant, the moderator, or coach.
 - B. If, after checking, it is determined that there is an equipment malfunction, the faulty part or parts will be replaced and play will be resumed.
 - C. Scores accumulated up to the point of the time-out shall stand, and all further points awarded during the remainder of the match will be added to or subtracted from this total.
 - D. If both referee judges or one referee judge and the moderator deem it advisable, points awarded for the two questions asked immediately before the determination of equipment failure may be recalled, and two additional questions used.
 - E. Under no conditions shall there be a replay of a match in which equipment failure occurred.

Officials

Moderator (Quiz Person)

The moderator shall assume complete direction of the game, ask all questions, and designate participants to answer questions. The moderator will accept all answers that are the same or mean the same as the expected answer to the question. Any answers different than the expected answer will be referred to the judge's panel, who will make the decision to accept or reject the given answer. The moderator also serves as the 3rd judge. The moderator shall indicate when a participant has exceeded the allocated time for a question. The moderator will declare the game winner and shall always be in control of the games. The moderator must be an adult, older than age 19.

Referee Judges

At least two referee judges shall be used. Referee judges must be knowledgeable horsemen with strong backgrounds in management, training, nutrition, physiology, showing, or veterinary medicine. The referee judges may rule individually or jointly on the acceptability of any question or answer. In cases of challenges to questions or answers, either both referee judges or one referee judge and the moderator must agree on the acceptability or rejection of any question or answer. When there is only one judge, both the judge and the moderator must agree on actions to be taken. The judge must be an adult who is older than age 19.

If an answer was not clearly heard, the contestant may be asked to repeat their answer. If a question was read to completion, and the answer given is different than the one expected, if it is technically or logically correct it may be accepted. If the answer given is "in the ball park", the judges may request the contestant to be more specific, expand, explain, or clarify their answer. If the question was interrupted, the judges may not ask for any kind of clarification. The answer is either correct or incorrect according to the way the question was written.

All answers given must be correct for the way the question is written. An answer may be correct for a portion heard of a question that was interrupted, but wrong for the way the question was written. The judges may not ask any questions, and the answer will be counted as a wrong answer. If the answer is correct for the way the question was written, it will be accepted.

All the game questions will have a reference code and page number. The required reference books will be available to look up information or to verify answers.

Timekeeper/Control Operator

At least one individual shall be used to indicate to the moderator the expiration of the time allowed to respond to a question. A referee judge may serve as timekeeper or the Moderator may use an automated system within the buzzer panel.

It will also be their responsibility at the beginning of the match to assure each contestant that their equipment is working properly.

Scorekeeper

At least two individuals shall be used to keep score for each contest. The individual maintaining team scores shall do so in such a manner that all points awarded or taken from each team may be checked and that the scores are clearly visible to the moderator and to the participants. The second scorekeeper shall be used to maintain a record of the individual from each team that answers a question correctly.

Scores will be verified as accurate at the completion of the one-on-one questions and again, at the completion of each round. In addition, the coach from each team will need to sign the score sheet upon completion of each round indicating they agree

with the final scores.

Questions

Sources of Questions

Restrictions placed on the sources of materials used for developing questions for the Junior, Mixed or Senior divisions, dictate that all questions are drawn from the references located on the 4-H Horse Program Web Site at: [Reference Books for Horse Bowl & Hippology | NC State Extension](#)

It should be clearly understood that this listing does not constitute an official endorsement of these materials. The publications are typically marketed by veterinary supply companies.

No source of information is infallible. At times there may be answers given that are in agreement with the recommended reference books, which in fact are erroneous or out of date. Every effort is made to eliminate such questions, however, in the event one slips in, the judges may agree to:

1. Accept the answer and explain the correct or up-to-date information, for future use of the question.
2. Accept only the correct answer.
3. Replace the question for the appropriate contestants.

Submissions

Every year, each county wishing to participate in District Horse Bowl contests should review the [4-H Horse Program Horse Bowl Contest Web Page](#) to see if question submission to the State Office is required or optional in order to be eligible to participate.

Questions must come from the approved sources and will come from the following categories:

1. Anatomy
2. Breeds and breed organizations
3. Diseases and unsoundness
4. Genetics
5. History and evolution
6. Nutrition
7. Showing, show procedures and other mounted activities
8. Physiology and reproduction
9. Psychology, training, and vices
10. Parasites
11. Tack and equipment
12. Trivia
13. Judging and conformation

Arrangement/Question Types

All questions shall be arranged in game packets consisting of 32 total questions per match.

One-On-One (12 questions)

- The first 12 questions of the match will be one-on-one questions worth two (2) points for correct answers and minus one (-1) for incorrect answers. The points will count toward individual and team scores.
- One-on-one questions shall be addressed to only one member of each team, beginning with the contestants in the #1 chairs (nearest to control operator) on either team and progressing with subsequent questions going to the contestants in the #2 chairs, #3 chairs, #4 chairs, respectively, until the one-on-one questions are completed. There will be an equal number of one-on-one questions per contestant per match.
- The moderator shall clearly indicate the start of one-on-one play by announcing the chair number of the contestants eligible to respond, prior to reading the question.

Toss-Up/Open (17 total questions)

- After the conclusion of the one-on-one questions, toss-up/open questions will be asked. They are worth one (1) point and are open for response to any member of either team.
- The toss-up question is used in the OPEN part of the match. If there is a correct answer to the toss-up question, a bonus question might be attached (the moderator will announce which questions have bonuses attached before the toss-up question is read).
- Toss-up questions are generally a little more difficult than one-on-one questions and may have two or three required answers or consist of multiple parts. All answers are required to be correct.
- The points will count toward individual and team scores. All incorrect answers receive a (-1) deduction.

Bonus (3 questions)

- Bonus questions will be worth three (3) points.
- They are attached to a correctly answered toss-up questions in the open part of the match. Bonus questions are typically questions 16, 21, and 25.
- Multiple answers are usually required, and three (3) points will be awarded if ALL the required answers are correct. No points will be awarded or taken away if there is less than the required number of answers, or if there are no correct answers.
- No part of the bonus questions will be repeated, nor will any additional information be given to the contestants related to the question.
- These points will count toward team scores only. Bonus question points will not be included in individual scores.

- A. A bonus question attached to an unanswered or incorrectly answered toss-up question will be transferred to the next regular open question. (which becomes the new toss-up question), until a correct answer is given.
- B. The team should allow the moderator to read the complete question. The team will be given ten (10) seconds to confer. The acknowledger will call time at the end of ten (10) seconds. The team captain or designee must then start giving the required number of answers within five (5) seconds. Team members may give answers to the captain/designee during the 30-second answering period.
- C. If the match ends with an unanswered bonus question, the bonus question will not be utilized.

Teams

Each team shall consist of four participants and teams may also have an alternate. Only four (4) contestants shall be seated at the panel at any one time. Seat position must be declared prior to competition and youth must remain in this seat for the duration of the entire contest. The only exception is when an alternate replaces a seated player during a match or the competition.

The alternate shall not be seated at the panel, nor may the alternate participate in the questions and answers unless:

- The moderator deems it impossible for one of the regular members of the team to continue in the contest
- The captain or coach of a team requests the replacement of a team member with an alternate.

If an alternate is seated following the removal of a regular participant, the team member removed becomes the alternate and becomes ineligible to return to that game. The team member that was removed and the alternate remain eligible to participate in further games. The use of an alternate team member is strongly recommended.

