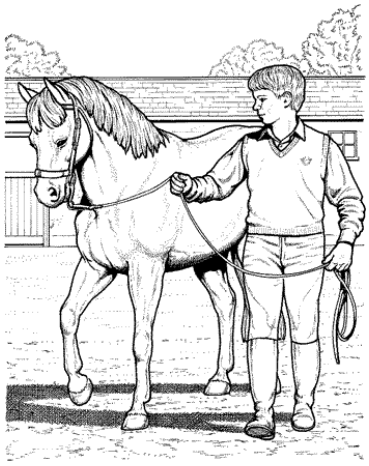
West Central 4-H Horse Show Regulations



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Regional Horse Show Definition and Philosophy

The West Central Regional Horse Show will follow the 4-H Alberta Equine Project Standards. It is the members' responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with this policy. 4-H-Alberta-Equine-Standard-2020.pdf (4hab.com)

A Regional Horse show can be defined as a show open to any 4-H Horse member who is in good standing within the West Central Region.

The main focus of a Regional show is to provide the opportunity for Horse club members to meet with others who have a common interest, learn more about horses, themselves, and others and have fun.

Show Committee Organization

A Regional Horse Show committee will be established at the annual meeting in January. There will be at least 3 other meetings occurring in February, April and June. This committee's duties will be to organize, promote and manage the Regional Show and other equine activities within the region. All horse clubs in the Region are expected to have a representative at two of three meetings prior to the show, in order to be in good standing. Refer to the Constitution (effective January 21, 2024).

Executive positions for the Regional Horse Committee will be elected for two-year terms, with the elections of President and Treasurer to occur on an alternating year than the Secretary and Vice-President to encourage continuity of the committee. One Provincial Equine Advisory Committee (PEAC) representative will be elected for a three-year term with a maximum 2 terms. The Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) Coordinator will be elected annually. The Show Secretary will be elected for a three-year term. The Show Executive Committee will consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, PEAC Representative, Show Secretary and Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) Coordinator.

Grievances

If a member or parent has any grievances they must be expressed in writing, with a $50 fee to the Show Executive Committee within 24 hours of the incident. If the grievance is upheld the $50 fee will be returned. Grievances presented to the Show Executive Committee at the show will be reviewed within one hour of receipt. The Executive Committee may decide to deal immediately with the grievance or if the matter is not urgent, they may decide to deal with the grievance after the show. The Show executive Committee will respond to grievances presented at the show by meeting with the affected parties. If a decision can be made immediately, it will be communicated verbally to the affected parties and a written response will be forwarded within two weeks. The Show Executive Committee has the right to determine consequences which may include expulsion from the show. A member or parent that has a grievance must be accompanied by the club leader or assistant leader when presenting the grievance to the show executive committee.

Any concerns may be presented in writing for discussion at the June meeting of the Horse Show Committee.

Please remember, above all, that volunteers run this show.

Supervision and Duties

All clubs participating in the show are expected to take on some duties at the January meeting relating to the organization of the show.

All participating Clubs will also be assigned other duties at the show, in the show office, hitching rings, warm up rings, trail rings, and ribbons, etc. These assignments will be sent to the clubs prior to the show. Any club not showing up for the assigned duty will be charged a fine of $100. An additional $100 fine will be assessed for each missed duty. These fines must be paid before any members from that club may enter any subsequent Regional Shows. Volunteers are expected to stay focused on the task at hand, and only offer advice to other volunteers running separate duties, if requested.

All members using the warmup ring must be supervised (within vocal range) by an adult who knows them, for the duration of warm up, in addition to the club volunteers in charge of the ring.

All members attending the show must have an adult present at the show that is responsible for them for the duration of the show.

Awards

Club Spirit Award: This award will be awarded to the Club displaying the ideals of club pride, stable management, and sportsmanship.
Stall Decorating: This award will be awarded to the club with the best stall display.

Both awards will be voted on by members and leaders attending the show.

