

Horse Show Class Descriptions:

Specific information can be found in the NYS 4-H Equine Show Rule Book such as attire requirements and tack requirements for each division.

Showmanship at Halter—this class is to be judged on the cleanliness and condition of the equine, the training and manners of the equine, and the way in which the exhibitor presents the equine to the judge. (Also called Fit and Show)

Trail Class—this class the equine will be tested for manners and obedience over and through a series of obstacles that insofar as possible are limited to those that might be encountered in normal riding. The equine should handle each obstacle quietly and willingly, but not without showing some curiosity about the obstacle. A good trail equine should be relied upon to investigate obstacles to determine the safety of proceeding over or through them. The equine should not forge ahead without inspecting the obstacle.

Obstacles may include: Gate; Logs or poles; Bridge; Back-up with at least a 30 degree turn; Obstacle to be walked over or jumped, at least 14" high but not more than 24" high; Slicker to be picked up and put back, while mounted; Carrying a bucket or pail; Side passing over L-or T-shaped rails demonstrating ability in both directions. Rails may be elevated up to 12" to 18"; Mailbox to be opened and closed; Dragging a log or sack with a rope; Passing tractor, truck or motorcycle; Water hazards

Command Class—this is an elimination contest where any rider not executing the judge's exact command promptly and correctly is **eliminated**. Assistants may be stationed at various points of the ring to aid in observing and eliminating contestants who fail to follow commands. Placings are made in the reverse order of elimination. Commands may include: walk, trot, canter, halt, reverse at any gait or at the halt, go from a gait to any other gait, counter lope or canter and to back up in a straight line or back into reverse. All assistants and the judge should agree on an established procedure for calling faults including the number of steps or strides permitted in transitions, the number of feet which move at a halt, etc.

Costume Class—Each contestant or group of not more than three contestants are to prepare themselves and their mounts to carry out a specific theme of their choice or one specified for the show. Expensive native Arabian and Indian costumes will not be given credit over an inexpensive costume which shows imagination, ingenuity and clearly represents the efforts of the exhibitor. All entries should be accompanied by a 3"x5" card which contains the name(s) of the exhibitor(s), county and region, and the theme of the costume or an explanation of the purpose or intent. No skits or acts will be accepted. All exhibitors must design the costumes in such a manner as to permit movement at the walk and to be safe. No costume will be permitted to enter or remain in the ring, if in the opinion of the judge, ringmaster or the show committee, the costume is deemed to create a hazardous situation for the exhibitor or any other exhibitor, the equine involved is unruly to the point of being unable to manage or as the result of activity during the class, the costume is seriously damaged or deteriorated. The above will be cause for **disqualification**. Helmets must be worn at all times.

Versatility Class—this class is designed to test the versatility of the rider rather than the equine. At least four classes should be used. The choice of the classes should test the contestant's ability in at least two different seats, Fitting and Showmanship and at least one performance class. Suggested combinations include Saddle Seat Fit and Show, Saddle Seat Equitation, Barrel Racing, and Western Riding; Hunter Seat Fit and Show, Western Equitation, Hunt Seat Equitation over fences, and Western Reining; Western Fit and Show, Barrel Racing, Hunt Seat Equitation and Western Riding.

Stock Seat Equitation—only the rider is being judged, therefore any equine that is suitable for this style of riding and is capable of performing the required class routine is acceptable. The results as shown by the performance of the equine are not to be considered more important than the method used in obtaining them.

The rider should present the appearance of being relaxed and comfortable, while at the same time being in complete control of the equine.

Western Pleasure—a good pleasure equine has a stride of reasonable length in keeping with his confirmation. He has enough cushion to his pastern to give the rider a pleasant, smooth ride. He carries his head in a natural position, not high and over flexed at the poll or low with the nose out. The equine should be relaxed but alert and ready to respond to the rider's commands without excessive cueing. When asked to extend the jog, he moves out with the same smooth way of going.