Members removed from the game table for disciplinary reasons, may not come back to any more matches in the competition.

Each team member and coach participating in the state competition will receive an identification tag indicating his or her name, county, and team name.

Counties with multiple team entries in the same age division cannot be matched against each other in the first round. County teams with conflicts must redraw for seeding. In the event teams are unable to redraw for seeding, the contest coordinator will modify the original seeding order accordingly.

Order of Team Play and Holding Rooms

Team captains or coaches will randomly draw numbers to be seated in the contest. A predetermined modified bye system may be used in determining the district representatives for the state contest. In the event that more than one team from the same county is participating in a division, those teams shall draw numbers first to ensure they do not play each other in the first round.

If a tie exists in selecting the highest scoring losing team, the team with the smallest losing margin will be used.

Double-elimination brackets will be used in all Divisions. A total of two losses will automatically eliminate a team from the competition.

After the round is completed, all teams/alternates and the coach (not eliminated from the contest) must return to the designated holding area to await their next match.

All coaches in the holding area are responsible for supervision of the teams. These rules are a matter of ethics and require the cooperation of all team members and coaches. Holding rooms will be for the team and coaches only– no parents in the holding area.

Spectators, team members, and coaches who have heard the questions being used in each round may not consult with teams that will be participating in succeeding games in that round.

Using cameras, video recorders, tape recorders and writing questions are prohibited during a match. Photographs will be permitted only before and after a match.

No cell phones are allowed in the competition area. Cell phones will be confiscated.

Match Procedures/Starting the Contest

1. Teams are assembled and seated at their respective panels, with the designated team captain seated in the #1 chair, nearest to the middle or the moderator. Each contestant is given the opportunity to check the equipment. Each participant must have a visible tag denoting their name and team title. It is recommended that team members introduce themselves to the scorekeeper(s).
2. All team members will have a participation bonus card facing the contestant. They will be blank to the score keepers until that contestant gives a correct response to a question. At that time the card will be turned around to face the scorekeepers.
3. One coach per team will be designated as the match coach. Additional coaches will not be eligible to communicate with the moderator or judges during protests.

4. The designated set of questions for each round is opened by the moderator and verified with the judges' panel and referee before starting the game. Prior to reading a question, the moderator will announce the number, type of question and the contestants eligible to respond. Each succeeding question will be read in this manner, until all of the questions for that match are read. The correct answer will be given for all unanswered questions or wrong answers.
5. All participants must wait for verbal acknowledgment from the moderator before answering a question. Failure to wait for verbal acknowledgment after activating the buzzer will result in an automatic incorrect answer and subsequent reduction of points.
6. Contestants who respond to a question will receive the appropriate points applied to a question. Appropriate penalties will be deducted as warranted.
7. During one-on-one questions, if any participants other than the two designated participants respond, that individual will lose 2 points; and the team of that individual participant will lose 2 points.

If any participant responds more than twice to questions directed to another participant, he or she will be replaced at the panel by the alternate. If no alternate is available, the remainder of the match will be played with less than the full team, and all questions normally addressed to the eliminated participant will be addressed only to the opposing participant.
8. If the time (five (5) seconds) in which to answer a question elapses, and a contestant has not activated the buzzer, there shall be no loss or awarding of points to either team. After the response time has elapsed, the answer will be given, and the next question will be read.
9. If the buzzer is activated and an answer is not started within the five (5) second allowable time, there will be a minus two (-2) pt. penalty imposed against the contestant who activated the buzzer and their team. The first answer will be accepted as the official answer, including multiple response questions. Repeating the question will not be considered the initiation of the answer. If a question is read to completion, the judges may ask the contestant to explain, expand, be more specific, or clarify their answer.
10. If a question is interrupted during the reading of it, the moderator will stop reading as soon as the buzzer is activated. The contestant has five (5) seconds after being acknowledged to begin their answer. If the answer given is correct for the way the question was written, it will be accepted. If the answer given is correct only for the portion of the question heard, but wrong for the way the question was written, the answer will not be accepted. If the question is interrupted, the judges will not be allowed to ask for any clarification of the answer given.

11. If a question is answered incorrectly, the other team is not given the opportunity to answer the question. The correct answer will be given by the moderator, and the contest will continue with the next question.
12. There will be no consultation among the team members, nor will there be any coaching permitted by team members on one-on-one and toss-up questions. Failure to follow this rule will result in a 5-point penalty to the team committing the offense plus an automatic incorrect answer to that question (total of -6 points).
13. Either the team captain or the moderator may call for a time-out for clarification of a rule, to permit the alternate to participate, or to allow for unexpected problems. These time-outs may be called only after a question has been answered and before the start of the next toss-up question.
14. If the judges elect not to use a game question, it must be replaced by another question so that the total number of questions to be asked will remain equal in each match.
15. Any contestant, coach, family member, friends or spectators, exhibiting UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT OR BEHAVIOR OR ACTIONS DETRIMENTAL TO THE CONTEST will be subject to dismissal from the immediate contest area.

Completing the Contest

1. The moderator will continue reading one-on-one questions, toss-up/open questions, and bonus questions, if applicable, until all questions have been asked.
2. If a question is thrown out either because of poor reading by the moderator or a decision by the referee judges, it will be replaced by another question so that the same total number of questions will be asked.
3. Following the final questions, the team with the highest number of points shall be declared the winner of that game.
4. In the event of a tie in all divisions, after all toss-up questions have been read, the following match tie breakers will apply:
 - A. A match tie will be broken with five (5) tie breaker questions.
 - B. If a tie remains after the five (5) tie breaker questions the tie will be broken with "Sudden Death" play. In "Sudden Death" play an additional question(s) will be asked until the first change in the score (a point earned or loss of a point). The first team to achieve a higher score will be declared the winner of the match. "Sudden Death" questions will be selected from the extra questions provided for the contest.
5. Tie Breaker points do not get added to individual, team, or team bonus scores. They are only used to break match ties.

Time Outs

The team captain, coach or any staff member may call for a “time out” for clarification of a rule or score, to seat an alternate or to allow for an unexpected problem (i.e. illness of a team member). “Time outs” for a coach and team to discuss game strategy etc. is not permitted in this contest. “Time outs” may be called for only after a question has been answered and before the next question.

A “time out” for an unexpected problem may not exceed a 5-minute delay in the round of play. At that time the team member would be excused from the remainder of that round. If the team has an alternate (who has not already participated in the current round) they may replace the excused player. If there is no alternate, the remainder of the round will be played as a team of 3.

Scoring/Scorekeeping

Team Participation Bonus

To encourage full team participation, bonus points will be awarded to the first team of a match to have each team member correctly respond to at least one toss-up (or one on one) question. This bonus shall be worth 2 points. Teams may be awarded bonus points as many times as possible in a match.

- A. To obtain these bonus points, each member of the team seated at the time must have correctly answered a toss-up or one-on-one question. If a team member who already has answered a question correctly is replaced by an alternate, it will be necessary for the alternate to also answer a question correctly before the bonus points may be awarded.
- B. After awarding team bonus points, all cards from the team that earned the points are collected. The opposing team may keep their cards.
- C. Team bonus points will not be included in individual scores.