Horse Ownership and Replacement

- Each Club will be responsible for the decision of and decision process regarding replacement horses during the 4-H year, up until show entry forms are submitted.
- It is recommended that members own their horse, but exceptions will always be necessary. It is reasonable to expect that the member can be responsible for the care and training of the horse. This should be strongly emphasized. There will be situations arising when it will be necessary for a member to replace a horse after the show entries have been submitted. It is difficult to have hard and fast rules for this. If a horse is medically unfit to show, a veterinary certificate must be presented to the committee executive.
- If your horse comes up lame at the show and you have a replacement you would like to use, you may do so on the approval of three Regional Show Executive.
- All replacement horses should be equivalently safe to the horse being replaced.
- Entry fees will be refunded with a veterinary or medical certificate.
- Horse ID sheets must be presented to show committee with show entries.
- Mares with a foal at foot are prohibited.
- It is strongly recommended that all horses have had their shots.
- Any horse showing signs of a communicable disease will be asked to leave the grounds at the discretion of a veterinarian.
- The Show Committee has the right to remove any horse for health, safety or soundness issues. Any horse that has been excused for the above reasons will not be eligible for further showing without proving soundness.
- The Show Secretary may limit the number of horses a member may stall depending upon the number of entries received.

- Junior Horses are horses 5 years and under. Senior horses are 6 years and over. Horse age is determined by whatever age your horse turns in the show year. Example – your horse was born in August 2010. The show is in 2015. Your horse is five years old.

Classes and Eligibility

- A refund will only be issued to a member in the event of a medical or family emergency.
- A Regional Horse Show must include the following classes: Western Horsemanship, Western Pleasure, English Equitation, English Pleasure, Showmanship and Trail for Levels 1 – 7.
- Other classes will be added or removed at the discretion of The Committee. Classes will be combined or separated as warranted by the Show Secretary.
- Some levels may be split into age divisions. Ages will be calculated as the age of the member on December 31st of the current 4-H year.
- The contestant must be entered in the level they are currently working on. Example: once you are riding in Level 3, you may not ride in any Level 2 or lower classes. Level 4 will be split into 4-1 classes for one-handed riding and 4-2 classes for two-handed riding. NO CROSS ENTRIES.
    - If the member has entered the show in a 4-1 class, the following year the member may not enter in a 4-2 class unless they have a new project horse. (A reset) This is only possible in level 4 if the member has advanced to a level 5 no "reset" is allowed.
- The levels entered will be at the leader's discretion on the honor system. It is suggested that the member enter the highest level that he/she is comfortable/competent in.
- Contestants must have completed their Level 3 Horsemanship to compete in any Jumping, Dressage, Gymkhana, Reining**,** Yearling and Two-Year-Old classes.
- If you are in Level 4 and above and have a junior horse, you must enter the junior horse classes.
- If you miss your designated class, you will only be allowed to enter your next registered class.

Show Etiquette

- The Judges, Show Steward and the Show Executive Committee decisions will be considered final.
- All manure in wash racks **must** be cleaned up and disposed of in the bin prior to leaving the wash rack.
- Conduct on West Central Regional Horse Show grounds of 4-H members, non-members, trainers, owners and parents shall be orderly, responsible, sportsmanlike, and humane in such manner to promote fair competition. Un-sportsmanlike behavior, irresponsible conduct, ill treatment of show officials, judges, ring stewards, and show volunteers will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the show. Only the announcer and recording or Show Secretary or Executive are allowed in the announcer's booth. No members, parents or leaders should be in the booth with the announcer unless on assigned duty from the Show Committee.
- The General Show Steward shall be responsible for ensuring rules are followed, help to deal with grievances and make recommendations for further changes.
- Inhumane treatment of horses is prohibited. All 4-H members and their family members will be expected to treat their project horse in a humane manner or risk expulsion from the show.
- Alcohol, illegal drugs, cannabis, tobacco and tobacco products are prohibited at all 4-H functions by members. Members consuming any of alcohol, illegal drugs, cannabis, tobacco and tobacco products risk being expelled from Regional Horse Show.
- Cannabis consumption is prohibited.