Western Riding—this class is a competition in the performance of a sensible, well mannered, free and easy moving ranch equine, which can get its rider around on the usual ranch chores, over the trails, and will give a quiet, comfortable and pleasant ride in the open country over obstacles. Special emphasis shall be given to the rider's methods used in obtaining the equine's performance.

Western Reining—each entry will individually perform a required pattern as selected and posted prior to the beginning of the show. The equine should rein and handle easily, fluently, effortlessly and with reasonable speed throughout the pattern. Any equine not following the exact course of travel indicated in the pattern will be disqualified.

Horsemanship Class—All exhibitors must perform an individual pattern which is not to exceed 1 minute. Pattern will be of the judge's choosing and will be posted prior to the beginning of the class.

Western Road Hack Class—equines are to be shown at a walk, jog, extended job, lope and extended lope both ways of the ring. The equine should be similar to the Western Pleasure mount in that it should move in a consistent, relaxed and willing manner.

Cloverleaf Barrels—Three barrels shall be placed in a triangle formation spaced as closely as possible to the suggested course.

Ride to barrel #1, circle it to the right, ride to barrel #2, circle it to the left, ride to barrel #3, circle it to the left and ride across the finish line. Or, cross start line and ride to barrel #2, circle it to the left, ride to barrel #1, circle it to the right, ride to barrel #3, circle it to the right, and ride across the finish line.

Straight-Line Barrels—Five barrels are placed in a straight line, spaced 21' apart, from the start/finish line.

Ride to barrel #1(side optional), weaves in and out to barrel #5, turns barrel #5 and weaves back toward finish line, ending on opposite side of barrel #1 and crosses finish line.

Pole Bending—Six poles shall be placed in a straight line, spaced 21' apart with the first pole being 21' from the start/finish line.

Ride to pole #6, (side optional) turns pole #6 left or right, then weaves (bends) around the opposite side of each pole to pole #1 and weaves around the opposite side of each pole to pole #6, turns and rides to the finish line on the opposite side of the poles as the initial run-in.

Keyhole Race—The keyhole pattern shall be outlined and marked with line marker or flour .

Ride into circle of keyhole (all four of equine's feet must be inside circle), turns either left or right, rides out of keyhole and across the finish line.

Stake-N-Barrel—Two barrels shall be placed in a straight line. The first barrel 30' from the start/finish line and the second barrel 90' further down the arena.

Ride to the first barrel (side optional), removes stake and proceeds to opposite side of second barrel, turns and returns to opposite side of first barrel, returns stake into barrel and crosses finish line.

Hunt Seat Equitation—Only the rider is being judged, therefore any equine that is suitable for this style of riding and is capable of performing the required class routine is acceptable. The rider should have a traditional appearance, seat and hands light and supple, conveying the impression of being able to maintain control should any emergency arise. Emphasis will be placed on the rider's ability to effectively control the equine and maintain the basic position while doing so.

Basic position—the eyes should be up and shoulders back. Heels down. The calf of the leg should be in contact with the equine and slightly behind the girth. The irons should be placed under the ball of the foot.

Hands- should be slightly apart, over and in front of the equine's withers, with thumbs slightly turned inward. The reins should be held in a light contact, making a straight line from the equine's mouth to the rider's elbow. The bight of the reins may fall on either side. However, all reins must be picked up at the same time.

Position in Motion—1. Walk and slow trot-body should be vertical. 2. Posting trot-inclined forward. 3. Canter-halfway between the posting trot and the walk.

See NYS 4-H Hunt Seat Division in 4-H Horse Show Rule Book for class routine and more info.

Hunt Seat Pleasure—Equine's are to be shown at a walk, trot, canter both ways of the ring. The pleasure equine should be smooth, relaxed and willing. These traits should be evident when the equine is worked at each gait. Emphasis will be placed on the smoothness of the performance of the equine and on the suitability of the equine to the rider for this style of riding.