Summary of Horse Bowl Scoring

Action	Point Value
Correct answer: one-on-one question	+2
Correct answer: toss-up/open question	+1
Correct answer: bonus question-- All answers required	+3
Team participation: Four correct answers; each team member has correctly answered one question.	+2 (awarded as many times as earned in a match)
Incorrect answers: one-on-one or toss-up/open	-1
Incorrect answer: bonus question (any part of the answer is incorrect.)	0
Response penalty: No answer started in 5 seconds.	-2
Response penalty: Contestant not acknowledged.	-1
Response penalty: Out of turn	-2
Response penalty: Out of turn for second time in same match	-2
Response penalty: Out of turn more than twice in the same match	-2 and elimination from match
Response penalty: Out of turn third time in contest	-2 and elimination from the contest
"Official" protest not upheld	-1 (in addition to -1 for incorrect answer)
Consulting/Coaching among team members, on one-on-one and toss-up questions	-5 (in addition to -1 for incorrect answer)

Protest/Verification of Questions and/or Answers

1. Verification of a question and answer is permissible
2. Only protests that are made in a courteous, respectful manner will be acknowledged.
3. Protests must be made before the next question is read.
4. An "official" protest of a question or answer to a question may be called for by the team captain or coach. Either the team captain or the coach (not both individuals) must be able to immediately (within 2 minutes) show the judges where the information being protested can be found in a current reference. The judges and moderator will consider the protest. Their decision in all cases will be final.
5. If an "official" protest is acknowledged, play will be stopped, and the designated officials will consider the protest and make a decision. A (-1) point penalty will be assessed if the protest is not upheld. This (-1) penalty is in addition to the (-1) for the incorrect answer that was protested (total of -2 points).
6. To sustain a protest, at least two members of the designated judges' panel must agree, to keep or replace a question, or to determine the validity of an answer.
7. If the protest is sustained by the officials, the moderator and/or the score keepers will take one of the following actions:
 - A. If the question is determined by the officials to be a poor question, it will be replaced and open to a specific chair on each team or to all contestants seated at the game table, depending on the type of question (one-on-one or open).
 - B. If the answer to the question received a call for verification, the designated judges' panel will determine the validity of the answer. Points will then be awarded or subtracted as appropriate.
 - C. If a question was protested after an answer is given (either correct or incorrect), the designated judges panel will determine the validity of the protested question. If the validity of the question is allowed, points will be awarded or subtracted as appropriate. If not, the questions will be replaced.

Abuse of the Protest Provisions

Every effort will be made to be fair and courteous and understanding to the contestants and the coaches.

Abuse of this protest provision by any contestant, or coach, will result in one or more of the following:

- Dismissal of team coach from the contest area.
- Dismissal (or replacement) of any contestant from the competition.
- Dismissal of an entire team from the competition, with forfeiture of points or standing.

Spectators, parents, and visitors may not protest any question, answer, or procedure during the course of play. They may, however, submit in writing to the contest officials any suggestions, complaints, or protests at the conclusion of the contest. Unseemly behavior, unsportsmanlike conduct, or any actions that are generally accepted as detrimental to the contest may subject the violators of such actions to dismissal from the immediate area of the contest.

Awards and Recognition

The results of the contest will be announced, and awards will be presented following the contest.

Junior, Senior, Mixed Individual Awards

1. Scores will be kept for each individual contestant. At the state contest, the top ten (10) individual contestants will receive special recognition.
2. To be considered for individual awards, individuals must participate in at least three matches (or at least two matches in district contests with 5 teams or less).
3. Individual scores are the total of the three highest match scores (or two highest in district contests with 5 teams or less).
4. Ties for individual awards will be broken based on:
 - A. First tie breaker: Highest average score for the entire contest
 - B. Second tie breaker: Highest individual match score.
 - C. Third tie breaker: Total number of points earned in the contest.
 - D. Fourth tie breaker: Most points scored in the latest round that the tied individuals shared participation in.

Junior, Senior, Mixed Team Awards

1. Team awards will be based on the predetermined procedure of play.
2. Every team will participate in a minimum of two matches.
3. The rank of teams will be determined based on their final position within the double elimination bracket. After two losses, the teams eliminated in the same round will be placed based on the higher scores in the eliminating round. Fifth (5th place) to the highest score, sixth (6th place) to the next highest score and so on.
4. In the circumstance when 2 or more teams eliminated in the same round have the same score, the following team tie breakers will apply.

- A. First tie breaker: Highest average score for the total average of all games played in double elimination games.
- B. Second tie breaker: Highest match score in double elimination games.
- C. Third tie breaker: Total score of the top two matches in double elimination games.

All contest tabulations will be declared official at the awards ceremony. If errors are found in the event tabulations within 24 hours from the award announcement, the youth who received the award incorrectly will return the award, which will then be awarded to the correct youth.

State Team Selection

Representation

An All-Star team composed of high-scoring Senior individuals from the Senior and Mixed Divisions will be tested to determine the state team and will represent North Carolina in national and regional competitions.

In the event a high Senior Horse Bowl individual also is a high individual in the State Judging Contest or Hippology Contest within the same year, that individual will have one week after completion of the State Horse Judging Contest to declare the event(s) in which he or she wishes to represent North Carolina at national contests.

The state Extension specialist will designate the next high-ranking individuals in the other contest(s) to represent North Carolina at nationals.

Members of the champion team in the Senior and Mixed division who were not selected to participate on the state team, will be eligible to compete on future teams in that division as long as they meet the age and educational eligibility requirements. Members of the state team selected from the Senior and Mixed divisions and participating in the National 4-H Roundup or Quarter Horse Congress will be ineligible to participate as members on any future county horse bowl teams.

Expenses

The state is not responsible for providing expense money or transportation to the national contest but will attempt to assist.

Coach

The coach of the high-scoring Senior team will be designated the coach of the state 4-H Horse Bowl team.

Special Assistant Coach

If appointed by the state committee, a special assistant coach will accomplish the following:

- Orient the coach to national rules and event procedures.
- Assist in the training, transportation, and management of both horse bowl teams in national competition.
- Identify and secure funding before the State 4-H Hippology Contest, and assist the Hippology team coach, county agents, and team members with fund-raising projects.

Suggested References

The materials listed on the NC Horse Program Website are resources for the NC State 4-H Hippology contest: [Reference Books for Horsebowl & Hippology | NC State Extension](#)
It should be clearly understood that this listing does not constitute an official endorsement of these materials. The publications are typically marketed by veterinary supply companies.

For additional information consult the **NC 4-H Awards Handbook**: [North Carolina 4-H | NC State Extension](#)

Horse Judging Contest

Objectives

- To teach participants good conformation (structural correctness, balance, and muscling), breed character, and performance ideals in different breeds of horses.
- To teach participants how to evaluate horses based on knowledge and fact, make a decision, and defend it.
- To teach participants horsemanship terms that can be used in a logical, systematic way to defend placings.
- To help participants gain confidence in their ability and use of the English language by giving oral reasons to a judge.
- To help participants learn to speak clearly, decisively, and convincingly through the use of oral reasons.

For anything not addressed in these rules, the [National Horse Judging Team Coaches Association Handbook](#) will be used.