Safety

- ASTM or SEI approved helmets are mandatory when mounted or horse in hand, including in the wash rack.
- All members 9 to 21 years old riding in the warm-up ring **must** have an adult present who knows them.
- A maximum of 15 – 20 riders will be allowed in the warm-up ring at one time for a twenty (20) minute time period. Preference will be given to members with upcoming classes.
- Any horses requiring lunging will be scheduled in a designated area. A maximum of two horses may be lunged at a time. Preference will be given to members with upcoming classes. All lungers must wear a helmet and a number on their back. All lungers **must** have an adult present at the designated area.
- Absolutely no riding or lunging on the track.
- Any horse that is disruptive or uncontrollable may be excused from the ring.
- No riding in halters.
- No riding double.
- No trotting, loping or cantering anywhere on the grounds outside of the arenas.
- Riding is only allowed in designated areas.
- No riding bareback.
- No riding in the barns.
- Stalls are not to be left with doors open and ropes across the doorway. Please use stall doors or web closures to keep horse in stall.
- Each stall must have a sign on the front, which contains information about the horse. These signs are provided by the show committee and are to be completed by the member. A halter should also be left hanging on the outside of the stall door.
- All water fights are to stay out of the barn and stay clear of horses. No water fights at the wash racks when horses are present.
- Dogs are not allowed around any area where there are horses. They must stay at the owner's trailer, and they must be kept on a leash.
- No bikes, skateboards, roller blades, low wheeled children's toys, or ATVs are permitted on the grounds. Golf carts may be permitted at the discretion of the Show Executive Committee.
- Objects that can be kicked and/or thrown are not to be used around the horses.
- No open-toed shoes including flip flops are allowed when in the arena, hitching and warm-up rings or when handling horses including in the wash racks and the barns. This safety rule applies to all present at the show.
- The Red Deer Westerner does not allow helium balloons on the premises. Tissue paper and streamers are also not allowed.

Uniforms and Attire

- Each club must submit a picture of their club uniform with their club entry forms. Show jackets are not considered part of a club uniform.
- Club colors or dress must be worn at all times in the show ring with the exceptions of Matched Pairs, English classes, Adult Command classes and Drill.
- Three show numbers will be provided to each member. They must be worn on either side of the saddle pad, except for showmanship, lunge-line and in-hand trail classes. The third number must be worn on the back at all times when a horse is being handled.

Showmanship:

The appearance of the exhibitor must be neat, clean and in their club uniform. The attire should be appropriate in the manner the horse is being shown (English, Western, or Saddle seat). Boots, long-sleeved shirt or blouse and belt are mandatory. Long hair must be contained. Gloves are optional. No chaps or spurs. Participants in showmanship must wear an ASTM or SEI approved helmet.

Western Classes:

- Clothing must fit properly and be neat and clean. Exhibitors must wear their club uniform consisting of the following: a) Western boots b) approved ASTM or SEI helmet c) Long sleeved shirt with collar and cuff or slinky worn with a vest. Sleeves are to be worn down at all times in the arena. Shirts must be done up and do not require a tie, kerchief, bolo or pin at the neck, d) Western pants or boot cut jeans with a belt to be worn (Jeans should not be rolled up, frayed or tattered) e) Chaps, gloves and spurs are optional. Chinks are only acceptable in reining, all cattle events and gymkhana**.**
- Long hair must be contained.
- All boots must have at least a ½ inch heel with a non-aggressive tread. Lace up boots are not recommended for safety concerns.

English Classes:

- Jacket: black, tweed or conservative dark color (navy, dark green or brown etc.)
- Jodhpurs or Breeches: Neutral colors such as beige, buff, light grey, white, tan or rust.
- White or light-colored shirt: tie, stock tie or choker must be worn with a tiepin.
- Black English boots are to be worn (either leather or rubber) with breeches and a black or dark jacket.
    - With a tweed jacket, black or brown boots may be worn.
    - With jodhpurs and a tweed or black jacket, jodhpur boots (paddock boots), which come to just above the ankle are to be worn. Half chaps may be worn provided they match the boot color.
- Helmet meeting ASTM or SEI standards must be worn. The tack steward will ensure that members are riding with approved helmets. In jumping class if harness comes undone or helmet falls off, rider must correct it before continuing on the course or taking the next jump.
- Hair must be neat and tidy, contained in a hair net, braid or bun (off the collar).
- Gloves are optional. Dark gloves are recommended.
- Spurs are optional, but if worn must be the un-rowelled type.
- Numbers must be worn on competitor's back and on each side of the saddle pad and must be clearly visible.
- Crop or Whip is optional in all classes over fences, with the exception of Hunter Hack, if carried, it must not be longer than 75 cm (30"). It must not be carried in flat classes. In Dressage riders may carry a crop or whip up to 120 cm (4 feet).

Gymkhana Events:

- Club uniforms with sleeves down at all times and western pants or jeans worn with a belt must be worn. Members may remove vests and accessories for gymkhana events. ASTM or SEI approved riding helmets must be worn for any competitor to compete in these events.
- Chaps, gloves, and spurs are optional.
- Level 1-3 riders can ride in either English or western tack for games.

Grooming and Tack

For all western classes manes and tails should not be braided.

