4-H 179R

Uniform Rules for 4-H Horse Shows

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

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Purpose of the Uniform Rules

The Uniform Rules are required for 4-H horse shows throughout the state of Ohio. In a horse program as large as Ohio's, consistency of rules is very important for smooth operation of the program. However, we also realize that due to the variations in size and organization of the horse clubs, counties need the flexibility to add to these rules to meet local needs. Therefore, the county horse advisory committee and/or the local 4-H Extension educator have the option of adding to these rules for local shows. However, when the 4-H member comes to the state horse show, these rules will be strictly followed, or if changes are made to these rules, they will be written out and given to all exhibitors. For a copy of additional county rules, be sure to ask your local 4-H advisor and/or the county 4-H Extension educator.

Solicitation for Horse Shows

Appropriate recognition is important, but the success and effectiveness of a 4-H horse show is not measured by the number of trophies.

Horse equipment and supplies, such as halters, lead ropes, blankets, etc., are practical and useful awards that might be substituted for a trophy. Less expensive trophies, ribbons, and rosettes are also suitable.

Solicitation of awards should be kept to a minimum, and steps should be taken to help ensure that the same business is not contacted for every show. The county Extension office, working with its 4-H horse committee, may need to develop a program for a more equitable solicitation plan. This may include the need for approval to solicit specific businesses.

The 4-H name and emblem are copyrighted, and therefore, a request for approval to solicit is appropriate.

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Policies

The combined recommendations of the State 4-H Horse Advisory Committee and the State 4-H Horse Judges Committee are included in the statements presented here. It is the desire that the county committees review their equine programs in relation to the recommendations presented in this publication.

CONDUCTING 4-H HORSE SHOWS

1. County Extension educators should be involved in the planning of 4-H horse shows or 4-H classes in open shows held within their counties. The 4-H name and emblem are copyrighted, so any classes that are called 4-H classes or any class limited to 4-H members must have Extension approval.
2. Regional or state 4-H horse shows sponsored by horse organizations must have the approval of the State 4-H Leader.
3. No entry fees are to be made in classes when the grade counts as the project grade.
4. A membership form identifying both the member and the project horse shall be presented if asked for when entering all 4-H classes. This form must be signed by the club advisor, and a duplicate form must be on file in the county Extension office.

5. Because spiritual growth is an important part of the 4-H program, Sunday morning shows in which 4-H members are involved are discouraged. If it is impossible to avoid a Sunday show, some kind of meaningful worship program should be conducted.

OWNERSHIP

1. Equine used as project animals must either be owned by the member, the member's family (parent, grandparent, sibling—full or step, or legal guardian[s] and their children) or leased. A horse can be leased to only one 4-H member as a project. If the lessor agrees, siblings can also ride the horse if the rules for others riding a 4-H member's horse are followed. The purpose of a lease is to provide an educational 4-H experience for youth who might not otherwise have the opportunity. If an animal is leased, a contract to lease must have the approval of the county 4-H Extension educator. A copy of the signed contract must be filed in the county Extension office.
2. An animal carried as a project can be shown by only one 4-H member in state fair participation. Counties may allow more than one 4-H member to show a horse in a county show if they wish. However, only one may compete for state fair qualification and that member needs to be identified prior to showing in a state fair qualifying show.
3. All animals carried as 4-H projects and those that are shown at the state fair must be owned or leased and in the continual care of the 4-H member by the date specified by the member's county. This date shall be no later than June 1. Continual care does permit boarding an animal, provided the member is involved in caring for the horse. Project animals should not be switched during the year.
4. Lessons, instruction, and advice for the member are encouraged. As long as the member is present in a learning situation, such assistance can include occasional riding or handling of the horse by another person but cannot include regular training and care of the horse within 30 days of competition in any county state fair qualifying show or the State Fair Junior Horse Show. Showing a 4-H member's project animal in a class at a show is not considered training. However, if a project animal is shown by someone other than the 4-H member in an open or breed show within the 30 days prior to the 4-H competition, the 4-H member must be present and show the project horse in that same show.
5. Family members can ride a 4-H member's project horse without the 4-H member being present within the 30-day limit as long as it is not a daily occurrence and is merely for pleasure (for example, trail riding with visiting relatives or friends) and does not include training of the horse for the show ring.
6. Only people showing an animal in a class at a show can ride, drive, or train that animal at the show. The violator and the horse are disqualified from further participation in that show. (An exception may be made for children simply wanting to sit on or to be led while riding the horse in a non-schooling manner.) From the time the equine arrives at the state show grounds for the State Fair Junior Horse Show, only the exhibitor may ride, drive, exercise, or train the horse, and the exhibitor must wear their back number when working with the animal.
7. A young person may earn money with horses (for example: shoeing, giving riding lessons, training, winning prize money, etc.) and still be in the 4-H program.