Eligibility

Members

Any Cloverbud, Junior, or Senior 4-H member is eligible to participate in the 4-H horse-judging contest. Members are not eligible, however, to participate in a contest if by the date of the contest they have competed or participated in a postsecondary judging program. A 4-Her is eligible for the Junior/Senior Rookie division if they are in their first year competing in horse judging. The Rookie division is for individual competitors only. Individuals may compete as 4-H members and FFA competitors. Youth will be required to pay an entry fee in both divisions and give the appropriate number of reasons in each division.

Teams

Each county is eligible to enter any number of Junior or Senior teams of three or four members in the state contest. The total individual scores for the three high team members will constitute the team score and be used in determining team awards. Individual entries will be accepted. All participants in the contest will be eligible for individual awards or recognition.

Ages

Senior teams will be composed of participants who have reached age 14 and have not reached age 19 as of January 1. Junior teams are composed of members who have not yet reached age 14 as of January 1.

Prior Participation

Members of the champion team in the Junior or Senior (who were not selected to participate on the state team) divisions will be eligible to compete on future teams in that division as long as they meet the age and educational eligibility requirements. Members of the state team

selected from the Senior Division and participating at the National 4-H Roundup will be ineligible to participate as individuals or members on any future county horse judging teams. Junior state winning team members may continue to compete on a county team in that division in future contests while age eligible.

Winning Individuals

Junior or Senior high overall individuals are eligible to return and compete on a team or as an individual in that age division.

Regulations

Conferring between Individuals

While the contest is in progress, there will be no conferring between participants or between a participant and anyone else except as directed by the chairman or his representatives. Failure to abide by this regulation will result in disqualification of the participant. Participants may speak to their group leader if they have any questions or problems.

Registration Fee

Each team or individual may be required to pay a registration fee. Check the entry form for details. Any entry form not completed in its entirety will be returned to the sender. Any entry form resubmitted after the deadline date may be assessed a late fee. In the event that late entries are prohibited, no late entries will be accepted.

Classes

Eight to 10 classes, consisting of four individuals in each class, shall be judged. The horses in each class will be of the same breed, sex, and approximate age. The showman of each horse in each class shall wear a number for identification purposes (1-2-3-4). Classes will be selected from the following list. In addition, any available horse breeds could be used in halter or performance classes.

Halter	Performance
American Saddle Horse	Western Pleasure
Appaloosa	Hunter Hack
Arabian	Country English Pleasure
Hunter-Type Horses or Ponies	English Pleasure
Morgan Horse	Reining
Paint Horse	Showmanship
Quarter Horse	Western Riding
Thoroughbred	Horsemanship
Draft Horses or Ponies	Hunt Seat Equitation
Trail	Saddle Seat Equitation
Hunter Under Saddle	Flat Shod Tennessee Walking Horse
Ranch Riding	Working Western Rail

Minimum Classes

Participants will place a minimum of two halter classes and two performance classes. The additional classes will vary depending on availability.

Reasons

Participants will provide oral reasons for their judging decisions as follows:

- **Cloverbud division:** Not required to give oral reasons.
- **Junior Rookie division:** Give oral reasons on one halter class.
- **Senior Rookie division:** Give oral reasons on one halter and one performance class.
- **Junior division:** Give two sets of oral reasons from either halter or performance.
- **Senior Division:** Give four sets of oral reasons in at least one halter and one performance class.

Participants will be notified when the class is called if oral reasons may be given on the class being judged.

Reasons will be given orally to an official. Two minutes will be allowed for each participant to give his or her oral reasons. At least 30 minutes will be allowed between reason sets for participants to organize and prepare their reasons.

Time

A maximum of 15 minutes will be allowed for participants to place all no-reasons halter classes. Halter classes in which oral reasons are to be given will be judged in a period of 17 minutes.

Card/Scantron Placing

The participants will hand to the group leader or his assistant the card bearing his placing of the class as soon as time is up. This card will be given to each participant when he is called before the official judge to give his oral reasons. Participants will not be permitted to use notes when giving oral reasons but shall have the card upon which they recorded their placing.

Placings will be recorded on scantron sheets. A sample of the form can be found on the [Horse Judging Contest page](#) on the website. Participants should follow the instructions of their group leaders and announcer in regard to turning in their sheets.

Judges

These officials will be used to make the official placing on each class. Classes will be placed in accordance with the rules of the United States Equestrian Federation or the respective breed association rules, if applicable.

Official placings and reasons will be given on completion of the contest and reasons session.

Scoring

Final Standing

This shall be based upon both the placing and the oral reasons scores. Fifty points shall constitute a perfect score in placing the animals, and 50 points shall constitute a perfect score for oral reasons. In classes where no reasons are required, only the placing will be considered.

Cuts

Cuts are a numerical value assigned by the official judges to each pair of horses (1-2, 2-3, 3-4) in a class to indicate the degree of difficulty in placing that specific pair.

- Small Cuts (1-2 points) mean the horses are very similar, and the placing decision is close and difficult to make.
- Large Cuts (4-5 points or more) mean there are obvious and significant differences between the horses, and the placing decision is easy to make.

The cut value is used in scoring: every time a contestant's placing differs from the official placing for a specific pair, the contestant is deducted the points indicated by that pair's cut. Therefore, larger cuts result in a greater penalty for an incorrect decision.

Reasons

Reasons scores are to be reflective of organization, relevancy, accuracy, terminology and presentation of reasons, regardless of the student's placing of the class. A bad placing must not automatically result in a low reasons score. If students see the differences in the horses and reflect those differences accurately in their reasons, they must not be penalized on the reasons score because their emphasis for placing the horses was different than that of the official judges. Placing scores will adequately reflect incorrect emphasis in placing. It is suggested that students who simply read their written notes receive a score of "15", student who use their notes receive a score of "20" and students who don't use any notes but have an incomplete set of reasons receive a score no higher than "25."

Tie Breakers

For the overall and class type categories, both individual and team ties will be broken with the highest reasons total within the category. Remaining ties will be broken with the lowest placing total for reasons classes within the category. For the reasons category, both individual and team ties will be broken with the lowest placing total for reasons classes. Remaining ties will be broken with the highest placing total for nonreasons classes.

Awards and Recognition

Junior (8-10 and 11-13) and Senior (14-18) Division Top Ten Individual Awards

1. Halter
2. Reasons
3. Performance
4. Overall

Junior (8-13) and Senior (14-18) Rookie Division Top Ten Individual Awards

1. Overall

Junior and Senior Team Awards

1. Team Overall (1st-10th)

All contest tabulations will be declared official at the awards ceremony. If errors are found in the event tabulations within 24 hours from the award announcement, the youth who received the award incorrectly will return the award, which will then be awarded to the correct youth.

State Team Selection

Representation

Selection of team members will be restricted to the top individuals in the Senior division at the North Carolina State 4-H Horse Judging Contest. The top ten individuals will receive an invitation to try out for the state team. After try outs, the top eight individuals will form two four-member teams and will represent North Carolina at the Southern Regional Horse Judging Contest in August. The team representing North Carolina in the national contests will be selected by the Southern Regional team coach and the Extension horse specialist after the Southern Regional contest. The national team will consist of four members. Team members who actually participate in national competition will lose state eligibility. Individuals who judged at the Southern Regional Judging Contest but were not selected for the national team will be eligible to represent their county at future state horse judging contests. In addition to the Southern Regional contest, national team members will also judge at the Quarter Horse Congress and the Eastern National 4-H Horse Judging Contests. The team will also be eligible to compete in other contests, but the members must furnish their own transportation and travel money.