Showmanship Grooming:

- Hair coat must be clean and well brushed. Mane and tail should be clean and free of tangles. The mane may be roached but a forelock and tuft over the withers must be left.
- If a horse kicks, a red ribbon must be placed in its tail.
- Bridle path must be trimmed.
- Hooves should be trimmed and clean. If shod, shoes must fit properly, and clinches should be neat. Dressings and polish may be used.

Showmanship Tack:

- Horse shall be shown with a well-fitting, clean halter and lead, which is safe and practical. No rope or cotton halters are permitted. Halter must be web or leather. Chains are optional but if using a shank with a chain, it may be attached in **one** of the following ways:
  - at the right throatlatch ring, run down the side of the halter through ring on the right side of the muzzle then under the jaw to exit the ring at the muzzle on the left side of the muzzle. The remaining chain should be a minimum length of 2 inches and a maximum of 10 inches from the last hardware contacted on the halter.
  - through the centre bottom ring under the jaw of the horse. The length of the chain can be a minimum of 2 inches and a maximum of 10 inches from the last hardware contacted on the halter.
- Leads must be held folded not coiled and held in the center with no fingers between the folds.
- It is appropriate to use a bridle when showing a horse English or Saddle seat.

Yearling and 2-Year-Old Lunge Line:

- Participants in this class must wear an ASTM or SEI approved helmet
- Optional equipment: lunge whip, gloves and protective splint boots. No other equipment is acceptable. Cavessons are prohibited.

Tack for Western Classes:

- All equipment must be clean, tidy, and in good repair. No extra points will be given for silver or colored trim.
- Suitable western saddle with standard rigging. **Keepers (stirrup hobble) to be used on all saddles.**
- Breast collar and back cinch are optional. If using a back cinch, a cinch hobble between front and back cinch is mandatory.
- Bridles may be web or leather. All bridles must have a throatlatch.
- In any Level 4-1 to Level 7 performance classes where a horse is over five years of age a leverage bit is mandatory and must be ridden with one hand.
  - In Level 4-2, a leverage bit with **no solid mouth pieces**, and must be ridden with 2 hands. A snaffle bit will not be accepted.
- A leverage bit is defined as a bit with a broken or solid mouthpiece, has shanks and acts with leverage. A leverage bit requires the use of a curb strap.
- A curb strap or chain strap cannot be narrower than 1.25 cm or ½" and must lie flat against the jaw. It must be loose enough to insert two fingers between the strap and the jaw.

- Gag bits (any leverage bit with a sliding mouthpiece, regardless of the length of the slide) are prohibited in Western Performance classes.
- A junior horse, 5 years of age and younger, can be ridden in snaffle, leverage or bosal. The horse must remain in the same bit for all western performance classes. No side pulls.
- Please refer to the Bit Rule Example Document for information on acceptable bits.
- A Snaffle bit is defined as a non-leverage bit. The three acceptable types are O-ring, Egg Butt, and D-ring, and the ring to be no larger than 3 ½". Half cheek snaffles are acceptable. A leather or nylon curb strap must be used with a snaffle bit. Reins are to be attached above the curb strap.
- Level 1-3 riders should use a snaffle or broken mouthpiece bit. Level 1–3 riders are encouraged to ride **with two hands**. Riders may use one hand if they are riding with a leveraged bit. Split reins are required for Level 1 – 3 regardless of bit type.
- Level 4 – 7 riders riding a junior horse with a snaffle bit or bosal, must use two hands. Riders riding a junior horse with a leverage bit must ride with one hand.
- Twisted wire snaffles, double or single, are prohibited in all classes
- Split or romal reins must be used in all performance classes. They may be leather or nylon web.
- The ends of the split reins must fall on the same side of the horse as the hand holding the reins. The reins are to be brought through the top of the hand holding the reins and out the bottom. One finger is to be permitted to be held between the reins. When using romal reins, the romal must be brought up through the bottom of the hand and out the top. The tail of the romal is held in the free hand no closer than 40 cm (16") from the rein hand. A finger is not permitted between the romal reins, and the romal is not permitted to be coiled in any manner in the free hand. The romal cannot be used forward of the cinch or act as a whip. When using a romal, hobbles may be carried on the saddle.
- Generally, it is more correct for a rider to hold the reins in their left hand, but either hand is acceptable. Riders must not change their rein hand during a class, with the exception of Trail class.
- The free hand (whether using a romal or split rein) must never touch the horse or saddle or grab the reins to use two hands.
- Mechanical hackamores, nosebands and tie down, running martingales, draw reins or any other training aid is prohibited in performance classes.
- Mechanical hackamores (must contain non-rigid material under the jaw), running martingales and tie downs may be used in speed events only.
- Side pulls are not allowed in any classes, Bosals are only allowed in Junior horse classes, no exceptions.
- Whips, crops and bats are prohibited in all performance classes.
- Protective boots, splint boots, bell boots, skid boots, are prohibited in all performance classes.
- Leg wraps are prohibited in all classes except Drill Team.
- Spurs are optional but if worn must be humane.