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8. Hardship cases

   A. A county may make exceptions on an individual basis to the June 1 date for local programs, but there are no exceptions for state fair participation.

   B. Children away in school or in a split family may still participate as long as the animal is identified by June 1, and they assume responsibility for the animal before the show. Rules for regular training and handling of the horse are the same as described previously.

STEWARDS

1. Each show must have a steward or stewards. It is recommended that the steward be a 4-H advisor who is familiar with both 4-H programs and technical horsemanship.
2. The steward interprets and clarifies rules and decides cases of eligibility for a particular class.
3. Any exhibitor wishing to discuss any matter with the judge must first contact the steward, who can approve and arrange such an appointment.

JUDGES

1. The Ohio 4-H Horse Show Judges List contains the names of judges who have met the qualifications set forth by the State 4-H Horse Show Judges Committee. It is recommended that 4-H Horse Show Committees hire judges listed on the current year's Ohio 4-H Horse Show Judges List. For state fair qualifying shows, it is required that judges with a PAS designation be selected from this list so they are familiar with Ohio 4-H's method of evaluating youth for state fair participation. The list is available online at **horse.osu.edu**.
2. The purpose of the program for judges is to train and/or identify judges who are knowledgeable, impartial, professional, and able to communicate effectively with youth and adults. These judges, along with the number of acceptable evaluations received on their behalf, are included on the list of judges for use by 4-H Horse Show Committees.
3. The qualifications required for a judge to be listed are as follows:

   A. Submit a completed application and appropriate application fee each year by October 1.

   B. Attend the 4-H judges training clinic every other year; or attend the 4-H judges training clinic and one other judges training clinic every three years.

   C. Earn a minimum score of 85% on a written or online open rulebook test on the current Uniform Rules for 4-H Horse Shows.

   D. Have at least three acceptable evaluations returned from shows that they have judged in the past two years.

   E. To get on the list the first time, a judge needs to provide at least three references, demonstrate an ability to judge (have apprentice judged or judged at least three shows), pass an interview, pass a test on the rule book, and attend and score well at the training clinic. Program rules and requirements as well as application materials are available online at **horse.osu.edu**.

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4. When hiring a judge, show management should provide the judge with:
   A. A contract listing the agreed-upon fee, expenses, and when the payment will be made.
   B. A listing of classes and any county rules *that are in addition* to the rules in *Uniform Rules for 4-H Horse Shows*.
   C. An introduction of the judge to the officials on show day. Provisions for the comfort of the judge while judging should also be made.
5. The judge should adhere to these guidelines for show management:
   A. Provide clear fee and expense information at the time of hiring.
   B. Arrive at the show 30 minutes before starting time to meet show officials and review any special rules, show procedure, and patterns to be used in the various classes.
   C. Do not visit with exhibitors or parents except when handling horse show questions through the steward.
6. A judge's conduct must be exemplary of their position. Any grossly inappropriate conduct (such as judging when intoxicated, using abusive language, etc.) should be reported to the state horse specialist, who will bring the matter up before the State 4-H Judges Committee for appropriate action.
7. Judges shall dress appropriately for the type of show and classes they are judging. A western hat, boots, trousers or pressed jeans, and a long-sleeve jacket or blazer are appropriate attire to judge western shows/classes or shows with a variety of classes. Business attire, such as dress suits, long skirts, jackets, and hard-sole, closed-toe shoes, is appropriate attire for judging English, Gaited, or Hunter shows.
8. Judges should be familiar with the different breeds they encounter and should be able to call and to recognize correct gaits.
9. Judges are encouraged to give constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement to exhibitors whenever possible.