See NYS 4-H Hunt Seat Division in 4-H Horse Show Rule Book for class routine and more info.

Hunter Under Saddle—Equines are to be shown at a walk, trot, extended trot (at judge's discretion) and canter, both ways of the ring. At the judge's discretion, all equines being considered for an award will be required to hand gallop one way of the ring. The equine should be similar to the Hunt Seat Pleasure mount, in that it is smooth, relaxed and willing. Emphasis will be placed on the equine's performance and the suitability to the rider for this style of riding.

See NYS 4-H Hunt Seat Division in 4-H Horse Show Rule Book for class routine and more info.

Hunter Hack—Equines are to be shown at a walk, trot, canter, and may be asked to extend the trot, both ways of the ring. All equines being considered for an award will be required to jump two fences not more than 2 feet high. The equine should be similar to the Hunter Under Saddle mount, in that it is smooth, relaxed and willing. The style of jumping should be smooth and consistent, such that the equine could be relied on to take the rider over fences in a safe, obedient manner at an even hunting pace. Emphasis will be placed on the equine's performance and the suitability to the rider for this style of riding. To be judged 30% on performance on the flat and 70% on performance over fences.

See NYS 4-H Hunt Seat Division in 4-H Horse Show Rule Book for class routine and more info.

Hunt Seat Equitation Over Fences—Only the rider is being judged, therefore any equine that is suitable for this style of riding and is capable of performing the required class routine is acceptable. The rider should demonstrate ability in controlling the equine while going over fences such that a balanced, even pace is maintained while also maintaining a safe and suitable position.

Basic position—Same basic position is required as for Hunt Seat Equitation on the Flat. While going over jumps, the inclination of the rider should be in a 2-point position; however, the rider should be flexible enough to maintain the position which is best suited to the individual equine's style of taking fences and also to the height of the fences. Stirrups may be slightly shorter for jumping than for work on the flat.

Hands—should be slightly apart, over and in front of the equine's withers, with thumbs slightly turned inward. The reins should be held in a light contact, making a straight line from the equine's mouth to the rider's elbow. The bight of the reins may fall on either side, however, all reins must be picked up at the same time. Sympathy with the equine's movements and an ability to adjust to these movements will be emphasized.

See NYS 4-H Hunt Seat Division in 4-H Horse Show Rule Book for class routine and more info.

Working Hunter—The entries in this class will show over a minimum of 6 fences. The Working Hunter should provide his rider with a safe, consistent ride at a working pace over a course of fences similar to those that might be encountered in the field. Emphasis on this class will be based on performance and conformation. The scoring of performance will be based on the maintenance of an even hunting pace, faults, manners, jumping style and way of moving over the course. Conformation will take into consideration quality, substance and soundness. Touches may or may not be used to assist in scoring the performance of the equine or to break ties. In classes with eight or more entries, it is recommended that touches be used in scoring.

See NYS 4-H Hunt Seat Division in 4-H Horse Show Rule Book for class routine and more info.

Saddle Seat Equitation—In equitation classes only the rider is being judged, therefore any equine that is suitable for this type of riding and which is capable of performing the required class routine is acceptable. It should be remembered that the equine's performance is directly influenced by the rider and the rider's ability to effectively communicate commands to the equine. Judges should note that the required Equitation Seat should in no way be exaggerated but be thoroughly efficient and most comfortable for riding the type of equine called for at any gait and for any length of time.

In Saddle Seat Equitation classes, riders should convey impression of effective and easy control. To show an equine well, he should show himself to the best advantage. Ring generalship must be taken into consideration by the judges. A complete picture of the whole is of major importance.

Basic Position—To obtain proper position, rider should place himself comfortably in the saddle and should find his center of gravity by sitting with a slight bend at the knees but without use of irons. While in this position adjust leathers to fit. Irons should be placed under ball of foot (not toe nor "home") with even pressure on entire width of sole and center of iron. Foot position should be natural (neither extremely in nor out).

