

Uniform Rules for 4-H Horse Shows



THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY

EXTENSION



Sample Pages

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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, 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.

There is a growing concern about the increased solicitation in the name of 4-H for 4-H horse show classes. Some businesses are being solicited many times during the year. This is creating a negative image for the 4-H program. Solicitation should be kept to a minimum, and steps should be taken to help assure 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.

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

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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.
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 do 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. It is recommended that 4-H Horse Show Committees hire judges listed on the current year's Ohio 4-H Horse Show Judges List. It is required that judges for state fair qualifying shows be selected from this list so that they are familiar with Ohio 4-H's method of evaluating youth for state fair participation. This list contains the names of judges who have met the qualifications set forth by the State 4-H Horse Show Judges Committee. 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 that 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.

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 that 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 (includes 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 cardiovascular, respiratory, or 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 General Rule 8.
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 without the permission of the show manager while any class is being judged.
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 should



ohio4h.org

I pledge
My head to clearer thinking,
My heart to greater loyalty,
My hands to larger service, and
My health to better living,
For my club, my community,
my country, and my world.

Want to know more about 4-H? Find your local
program at **4-h.org/find**.



Additional copies of this book and other Ohio State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development publications are available through local OSU Extension offices and online at **extensionpubs.osu.edu**. Ohio residents get the best price when they order and pick up their purchases through local Extension offices.

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