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GENERAL RULES

1. All youth, age 19 and under, participating in any 4-H equestrian activity, are required to wear properly fitted protective headgear which meets or exceeds current ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials)/SEI (Safety Equipment Institute) standards with the chin harness securely fastened at all times while riding or driving an equine.

   It is the responsibility of the rider, or the parent or guardian of the youth participant, to make sure the headgear worn complies with appropriate safety standards for protective headgear intended for equestrian use and is properly fitted and in good condition. The Ohio 4-H Horse Program, show committees, officials, Extension personnel, and volunteer leaders are not responsible for checking headgear worn for such compliance.

   The Ohio 4-H Horse Program, show committees, officials, Extension personnel, and volunteer leaders make no representation or warranty, expressed or implied, about any protective headgear, and caution riders that death or serious injury may result despite wearing such headgear, as no helmet

can protect against all foreseeable injuries in equestrian activities.

The Ohio 4-H Horse Program, show committees, officials, Extension personnel, and volunteer leaders may, at their discretion, check a participant's protective headgear for proper standards. If the youth is found to be wearing unapproved, defective, or improperly fitted headgear, they will not be permitted to participate in riding or driving activities until proper headgear is acquired.

2. Inhumane (as determined by show management) methods of schooling or showing are not allowed. Any fresh bleeding observed by the judge and caused by rider, tack, or lack of control in a class disqualifies the exhibitor in that class.
3. The administration of any drug (including herbal preparations) that affects the central nervous system (stimulant or depressant) of a horse shown in any 4-H class is strictly prohibited.
4. The administration of a drug for therapeutic measures, including the use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, is permitted unless the drug affects the central nervous system (stimulant or depressant). If used, a veterinarian's certificate prescribing the drug must be filed with show management prior to showing.
5. The use of any equipment that affects the central nervous system (stimulant or depressant) of a horse while shown in any 4-H class is strictly prohibited.
6. Use of any substance or method that affects the normal movement of the tail is strictly prohibited. Tongue ties are also prohibited.
7. The use of irritants (including blisters, ginger, or similar soring or pain-inducing substances or devices) that affect the gait, carriage, or performance of the horse are strictly prohibited.
8. Any exhibitor guilty of showing an animal under the influence of any prohibited drug, using any forbidden substance, or failing to file a veterinarian's certificate prior to showing is disqualified and forfeits all placings and awards for the show. Additional penalties may also be given by show management, based on the situation.
9. Animals must be made available for drug testing if requested. Failure to do so is an admission of guilt, and punishments are according to previous section.
10. The judge will dismiss from the ring any entry the judge feels is unruly or not in sufficient control for the safety of the handler or other exhibitors.
11. No person other than exhibitors and show officials is allowed in the ring while any class is being judged without permission of the show manager.
12. Participation in any 4-H show is optional. No 4-H member is required to exhibit in order to receive a project grade.
13. Grading of show entries and projects is at the option of the county 4-H committee. No show judges are required to assign annual project grades, but judges may be asked to grade all 4-H members in a class on their performance.
14. Long hair must be confined so it does not cover the rider's number. Numbers placed on both sides of the horse are preferred to back numbers. If only one number is used, it must be on the exhibitor's back. Failure to wear a number or wearing an incorrect number in a class causes disqualification of the exhibitor.