Hands—should be held in an easy position, neither perpendicular nor horizontal to the saddle and should show sympathy, adaptability and control. The height the hands are held above the equine's withers is a matter of how and where the equine carries his head. The method of holding the reins is optional, however, both hands must be used and all reins must be picked up at one time. Bight of rein should be on the off side.

Position in Motion—1. Walk-slight motion in saddle. 2. Trot- slight elevation in saddle posting; hips under body not mechanical up-and-down nor swinging forward and backward. 3. Intermediate Gait- a four beat lateral gait, including but not limited to the following gaits: running walk, fox trot, single foot, and the gaits of the Paso Fino. 4. Canter- close seat, going with equine. 5. Slow Gait- steady in saddle, no slap nor twist; legs straight down, intermittent sawing. 6. Rack- seat smooth in saddle; legs down and slightly back, not thrust forward; hands low in motion with gait, not sawing but placement optional to individual rider and equine.

See NYS 4-H Saddle Seat Division in 4-H Horse Show Rule Book for class routine and more info.

English Pleasure Saddle Seat—Equines are to be shown at the walk, trot and canter, both ways of the ring. The pleasure equine should be easy to handle, obedient and consistent. Light contact with the equine's mouth must be maintained. It is recommended that equines be brought to a flat-footed walk before changing gaits. Pulling, tossing of the head, going sideways and other indications of poor manners will be penalized. Equines may be shown with either a full or roached mane, long or short tail. Tails must be carried naturally. Manners and suitability as a pleasure mount are paramount. May cross enter in any other class, including Park or Classic Country Pleasure.

See NYS 4-H Saddle Seat Division in 4-H Horse Show Rule Book for class routine and more info.

Saddle Seat Road Hack—To be judged on performance, manners and suitability for road hack equines. Equines are to be shown at a walk, trot, extended trot, canter and hand gallop. The road hack should be obedient, consistent and easy to handle. The equine should back readily if asked to. At any time during the class the judge may ask equines to halt and walk off on a loose rein. Emphasis in this class will be placed on both the performance and the confirmation of the equine. The scoring of the equine's performance will be based on the smoothness of the overall performance and especially on the ability to extend the trot by actually lengthening the stride rather than just moving on with more speed. Conformation will take into account soundness, quality and substance.

See NYS 4-H Saddle Seat Division in 4-H Horse Show Rule Book for class routine and more info.

Training Level Dressage Tests—the purpose of the Training Level Dressage Tests is to confirm that the equine's muscles are supple and loose, and that it moves freely forward in a clear and steady rhythm, accepting contact with the bit. Gaits judged on freedom and regularity. Impulsion judged on desire to move forward, elasticity of steps, suppleness of the back, and engagement of the hindquarters. Submission judged on attention and confidence; harmony, lightness and ease of movements, and acceptance of the bridle. Rider's position and seat judged on correctness and effect of the aids.

First Level Dressage Tests—the purpose of the First Level Dressage Tests is to confirm that the equine, in addition to the requirements of Training Level, has developed thrust (pushing power) and achieved a degree of balance and thoroughness. Gaits judged on freedom and regularity. Impulsion judged on desire to move forward, elasticity of the steps, suppleness of the back, and engagement of the hindquarters. Submission judged on attention and confidence, harmony, lightness and ease of movements, and acceptance of the bridle, lightness of the forehand. Rider's position and seat judged on correctness and effect of the aids.

See NYS 4-H Dressage Division in 4-H Horse Show Rule Book for class routine and more info.

Driving—See Driving Division in NYS 4-H Horse Show Rule Book.

Miniature—See Miniature Equine Division in NYS 4-H Horse Show Rule Book.

Equine Drill and Parade Team—See Drill and Parade Team Division in NYS 4-H Horse Show Rule Book.