Trail:

- Level 1-3 riders may ride in either English or western tack. Judges will give preference to western tack.
- Level 4-7 must be in western tack and attire.
- A Handy Horse Trail class will be offered for English 4-7 riders.
    - Members must choose between Handy Horse or Trail they are not to enter both.

In Hand Trail:

- Horses and members must be attired as they would for a showmanship class.
- Participants in this class must wear an ASTM or SEI approved helmet.

Gymkhana Events:

- Please see tack for Western classes.
- Roping reins are acceptable for gymkhana events.
- No elastics on boots or stirrups for any riding event including gymkhana.
- Whips (over unders) **OR** spurs can be used.
- Protective boots, splint boots and bell boots are permitted in speed events.

English Events

Any rule not below will abide by the Equine Canada (EC) rulebook.

English Tack:

- Must be neat and clean.
- Saddle: Plain English or modified jumping may be used in all classes. A dressage saddle may be used in flat classes but would not be comfortable for jumping.
- Bar hook must be open and if it is not possible to open it then safety stirrups must be used.
- Saddle Pads: may be fleece or cotton. A numnah shaped contoured pad is recommended.
- Bridle: Must be leather, English in style. It must have a leather browband, which is not solid white, colored or sequined. White edging, not exceeding 0.63 cm (1/4") is permissible. Must have a leather cavesson noseband. Flash, Figure 8 or dropped nosebands are not permitted except in Jumper classes. In Dressage classes, browbands may be coloured and/or sequined. Drop, cavesson, flash and Figure 8 nosebands are permitted in Dressage.
- Bits may be snaffle, Pelham, double or kimberwick. Half cheek snaffles are acceptable. The snaffle may not be twisted wire, may not have a curb strap, and all bits must be humane type. Gag bits are prohibited.
- No bit converters are allowed.
- English girth in good repair.
- Breastplates are allowed in all classes.
- No martingales, boots, or bandages may be used in flat classes.
- Bandages and boots are not allowed in hunter classes.
- Properly fitted standing and running martingales may be used in hunters over fences; running martingales and boots are allowed in Jumper classes.
- Tie down, side reins and draw reins are prohibited.
- Braiding of mane and tail is optional. (If braiding mane & forelock, tail may be braided) Elastic bands or yarn are permissible.

Dressage: (Members may only enter English Dressage or Western Dressage, not both)

- Members may enter a junior and senior project providing both horses are in full tack and ready to go at ring side. No gate holds will be allowed
- Spurs are allowed, but they must be blunt metal spurs no longer than 1.5 cm.
- All bridles must be correctly fitted and be black or brown in colour. Reins must be black or brown in colour.
- Type of reins is optional but reins with hand loops, elastic or rubber inserts are prohibited.
- Drop, cavesson, flash and Figure 8 nosebands are permitted.
- Whips are permitted, however the total length of the whip (including lash), used while mounted on a horse must not exceed 120 cm, while mounted on a pony the length must not exceed 100 cm. Telescoping whips are not permitted.
- The following are not permitted:
  - Leg boots and bandages
  - Running martingales
  - Single direct side-reins or double sliding reins
  - Equine nasal strips
  - Kimberwick bits
  - Waterford bits

Arena Etiquette

- Only judges, ringmasters, and tack stewards are allowed to call someone from the show ring unless an extreme safety concern arises.
- Enter the ring and travel counter clockwise unless otherwise directed.
- Keep as close to the rail as possible.
- Always pass to the inside of the arena.
- Don't try to squeeze between the rail and another rider. When passing allow enough room in front and back of the horse you are passing. Do NOT cut sharply in front of another horse or travel too close behind. Be aware of these points and they will reduce the chances of anyone being kicked.
- A red ribbon in a horse's tail means that the horse kicks and must be displayed at all times for all horses that kick.
- Three show numbers will be provided to each member. They must be worn on either side of the saddle pad, except for showmanship, lunge-line and in-hand trail classes, as well as on the member's back. If you have a horse in hand, you must be wearing a number.
- Always reverse direction by turning to the inside of the arena.
- Always be aware of other riders in the arena and try to keep proper spacing.
- All gates will be kept closed for safety reasons.
- It is the member's responsibility to keep track of classes and listen for any changes to show order. If you miss your designated class, you will only be allowed to enter your next registered class.
- Please advise hitching ring of any scratches and need for a gate hold. This is the member's responsibility. Gate holds will be permitted when asked due to conflict of classes. Priority is given to group riding classes over individual pattern classes.
- Equipment and clothing etc. will not be hung along the fence for safety reasons.