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15. The judge determines if a horse is sound or healthy enough to compete in a class.
16. Stallions may be shown in 4-H classes only within the same calendar year in which they were foaled.
17. Unsportsmanlike conduct toward judges, show management, or exhibitors, or physical abuse of the horse is not tolerated. Violators will be dismissed from the show by the show manager.
18. The procedures for handling horse show complaints and protests are as follows:
    A. Complaints are handled through the show steward, who clarifies rules and arranges for the exhibitor to visit with the judge if the steward feels the request is justified.
    B. If any complaint cannot be resolved at the steward level, a written protest should be filed with show management.
        1. Protests must be made in writing and signed by the party or parties making the protest.
        2. A $100 fee must accompany the protest. The fee is retained by the show management and used to pay the costs of investigating the protest.
        3. The protest and fee must be filed with the show manager the same day as the show. The protest is considered at the time designated by the show manager and includes the accused, the accuser, an Extension representative, and any other needed parties. If any party cannot attend, a representative must be sent.
        4. A judge's decision on how a class is placed, or a decision on disqualification of an exhibitor based on the judge's interpretation of the rules for that class, shall not be protested.
    C. The show manager has the right to prohibit an exhibitor from showing if there is evidence that the exhibitor has violated 4-H horse show rules that would make the exhibitor ineligible to show.
    D. Video footage is not permitted to protest class placings or the disqualification of an exhibitor.
19. Ohio 4-H membership eligibility for participation in 4-H projects and competitive events begins when the child is at least age 8 and enrolled in the third grade as of January 1 of the current year. 4-H membership ends December 31 of the year in which an individual attains the age of 19.
20. Age of a horse is determined on the universal system that makes a horse one year older each January 1.
21. Within the class and the divisions provided in these rules, classes may be divided to fit local conditions as follows:
    A. Age of exhibitor
    B. Experience level of riders and/or horses
    C. All classes may be divided by the judge or the show committee to maintain safety.
    D. Height of project animal
22. Measurement guidelines for 4-H equine
    A. Stand the animal on a smooth, level surface in such a way that the front legs are vertical and the backs of the hocks are in a vertical line with the point of the horse's quarter. (See Figure 1.)

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B. The head is to be held only low enough to reveal the highest point of the withers and no lower.

C. For horses and ponies, measure the vertical distance from the highest point of the withers to the ground. (See Figure 1.)

D. For small equine, measure the vertical distance from the base of the last hairs of the mane to the ground.

E. The measuring stick shall have a plumb bob or spirit level to make sure the standard is perpendicular to the ground and that the cross pieces are parallel to the ground.

F. Animals should be measured at the beginning of the 4-H horse show season, no later than June 1. The animal can be measured barefoot or shod (option up to the exhibitor, but the animal must be shown as measured). If the animal was first measured shod and at a subsequent show, the exhibitor wanted to show the animal barefoot, the animal should be re-measured (if the situation is reversed, the animal should also be re-measured) if there is any doubt in which size class the animal belongs. The height of the animal should be marked on the 4-H ID form.

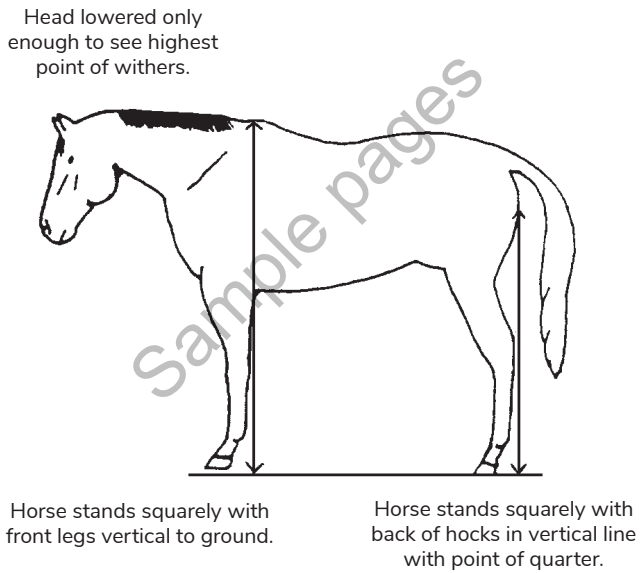

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Figure 1
How to Measure a Horse