Expenses

The state is not responsible for providing expense money or transportation to the national contest but will attempt to assist.

Coach

The coach of the high-scoring Senior team will be designated the coach of the state 4-H Horse Judging team.

Special Assistant Coach

If appointed by the state committee, a special assistant coach will accomplish the following:

- Orient the coach to national rules and event procedures.
- Assist in the training, transportation, and management of both Horse Judging teams in national competition.
- Identify and secure funding before the State 4-H Horse Judging Contest, and assist the Horse Judging team coach, county agents, and team members with fund-raising projects.

Suggested References

The Horse Judging Resource Material page on the NC Horse Program Website has resources for preparing for the NC State 4-H Horse Judging Contest: [North Carolina 4-H Horse Program Educational Materials | Horse Judging Resource Material](#).

Horse Presentation Contest (Individual and Team)

Objectives

- To encourage youth to teach others how to do something related to horses by the correct use of visuals or equipment.
- To give youth confidence in their ability to present information in a logical and concise manner.
- To increase the level of horse knowledge and expertise.
- To improve members' study skills and ability to use correct English.
- To provide 4-H members with an opportunity to work jointly (team presentation) designing and presenting an educational horse-related topic.

Eligibility

Members

Participants. Each participant must be an actual 4-H club member interested in horses. Members of 4-H are not eligible, however, to participate in a horse presentation or illustrated talk if by the date of the district contest they will have completed a year of training beyond the high school level in a communications course that requires public speaking. Participants do not need their own horse(s).

Divisions

The horse presentation contest will be divided into three age divisions (8-10, 11-13, and 14-18). Each county will be allowed to enter one individual and one team in each age division in district competition during District Activity Days. A team consists of two members within the same age category. All Senior members must have reached age 14 but not age 19 before January 1 of the current year. In all divisions, the first and second-place finishers will both move on to the state finals. The state contest will be held during State 4-H Congress. District Activity Day rules will apply towards participation in other activities.

Southern Regional and National Contest Opportunities

The state winner and runner-up (both individual and team) of the Senior Division will be eligible to represent North Carolina in the Southern Regional contest in accordance with the rules of that contest. The individual and team who rank the highest in the state Senior Division will be eligible to represent North Carolina in other national contests if such contests are offered in accordance with the rules of those contests. The state is not responsible for paying expenses to these contests but will attempt to assist.

Previous State Winners

Previous state winners, representing North Carolina in the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup, are ineligible for further state competition in that category (individual/team). The NC State Champion cannot come back and compete in the state contest even if they did not compete at Eastern Nationals.

Regulations

At the discretion of the State 4-H Office, individual and team presentation contests may be combined and may be held in conjunction with the State 4-H Horse Show.

Only one youth per age division may participate from each county.

Presentations or illustrated talks may be on any horse-related subject.

The presentation may be a demonstration or illustrated talk. All references to the term “presentation” in these rules include either demonstration or illustrated talk. A demonstration is defined as a presentation of a step-by-step procedure with an end product or result. An illustrated talk is defined as a presentation of an idea or topic that uses visual aids to convey the message. Both presentation forms are acceptable and will be evaluated equally, although the delivery methods are different to those defined above. Both should utilize visual aids to help convey the major points of the presentation and more than one type of visual aid is preferable.

Notes and visuals may be used. Visuals should be neat, legible, and large enough to read easily. Visual aids may include but are not limited to handouts, posters, props, videos, slides, and computer-generated media (PowerPoint, websites, etc.). No live animals may be used. Creative audio-visual aids may be used but the contestant must be involved in making or designing them.

No coaching from parents or coaches during the presentation. Once an individual or team has started their presentation, they may not receive assistance from any coach, parent, audience member, or other person, which includes, but is not limited to, the stroking of any key on a computer or other audio-visual device. The penalty for violating this rule is disqualification.

Contestants should cite their major references after the conclusion of their presentation. This time will not be counted in the allotted time.

Only the judge(s) may question participants during the contest. Question time will not be counted toward the allotted time period. Participants are encouraged to repeat questions before answering.

Time Limits

References are not to be included in the time limit.

Individual Presentation

- Junior Division (8-10 and 11-13): 4 -12 minutes
- Senior Division (14-18): 9-12 minutes.

One point will be deducted per judge for each minute, or fraction thereof, under 4 minutes (Junior) or 9 minutes (Senior) or over 12 minutes.

Team Presentation

- Junior Division (8-10 and 11-13): 5 -15 minutes
- Senior Division (14-18): 10-15 minutes.

One point will be deducted per judge for each minute, or fraction thereof, under 5 minutes (Junior) or 10 minutes (Senior) or over 15 minutes.

Scoring

Presentations will be judged equally on the following basis:

Format	15 points
Materials/Visual Aids	15 points
Knowledge of Subject Matter	25 points
Delivery	25 points
Credit and Content	10 points
Questions	10 points
Total	100 Points

Ties will be broken first by the judges' accumulated Delivery score, second by the judges' accumulated Format score and third on Credit and Content score.

To see a copy of the scoresheet for this competition, click [here](#).

Ethical Standards and Presentation Development

Speeches and presentations should be original and constructed and delivered by 4-H'ers.

Plagiarism, in any form, is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying from other sources: Copying parts of speeches, presentations, or any other work created by another individual.
- Misuse of AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools: Using AI tools to generate entire sentences, paragraphs, or significant portions of the work.
- Improper citation: Using text, phrases, photos, diagrams, or any other material from articles, videos, books, movies, or other published sources without proper attribution to the original author.

Contest Requirements

Cite sources accurately and completely: All resources used must be cited specifically and honestly.

Submit a Works Cited page: A hard copy of the Works Cited/References page must be submitted at check-in.

Include essential information: The Works Cited page must include the contestant(s)' name(s), the title of their presentation, and be clearly labeled in the header.

All sources used must be listed, including but not limited to: websites, books, articles, interviews, and any other relevant materials.

Suggested References

4-H Presentations (4H L-1-172) will be helpful in preparing youths for this contest. Also, Judging Presentations and the 4-H Scorecard will be helpful. Both are available from the office of 4-H and Youth Development at NC State University or via the web at <http://www.nc4h.org/presentations/index.html>

A list of suggested topics for demonstrations, illustrated talks, and horse public speaking is found in the Appendix to this manual.

For additional information consult the following NC.4-H Program pages:

- Presentation Information: [Presentation Regulations | NC State Extension](#)
- N.C. 4-H Awards Handbook: 4-H Awards & Incentives Programs | NC State Extension
For additional information consult the **NC 4-H Awards Handbook**: [North Carolina 4-H | NC State Extension](#)

Horse Public Speaking Contest

Objectives

- To acquire skills, confidence, and poise in speaking to groups through the use of an interesting and familiar topic.
- To expand participants' horse knowledge and increase their research and study techniques.
- To teach participants how to organize thoughts and express ideas in a logical and concise manner.
- To increase participants' knowledge and control of the English language in expressing ideas.
- To reward and recognize participants for accomplishments they have made in a friendly and competitive atmosphere.