Rules and Procedures for Classes
Western Division

Patterns:
All patterns will be distributed in the club packages, available one hour before the show starts. Any patterns not in the package will be posted one hour prior to the class if there is a pattern.

Yearling and 2-Year-Old Lunge Line:
- Yearling and 2-year-old Lunge Line classes will be judged on movement, manners, way of going, disposition, transitions, and handler's ability.
- The horse is to be shown both ways of the arena on a lunge line at a walk, and trot for yearlings and walk, trot and lope for the two-year-old's. There is no designation on which way of the ring is to be traveled first. However, within the restricted time frame all of the gaits must be shown both ways of the ring. The method used to change direction is optional.
- There will be a maximum two (2) minute time limit. Contestants will be notified at the half time mark.
- Horses are to be exhibited in halter on a lunge line with a maximum length of 30 feet.
- Unsafe use of the lunge line or whip may result in dismissal from the class.
- The lunge line must travel freely from the horse to the handler without touching any other part of the horse.

In Hand Trail:
- Available for yearlings and two-year-old's only.
- Minimum of four obstacles which may include:
  - bridge
  - trot or walk-overs
  - gate
  - carrying an object
  - back-up
  - turning in a box
- Scoring criteria will be the same as for a mounted trail class.

Showmanship at Halter:
- Showmanship class will be judged strictly on the exhibitor's ability to fit and show a horse at halter. The horse is merely a prop used to demonstrate the ability and preparation of the exhibitor.
- The ideal showmanship performance consists of a poised, confident, neatly attired exhibitor leading a well-groomed and conditioned horse that quickly and efficiently performs the requested pattern. Showmanship is not a halter class and should not be judged as so.
- All exhibitors should enter the ring leading the horse, which should be alert and walk in a counter clockwise direction unless otherwise directed by the Ringmaster or the Judge.
- The following are considered acceptable: leading the horse at a walk, jog/trot or extended trot; a back-up in a straight or curved line or combination of straight and curved lines; stop; and turn 90 degrees (1/4), 180 (1/2), 270 (3/4), 360 (full turn) or any combination thereof. The judge must have the exhibitor set up squarely for inspection sometime during the class.
- The exhibitor should be poised, confident and courteous at all times. They should quickly recognize and correct faults in the position of the horse. The exhibitor should continue to show the horse throughout

the entire class. The horse should lead willingly and not drag behind the exhibitor and be responsive to the exhibitor's cues.

- The exhibitor must lead on the horse's left side holding the lead shank in the right. The remaining portion of the lead should be carried neatly and safely in the left hand. A tightly coiled or rolled lead shank will be considered a fault. Lead rope must be folded, not coiled and held in center with no fingers between the folds. When leading the exhibitor should be positioned between the eye and mid-point of the horse's neck, referred to as the leading position. The exhibitor's hand may not touch any metal portion of the lead shank.
- The position of the exhibitor when executing a turn to the right is the same as the leading position except that the exhibitor should turn and face the horse's head and have the horse move away from them turning over the hocks with the left forefoot passing in front of the right.
- When backing the exhibitor should turn from the leading position to face the rear of the horse with the right hand extended across the exhibitor's chest and walk forward beside the horse, with the horse moving backwards.
- When setting the horse up for inspection, stand angled toward the horse in a position between the eye and the muzzle and never leave the head of the horse. Do not get between the horse and the judge. The quarter method is used. When moving around the horse change sides in front of the horse with the minimal steps possible and assume the same position on the right side as the left. Pose the horse with feet squarely under it and do not crowd the exhibitor in front, behind or beside you when walking or lining up.
- If member is unsure of pattern asked to perform, they should ask at the beginning of the class. It is the exhibitor's responsibility to know and learn the pattern.