G. Horse and pony sizes are as follows:

1. Horse is over 58 inches (14.2 hands).
2. Large pony is over 54 inches (13.2 hands) but not exceeding 58 inches (14.2 hands).
3. Medium pony is over 50 inches (12.2 hands) but not exceeding 54 inches (13.2 hands).
4. Small pony is taller than 38 inches but not exceeding 50 inches (12.2 hands).

5. Small equine is 38 inches or shorter when measured at the base of the last hairs of the mane.

H. Show management may either accept the height measurement written on the 4-H member's card or must measure every animal to be shown in a pony or small equine class.

I. Animals may show in a class for animals larger than they are, but never in classes for animals smaller than they are. Youth may not show in classes of different animal height in the same show.

23. Horse show management may make attire exceptions for youth with religious beliefs that prohibit the use of the defined attire. However, the attire must not create an unsafe situation for the youth.

24. Equipment failure in any class is a disqualification if it prevents the youth from safely completing the class.

25. All equines are eligible to exhibit in classes that horses or ponies may enter and must follow the same rules except where differences are noted. All equines are to enter only the classes in which they can perform the required gaits and maneuvers.

26. Donkeys in 4-H horse shows: When donkeys are shown, show management and the judge should consider the following:

A. Show donkeys in classes by themselves whenever possible.

B. In riding classes, donkeys may be shown English or Western and may be ridden at all times with two hands.

A crupper or breeching is mandatory in all riding classes. Donkeys should only be asked to canter for brief periods of time and be asked to back only short distances. The use of draw reins in classes is to be penalized but is not cause for disqualification.

27. The 4-H name may in no way be associated with any class or show in which any form of gambling is done on the outcome of any class.

28. Any horse five years of age and under may be ridden two-handed with a snaffle bit or hackamore in any western class. However, proof of the horse's age is the burden of the rider.

29. Youth are not to be tied or attached to the saddle in any manner nor are stirrups to be tied down in any way. Use of Velcro or any other substance that causes youth to adhere to the saddle is illegal.

30. In evaluation of all classes except dressage, a score of 70 is considered correct (average).

31. There is a two-minute time limit for all exhibitors to be in a class. Time begins when the announcer first calls for the class to begin entering the arena. After two minutes or if all exhibitors are in the arena before the two minutes, the gate is closed, and the class is started.

32. Special allowances may be made at horse shows for children with medical or physical handicaps. Parents need to notify the steward before the show, who then makes arrangements with the judge and the ringmaster for any special needs of the youth.

33. Electronic communication equipment that allows someone to be in communication with the exhibitor in their classes is not allowed. Exceptions can be made based only on medical or physical handicaps.

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34. Draft classes are for draft-type equine. Animals should be draft breeds or crosses of draft breeds or draft-type mules. Draft ponies should be of stout build.
35. A fall of the horse is defined as the horse's shoulder and/or hip touching the ground and is cause for disqualification in any class.
36. A fall of the exhibitor is defined as the exhibitor's shoulder and/or hip touching the ground and is cause of disqualification in any class.
37. All exhibitors, regardless of discipline, must allow their equipment and/or horse to be examined by the show steward and/or judge. At the judge and/or show steward's discretion, this includes, but is not limited to, the use of a bit gauge, magnet, or other equipment. Exhibitors may be requested to drop the headstall/bridle, whether this inspection takes place in the warm-up arena, at the entry gate of the arena, or following a class in the center of the arena; the participant may be asked to dismount from the horse when the headstall/bridle is dropped.
38. Because of animal welfare concerns and the image that 4-H wants to present, horses with a body condition score of less than 4, when using a scale of 1-9 (ribs easily discernable, tops of spinous process easily discernable, tailhead prominent with hook bones easily discernable, withers accentuated, and neck obviously thin), obviously sick horses, and horses with Grade 3 or greater lameness (consistently observable at the trot; marked nodding, hitching, or shortened stride; or minimal weight bearing in motion or at rest) are not allowed at 4-H shows. The show manager, show veterinarian, or the judge can dismiss a horse from the show for these reasons.
39. Within the same show, exhibitors must choose a style of seat within English (Hunt Seat or Saddle Seat) and Western (Western or Ranch) classes. This selection includes showmanship, rail (pleasure/hunter under saddle), pattern (horsemanship/equitation) and trail classes, and follows the horse/exhibitor combination within the same show. If a class is not offered in the exhibitor's discipline, (for example, ranch trail), the exhibitor may enter the other seat (trail) but will be judged according to the class standards.