Eligibility

Members

Participants. Each participant must be an actual 4-H club member interested in horses. Members are not eligible, however, to participate in a horse public speaking contest if by the date of the district contest they will have participated in official post-secondary competitive events of a similar nature in the same subject area. Neither can the participant be undergoing preparation for such an event. Participants do not need to own their own horses

Divisions

The horse public speaking contest will be divided into three age divisions (8-10, 11-13, and 14-18). Each county will be allowed to enter one individual in each division in district competition during District Activity Days. Senior participants must have reached age 14 but not age 19 before January 1 of the current year. The gold and silver winners in all three divisions in each district will compete in the state finals. District Activity Day rules will apply to participation in other activities.

Southern Regional and National Contest Opportunities

The state winner and runner-up of the Senior Division will be eligible to represent North Carolina in the Southern Regional contest in accordance with the rules of that contest. The state winner in the Senior Division will be eligible to represent North Carolina in other national contests if such contests are offered in accordance with the rules of those contests. The state is not responsible for paying expenses to these contests but will attempt to assist.

Previous State Winners

Previous state winners of the Junior Division will be ineligible for future Junior Division competition in horse public speaking. Previous Senior Division state winners or participants in the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup are ineligible for further competition in horse public speaking. The NC State Champion cannot come back and compete in the state contest even if they did not compete at Eastern Nationals.

Regulations

Speeches must pertain to any area of the horse industry. Refer to the list of suggested topics in the Appendix to this manual.

Notes may be used. Speakers should not read their speeches or give speeches that sound memorized. No visual aids or posters are allowed.

No coaching from parents or coaches during the speech.

Contestants should cite their major references after the conclusion of their speech. This time will not be counted in the allotted time.

Only the judge(s) may question participants during the contest. Question time will not be counted toward the allotted time period. Participants are encouraged to repeat questions before answering.

Time Limits

References are not to be included in the time limit.

- Junior Division (8-10 and 11-13): 4-10 minutes
- Senior Division (14-18): 7-10 minutes.

Three points will be deducted per judge for each minute, or fraction thereof, under 4 minutes (Junior) or 7 minutes (Senior) or over 10 minutes.

Scoring

Speeches will be judged equally on the following basis:

Format	20 points
Knowledge of Subject Matter	25 points
Delivery	25 points
Credit and Content	20 points
Questions	10 points
Total	100 Points

Ties will be broken first by the judges' accumulated Delivery score, second by the judges' accumulated Format score and third on Credit and Content score.

To see a copy of the scoresheet for this competition, click [here](#).

Ethical Standards and Presentation Development

Speeches should be original and constructed and delivered by 4-H'ers. Plagiarism, in any form, is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying from other sources: Copying parts of speeches, presentations, or any other work created by another individual.
- Misuse of AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools: Using AI tools to generate entire sentences, paragraphs, or significant portions of the work.
- Improper citation: Using text, phrases, photos, diagrams, or any other material from articles, videos, books, movies, or other published sources without proper attribution to the original author.

Contest Requirements

Cite sources accurately and completely: All resources used must be cited specifically and honestly.

Submit a Works Cited page: A hard copy of the Works Cited/References page must be submitted at check-in.

Include essential information: The Works Cited page must include the contestant(s)' name(s), the title of their speech, and be clearly labeled in the header.

All sources used must be listed, including but not limited to: websites, books, articles, interviews, and any other relevant materials.

Suggested References

A list of suggested topics for demonstrations, illustrated talks, and horse public speaking is found in the Appendix to this manual.

Public Speaking and You (4H M-1-34) pamphlet gives many helpful hints in preparing and giving speeches.

For additional information consult the following NC.4-H Program pages:

- Presentation Information: [Presentation Regulations | NC State Extension](#)
- N.C. 4-H Awards Handbook: 4-H Awards & Incentives Programs | NC State Extension
For additional information consult the **NC 4-H Awards Handbook**: [North Carolina 4-H | NC State Extension](#)

Artistic Expression Events

Objectives

- To provide an educational opportunity for participants to exhibit their artistic skills and talents pertaining to a horse project.
- To increase awareness of the Horse Project through art exhibitions and illustrative displays.
- To provide a medium for 4-H youth to visually show their interest in horses.
- To enable 4-H youth to learn the process of developing good design and experience the need for careful craftsmanship and neatness.
- To encourage participants to explore and develop economic alternatives for themselves and their horse.
- To encourage the 4-H member to broaden his or her horizons and utilize creative talent within the Horse Project.

Eligibility

Members

Any Cloverbud, Junior, or Senior 4-H member is eligible to participate in the NC 4-H Horse Program Artistic Expression Contests. Participants do not need to own a horse.

Ages

Senior participants will be members who have reached age 14 and have not reached age 19 as of January 1. Junior participants have not yet reached age 14 as of January 1. Participation is open to Cloverbud members. Participants aged 5 to 7 may participate in this noncompetitive division.

Prior Participation/Winning Individuals

State winners in the Junior Division of an Artistic Expression Event are ineligible for future competition in the Junior Division in that **same** event. Juniors are eligible to compete in other Artistic Expression Events in which they have not won a state championship. State winners in a Senior Division of an Artistic Expression Event are ineligible to compete in that **same** event in future years. Senior state Artistic Expression Event winners are eligible to compete in other Artistic Expression Events in which they have not won a state championship.

Regulations

Entries

Each participant is limited to one article per contest category. Articles must be made by the participant and work that has been completed since the previous year's contest and that relates to the Horse and Pony Project.

All entries must be identified with name, age, age division, county of participant, mailing address, email address and phone number. Identifying information must be attached to the entry in such a way that it can be hidden from judges during judging.

Entries that are not made/taken by the participant will be disqualified; however, adult supervision is permissible.

Categories/Contests/Scoring

Craft

- Craft items suitable for a horse project include functional accessories for the horse, rider and facilities (for example, saddle trees, bridle holders, stall signs, blanket holders, tooled leather belt, etc.) or decorative or informative items (for example sculptures, wall hangings and dioramas).
- Media: Craft items can be made from a single medium or a combination of media. Examples of types of media are wood, clay, resin, plastic, metal, paper (e.g. papier-mâché), seeds, pasta, leather, beads and textiles (e.g., knitting, needlepoint, macramé, weaving, etc.).

Each project will be judged by at least two judges on the craft's appropriateness, serviceability, and durability on the following basis:

Craft Scoring

Suitability of materials used	20 points
Creativity	15 points
Construction method and finish (wise choice, workmanship)	35 points
Degree of Difficulty	15 points
Total appearance	15 points
Total	100 points

Must have a minimum score of 60 points to place.

Digitally Created Art

- All artwork submitted must be digital paintings and or drawings created with illustration software and highlight some aspects of horses/equine, horseback riding, etc.
- There is no limitation regarding the software used to create the artwork. Submissions containing filtered photos, AI generated images, photo manipulations, collages, or animation are not accepted.
- File submission. After your registration has been completed and approved, you will receive specific instructions on how, when, and where to submit your entry digitally. File

size must not exceed 10MBs. Only PNG and JPEG image file formats will be accepted. Minimum resolution accepted is 600 pixels wide. Submissions of very low quality will not be accepted.