Faults:

- Poorly groomed horse; Ill-fitting halter; Holding the chain portion of the lead; Horse leading, backing, stopping or standing crooked; Horse stepping behind right front leg with the left; Leading on the right side of the horse; Blocking the judge's view of the horse; Not correcting the mistakes made by the horse; Talking to other exhibitors; Placing horse's feet and legs by hand or kicking; Not stopping horse before turning; Verbal cues to the horse; Turning the horse in the wrong direction; The judge having to move to avoid the horse.
- Omission or addition of maneuvers; knocking over of a cone; working the wrong side of the cone; and severe disobedience of the horse i.e., horse circling the exhibitor may result in a zero (0) score.
- **A horse that rears in the class will be asked to leave immediately.**

Western Horsemanship:

- Level 1 will be a walk/trot class.
- Level 2 will have a minimum amount of loping where the contestant choosing to lope will be given preference over those that choose not to, and they will not be severely penalized for not having the correct lead.
- Proper leads at a lope/canter should be recognized and used in levels 3-7. In Level 3 classes, riders on the correct lead will be given preference.
- Levels 4–7 will be expected to have proper leads and bits and hands for the age of horse.

- In a Horsemanship class, it is the skill of the rider that is being judged (seat, hand and position).
  - **Basic Position:** Rider should sit in the center of the saddle with the shoulder, points of the hip and back of the heel in a vertical straight line. Stirrup should be just short enough to allow the heels to be lower than the toes. The rider should maintain contact with the saddle from the seat to the inner thigh with only light contact between the lower leg and the horse and saddle. The body should appear comfortable, relaxed and flexible. Hands and arms should be held in a relaxed easy manner with the upper arms in a straight line with the body, and the one holding the reins bent at the elbow. The offhand should be closed and held near the belt or held loosely at the side. Excessive pumping of arm will be penalized. The rider's wrist should be kept straight and relaxed. The rein hand should be carried immediately above or slightly in front of the saddle horn. The rider should maintain light contact with the horse's mouth.
  - **Position in Motion**: rider should sit to jog. Do not post unless the judge requests a rising trot. Posting when not requested by the judge will be penalized. Maintain contact with the seat of the saddle. All movements of the horse should be governed by imperceptible aids. Exaggerated shifting of rider's weight is not desirable and will be penalized. Proper leads and recognition of leads is desirable, and failure to do so will be penalized in Levels 4-7.
  - Riders may be asked to do individual patterns.
  - Riders may be asked to dismount and mount.
- When riding a figure eight pattern, always start and finish in the middle or the center of the pattern.
- Accuracy is desired, so start transitions exactly at posted markers.
- If a horse or rider should fall, they shall be allowed to continue in the class but will not be judged. Prior to the member remounting, they must be assessed by the First Responder. However, if the rider or horse should fall and this was caused by another horse or rider they shall be allowed to continue and only be penalized at the judge's discretion.
- If unsure of pattern, ask for clarification from the judge before anyone has started the pattern.
- The exhibitor should perform the work accurately, precisely, smoothly and promptly.
- The stop should be straight and square.
- The back should be smooth and responsive.

Western Pleasure:

- In this class the horse is judged on smoothness of ride, alertness and responsiveness to cues.
- A good pleasure horse has a free-flowing stride of reasonable length. He should travel with a bright relaxed and alert expression.
- Level 1 will be a walk/trot class.
- Level 2 will have a minimum amount of loping where the contestants choosing to lope will be given preference over those that choose not to, and they will not be severely penalized for not having the correct lead.
- In Levels 3–7, the horse and rider should work both ways of the arena at all three gaits on a reasonably loose rein. The trot is to be a rhythmic 2 beat gait. The lope is to be a natural 3 beat gait; a 4-beat lope will be penalized. Level 1 will work both ways of the arena at a walk and trot. Level 2 will work both ways of the arena with minimal loping.
- All transitions should be executed smoothly and efficiently within a reasonable number of strides. Horse's head position should be maintained at the vertical with no bobbing at any gait.
- Proper leads at a lope/canter should be recognized and used in Levels 3-7. In Level 3 classes riders on the correct lead will be given preference.

- Excessive speed is to be penalized. Keeping in mind that all natural gaits beats are to be kept (example: no four beating at the lope).
- The stop should be straight and square.
- The back should be smooth and responsive.

Reining:

Only members riding in Levels 4–7 may enter reining classes. Patterns will be available in club packages to be picked up at the show and will be chosen from the National Reining Horse Association or National Reined Cow Horse Association Patterns. Level 4 and Young Horses will not be required to do flying lead changes.