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State Fair Qualifying Shows

PERFORMANCE AGAINST A STANDARD (PAS)

1. A county may allow a youth to have more than one project horse. However, only one project animal per youth may be used to qualify for the state fair. The selection of the animal for state fair qualification must be done before competing in any state fair qualifying show and cannot be switched, once selected, for the duration of the project year.
2. The project horse shown at the state fair must be the one the 4-H member qualified with in their county.
3. Counties may send their youth to another county to qualify for any reason, but the reason must be acceptable to and approved by the 4-H Extension educators in both counties involved.
    A. Out-of-county youth pay the county in which they participate a minimum of $10 per class entered to cover the costs of their participation.

   B. Youth wanting to participate in an Out-of-County PAS show must complete an Out-of-County PAS form, available online at **horse.osu.edu**, prior to the show.

4. A youth cannot compete in more than two single-judged PAS shows or one double-judged PAS show. It is recommended that counties only offer single-judged PAS shows.
5. PAS shows must use designated PAS judges from the current Ohio 4-H Horse Show Judges List, available online at **horse.osu.edu**.
6. PAS shows must use the current year's designated PAS patterns and score sheets, available online at **horse.osu.edu**.
7. The county 4-H Extension office personnel are responsible for submitting their county's PAS show verification sheets, that include all scores for all exhibitors, by the designated deadline.
8. It is the responsibility of the exhibitor to submit their state fair entry by the designated deadline.
9. PAS classes may be held in addition to other classes at a 4-H horse show. However, PAS classes must be held separately within that show and not combined with other classes.

Showmanship Classes

1. Showmanship classes are judged on the fitting and the grooming of the horse and on the ability of the exhibitor to present the horse properly and to its best advantage. Type, conformation, and quality of the horse have no bearing on the judging of these classes. Manners and responsiveness to the exhibitor, however, do indicate the degree of training received by the animal and should be credited to the exhibitor.
2. Classes may be divided by age and/or ability level of the exhibitor and the size of the animal. Within a division, the judge should respect the breed differences in showmanship methods and appointments.
3. Scoring
   A. Exhibitors will be scored on a 0-to-infinity basis, with a 70 denoting an average (correct) performance score.
   B. Maneuver Scores: Patterns shall be divided into individual maneuvers, as specified by the judge, and each maneuver will be scored from +3 to –3 with ½ point increments being acceptable. –3 = Extremely Poor, –2 = Very Poor, –1 = Poor, 0 = Correct, +1 = Good, +2 = Very Good, +3 = Excellent. The maneuver scores are added or subtracted from 70 and should be determined independently of penalties. Maneuver scores should reflect the exhibitor's overall performance of the pattern work including leading and posing with emphasis placed on the exhibitor showing the animal to its best advantage.
   C. Penalties: Penalties are independent of the maneuver scores and are deducted from the final score as follows:
      1. Minor (3 Point) Penalties
         a. Break of gait at the walk, jog, trot, or show gait up to 2 strides
         b. Over or under turning up to ⅛ of a turn
         c. Ticking or hitting a cone

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