- Identification. When you email your submission, use “NC 4-H Artistic Expression Entry” as your subject. Include the following entry information with your email: Name of 4-H'er. 4-H County, Entry Division: Cloverbud (Ages 5-7), Junior Division (Ages 8-13) OR Senior Division (Ages 14-18), Digitally Created Art. Picture File Naming: Submit your entry as a JPEG or PNG file. Save file as: "Last Name, First Name, Age Division Contest" - Example "Stroud, Landon, Cloverbud Digitally Created Art."
- Proof of progression. All entries must provide proof of progression to ensure that images are not generated via AI or copied from another source. This proof of progression shall be 3 to 5 time-stamped screenshots or photos that are taken during the creation of the submission. Proof of Progression file naming: Submit this along with your entry as a JPEG or PNG file. Save file as: "Last Name, First Name, Proof of Progression" - Example "Stroud, Landon, Proof of Progression."
- Disqualification. The following infractions will result in disqualification:
 - Animated or moving entries such as GIFs
 - Manually drawn or painted and scanned into digital format
 - Artwork that includes filtered photos, photo manipulations, and/or collages
 - Artwork that infringes on intellectual property rights of other individuals, such as clipart or digital art created by another artist and arranged in the submission.
 - Failure to provide proof of progression.
 - Exceeding the maximum file size (10MBs).
 - Not meeting the minimum resolution requirements (600 pixels wide).

Each project will be judged by at least two judges on the following criteria:

Digitally Created Art Scoring

Originality/Creativity	25 points
Skill Level, Degree of Difficulty, Technical Execution and Techniques	30 points
Composition, Balance, Harmony, and Overall Design	45 points
Total	100 points

Must have a minimum score of 60 points to place.

Drawing

- Size: There is no size limitation on drawings.
- Media: Pencil, chalk, charcoal, pen and ink, pastels, etchings or markers. Cloverbud members, however, may use any drawing medium of their choice excluding a paint type medium.
- Presentation: All work must be matted or mounted using suitable materials. Recommended matting boards are Crescent, Alpha mat, and Bainbridge brand name matting board. Cardboard is NOT considered suitable material for matting or mounting. Foam core provides a sturdy backing for projects and helps prevent damage and movement while displayed. Drawing entries are NOT to be framed. Captions are not permitted on the front of the drawing and if used it will be penalized as indicated under the scoring rules. Entries with frames will be disqualified.

Each project will be judged by at least two judges on the following criteria:

Drawing Scoring

Composition, Balance, Harmony, and Overall Design	40 points
Use of Materials and Appropriate Media Selection	20 points
Skill Level, Degree of Difficulty	30 points
Completed Appearance and Neatness	10 points
Total	100 points

Must have a minimum score of 60 points to place.

Infractions: Entries not conforming to the contest guidelines will be penalized by having points deducted from their total score as follows:

- Caption 10 points
- Use of wrong media 30 points
- Incorrect mounting or matting 10 points

Painting

- Size: There is no size limitation on paintings.
- Media: Watercolor, acrylic, oil, or tempera paints (Juniors only) may be used. Cloverbud members may use any paint medium of their choice excluding a drawing type medium.
- Presentation: All watercolors must be matted with a suitable matting board. Recommended matting boards are Crescent, Alpha mat, and Bainbridge brand name matting board. All painting other than watercolors must be done on a proper painting support, e.g. canvas and canvas panels. Captions are not permitted on the front of the painting and if used it will be penalized. Entries with frames will be disqualified.

Each project will be judged by at least two judges on the following criteria:

Painting Scoring

Composition, Balance, Harmony, and Overall Design	40 points
Use of Materials and Appropriate Media Selection	20 points
Skill Level, Degree of Difficulty	30 points
Completed Appearance and Neatness	10 points
Total	100 points

Must have a minimum score of 60 points to place.

Infractions: Entries not conforming to the contest guidelines will be penalized by having points deducted from their total score as follows:

- Caption 10 points
- Incorrect painting support 10 points

Photography (Standard and Digitally Enhanced/Altered)

- The Photography Contest is subdivided into two subcategories: one for standard photographs and the other for digitally enhanced/altered photographs.
- The Digitally Enhanced/Altered (DE) category is for photographs that have been significantly altered using computer software and the alteration is either the main attraction of the photograph or plays a big part in the artistic merit of the photograph. Examples are a horse with wings, green sun and yellow grass; horse with a unicorn horn, horse jumping over the moon.)
 - Use solely of common photographic techniques such as contrast enhancement, adjustment of lightness/darkness, color balancing and cropping do not qualify a photograph for the digitally enhanced/altered category.
 - Taking a photograph with a digital camera is not considered digitally enhanced/altered photograph.
- Participants may enter one photograph in the standard photography category/contest and one in the digitally enhanced/altered contest.
- Each sub-category will be judged separately, and awards will be given for each sub-category.
- The rules will be the same for both sub-categories.
- Size: There is no size limitation on photographs.
- Mounting. Cardboard is NOT considered a suitable material for mounting. Foam core provides a sturdy backing for projects and helps prevent damage and movement while displayed. All photos are to be mounted on a firm backing that is the same size as the photograph. Photos that are not mounted will be disqualified. Matting borders will be penalized as indicated under the scoring rules.
- Color. Photos may be black and white or full color and will be judged equally.
- Edges. White edges are to be trimmed from all photos and if not trimmed will be penalized as indicated under the scoring rules.

- Framing. No frames or glass permitted. Photos with frames or glass will be disqualified.
- Captions. Captions are not permitted on the front of the photograph and if used it will be penalized as indicated under the scoring rules. A date imprint on a photo does not count as a caption. Entry may be titled on the back of the mount board.

Entries will be judged by at least two judges on creativity, technical quality, composition, and overall appearance as follows:

Standard Photography Scoring

Composition camera angle, close to subject, pleasing to look at, elements balanced, simple background	40 points
Technical Quality, depth of field, lens artifacts, focal length, sharp clear image, exposure, lighting, close enough to subject	35 points
Creativity, interesting to look at, one central idea, idea shown clearly, experimentation, subject spontaneity	15 points
Overall appearance, neatness, and mounting	10 points
Total	100 points

Must have a minimum score of 60 points to place.

Infractions: Entries not conforming to the contest guidelines will be penalized by having points deducted from their total score as follows:

- Captions 10 points
- Incorrect mounting, being matted or having white border 10 points

Entries will be judged by at least two judges on digital artistry, technical quality, composition, and overall appearance as follows

Digitally Enhanced/Altered Photography Scoring

Digital Artistry: assesses the contribution of the digital component to the overall image and is evaluated through the use of impact, creativity, originality, design, use of color and value, and whether attention is drawn to the focal points	40 points
Composition	30 points
Technical Quality	20 points
Overall appearance, neatness, and mounting	10 points
Total	100 points

Must have a minimum score of 60 points to place.

Infractions: Entries not conforming to the contest guidelines will be penalized by having points deducted from their total score as follows:

- Captions 10 points

- Incorrect mounting, being matted or having white border 10 points

Poster

- Size. Each entry must be a minimum of 600 square inches. A one-inch border is recommended.
- Materials. Posters must not contain three-dimensional materials that protrude more than one-quarter of an inch from the surface of the poster board.
- Topics. The poster can depict any topic related to the Horse and Pony Project (for example: care, training, health, nutrition, psychology, breed, history of breeds, anatomy, careers, safety, reproduction, youth leadership in project, colors, and markings).
- Content. Effective posters should focus attention on one idea that encourages people to stop, look, read, and remember. Posters should include a combination of illustrations and captions that effectively promote one main idea.
- Re-entries. A poster or poster idea that an entrant submitted in previous years cannot be entered again.

Each project will be judged by at least two judges on the following criteria:

Poster Scoring

Information given and ideas expressed (theme, simplicity, and originality)	50 points
Art, design and lettering (pleasing composition, attractive, dynamic, eye-catching, original, neat, easily read lettering, and use of color), appropriate border	30 points
Construction (materials: texture, shape, size, durability)	20 points
Total	100 points

Must have a minimum score of 60 points to place.

Infractions: Entries not conforming to the contest guidelines will be penalized by having points deducted from their total score as follows:

- Size (either over or under guidelines) 15 points
- 3 D objects that protrude > ¼ inch 20 points

Sewing

- Items entered in the Sewing Contest must simply pertain to a “horse theme” and may be decorative or functional. Participants must have used a thread to join or attach fabric pieces together with stitches. Articles without stitching or that are glued together will be disqualified. For clarity: crocheting, needlepointing, knitting, weaving, macramé, etc. belong in the craft category.

- Each participant is limited to one article per contest. Articles must be made by the participant and be made by the participant and be work that has been completed since the previous year's contest and that relates to the Horse and Pony Project. If the article is part of a set containing more than one piece (ex. Pillows) only one piece can be entered into competition.
- Entries without any type of stitching done by the contestant are not considered sewing and will be disqualified.

Each project will be judged by at least two judges on its appropriateness, serviceability, and durability on the following basis:

Suitability of materials used	15 points
Creativity	10 points
Construction methods and finishes (wise choice, workmanship)	25 points
Degree of difficulty	20 points
Total appearance	30 points
Total	100 points

Must have a minimum score of 60 points to place.

Awards and Recognition

A Grand Champion State Level award plus top ten ribbons in the Junior and Senior age divisions will be awarded. Cloverbud participants will not be ranked but will be evaluated and receive participation awards. Entries will be judged by at least two judges. Ties will be broken starting with the judging criteria with the highest point value and continuing on in descending order. If ties are still present, the NC 4-H Horse program will award multiple prizes of the same rank.

Suggested References

For additional information consult the following N.C. 4-H Program pages:

- NC 4-H Horse Program Website: <http://equinehusbandry.ces.ncsu.edu/>
- NC 4-H Awards Handbook: <http://www.nc4h.org/youth/4-h-awards-incentives-programs>

Creative Writing Contests

Objectives

- To provide an outlet for written expression for the 4-H member in horse related topics.
- To encourage youth to express their experiences and ideas in a creative manner.
- To recognize youth who have creative writing talent by expressing their ideas through writing.

Eligibility

Members

Participants. Each participant must be a current 4-H club member. Participants do not need to own their own horse.

Divisions

The creative writing contest will be divided into two divisions: junior and senior. Senior participants are youth who have reached age 14 and have not reached age 19 as of January 1. Junior participants are youth who have reached age 8 and have not yet reached age 14 as of January 1. Cloverbuds are not eligible to compete in creative writing events.

Previous State Winners

State winners in the Junior Division are ineligible for future competition in the Junior Division in the same event. Junior State creative writing winners are eligible to compete in other Junior Division creative writing events in which they have not won a state championship. State winners in a Senior Division competitive writing event are ineligible to compete in that same creative writing event in future years. Senior State Creative Writing Winners are eligible to compete in other creative writing events in which they have not won a state championship.

Regulations

Contest Areas

Creative writing will be divided into three contest areas: Poetry, Short Story, and Essay.

Topics

Creative writing entries must be related to horses or the horse industry, and a new topic must have been developed since the previous year's contest. Any horse-related topic is acceptable.

Identification

Creative writing entries must include:

- A separate title page with the following information: Title of work, 4-H member's name, address, phone number, email address, county, district, and division.
- The title page will be removed before the entries are judged so that no names or identifying information will appear on the entries.
- The title of the entry must also appear on the body of the paper without the participant's name, address, phone number, email address, county, division, or district.
- Each creative writing entry will receive a number to identify it with the master list of Creative Writing Contest entries, and numbers will be retained in the Extension horse specialist's office.
- An entry that is determined to have plagiarized someone else's work will be disqualified.

Judges

Creative writing entries will be judged by a committee of three judges, consisting of two knowledgeable horse owners who are familiar with the 4-H Horse Program and an official with an English background.

Project Length and Presentation Requirements

Short Story

- Short stories will be limited to 1,000 words maximum and a minimum of 200 words for Junior short stories and 500 words for Senior short stories.
- A short story contains a beginning, middle, and end using a timeline.
- Short Stories are to be typed double-spaced or written legibly in ink. Papers handwritten in pencil will not be accepted.

Poetry

- Poetry will have a maximum of 50 lines.

Essay

- Essays will be limited to 200 to 1,000 words for Juniors and 500 to 1,000 words for Seniors.
- Junior essays must cite one acceptable reference and Senior essays must cite two acceptable references. Examples of acceptable references are books, journal/magazine articles, encyclopedia articles and published reports written by experts. Wikipedia and blogs are not considered acceptable references.
- An essay is a series of paragraphs on one topic written as a personal opinion.
- Essays are to be typed double-spaced or written legibly in ink. Essays handwritten in pencil will not be accepted.

Scoring

Ties will be broken starting with the judging criteria with the highest point value and continuing on in descending order. If ties are still present, the NC 4-H Horse Program will award multiple prizes of the same rank.

Short Stories will be judged equally on the following basis:

Creativity, Imagination, and Originality	35 points
Plot/Story Line Development	30 points
Grammar and Spelling	25 points
Neatness	10 points
Total	100 Points
Creativity, Imagination, and Originality	35 points
Plot/Story Line Development	30 points

Penalties:

- Single-spaced 10-point penalty
- Length of entry (either over or under guidelines) 15-point penalty

Poetry entries will be judged equally on the following basis:

Poetic structure, rhyme and/or meter	30 points
Creativity, Imagination, and Originality	25 points
Overall Impact/Impression of Content	15 points
Grammar and Spelling	20 points
Neatness	10 points
Total	100 Points

Penalties:

- Exceeding maximum length 10-point penalty

Essay entries will be judged equally on the following basis:

Content	40 points
Creativity and Expression	15 points
Originality	15 points
Grammar & References	20 points
Neatness	10 points
Total	100 Points

Penalties:

- Single-spaced 10-point penalty
- Length of entry (either over or under guidelines) 15-point penalty

Any entry that is determined to have plagiarized someone else's work will be disqualified.

Registration

Entry forms are available on the NC 4-H Horse Program Web site. Click on the appropriate Entry Form link on the [Horse Creative Writing Contests Page](#).

Entry Fee. Checks should be made payable to NCSU to cover the entry fee for the event. If a youth is entering more than one Creative Writing contest, the entry fees may be combined in one check, but please list the contest names in the memo line.

Deadline. The entry form must be completed and entry fees submitted according to the published deadlines on the website.

Awards

First through sixth-place Junior and Senior winners in each event will receive ribbons.

First-place Junior and Senior winners will receive an award in each event.

Suggested References

- N.C. 4-H Awards Handbook: 4-H Awards & Incentives Programs | NC State Extension For additional information consult the **NC 4-H Awards Handbook**: [North Carolina 4-H | NC State Extension](#)
- NC 4-H Horse Program Website: [Horse Creative Writing Contests Page](#)