To rein a horse is not only to guide him, but also to control his every movement. The best reined horse should be willfully 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 faulted according to severity of deviation. Credit will be given for smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness and authority in performing the various maneuvers while controlling speed.

There are eight elements in reining: walk-in, stops, spins, rollbacks, circles, backups, lead changes, run downs, and run-arounds. Each element is scored by the judge based on how well it is performed. Following are brief descriptions of what is looked for in each element.

- **Walk-in**: This brings the horse from the gate to the center of the arena to begin the pattern. The horse should appear relaxed and confident. During this time the horse should not be checked and should walk smoothly into the center of the arena. For some patterns this element may not be present, as the pattern may require that the contestant begin the pattern at the end of the arena.
- **Stops**: stops slow the horse down from a lope to a stop by bringing the hind legs under the horse in a locked position sliding on the hind feet. The horse should enter the stop by bending the back, bringing the hind legs further under the body while maintaining forward motion, ground contact and cadence with the front legs. Throughout the stop, the horse should continue in a straight line while maintaining ground contact with the hind feet.
- **Spins** are a series of 360 degree turns, executed over a stationary (inside) hind leg. Propulsion for the spin is supplied by the outside rear leg and front legs, and contact should be made with the ground and a front leg. The location of the hindquarters should be fixed at the start of the spin and maintained throughout the spins. Horses spinning should exhibit positive cadence, attitude, smoothness, finesse, and speed.
- **Rollbacks**: rollbacks are the 180-degree reversal of forward motion completed by running to a stop, rolling (turning) the shoulders back to the opposite direction over the hocks and departing in a lope, as one continuous motion. The horse should not step ahead or back prior to rolling back. Some hesitation is allowed.
- **Circles:** Circles are done at the lope and are of a designated size and speed, which demonstrates control, willingness to guide and degree of difficulty in speed and speed changes. Circles must at all times be run in the geographical area of the arena specified in the pattern description and have a common center point. There must be a clearly defined difference in speed and the size of the circles. The small slow circles to the right must be similar to the small slow circles to the left, as must the large fast circles to the right be the same in size and speed as the large fast circles to the left.

- **Back-ups**: a backup is a maneuver requiring the horse to be moved in a reverse motion in straight line in a required distance – at least ten feet.
- **Hesitate**: to hesitate is the act of demonstrating the horse's ability to stand in a relaxed manner at a designated time in the pattern. In a hesitation, the horse should remain motionless and relaxed. The hesitation is used in many patterns at the end of the pattern to indicate completion of the pattern.
- **Lead Changes**: lead changes are the act of changing leading legs of the front and rear pairs, at a lope, when changing the direction traveled. The lead change must be executed at a lope with no change of gait or speed and be performed in the exact geographical position in the arena specified in the pattern description. The change of front and rear leads must take place within the same stride to avoid penalty. During the lead change, the horse should remain calm and flat with no indication of annoyance or disobedience.
- **Run Down and Run-arounds**: run downs and run-arounds should demonstrate control and gradual increase in speed.
- **Scoring**: each element receives a maneuver score. These scores indicate how well the competitor has completed the maneuver. In addition to this score, penalty points may be assigned for things such as over or under, spinning, incorrect leads, etc. Maneuver scores are ranged from +1 ½ to - 1 ½. They are based on: (a) being on pattern, (b) performing the correct maneuver as dictated by pattern, (c) executing the maneuver correctly (d) degree of difficulty (here credit is given for smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness, authority, and controlled speed while completing a correct maneuver).

Ranch Horse Pleasure:

The ranch horse pleasure horse should reflect the versatility, attitude and movement of the working horse. This class should show the horse's ability to work at a forward, working speed while under the rider's control. Overall cadence and performance of gaits with an emphasis on forward movement, free flowing and ground covering for all gaits is observed. Transitions should be performed where designated with smoothness and responsiveness.

Required maneuvers are:

- Walk, jog, and lope both directions
- Extended jog and extended lope in at least one direction
- Stops
- Back

Optional maneuvers are:

- Sidepass
- Turns of 360 degrees or more
- Changes of lead (simple or flying)
- Walk, jog or lope over pole(s)
- Or some reasonable combination of maneuvers that would be reasonable for a ranch horse to perform.

Penalties:

1 Point	*3 Points*	*5 Points*
Too slow/per gait	**Drooped reins**	**Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, buck, rear, etc.**
Over bridled	**Break of gait at lope**	
Out of frame	**Break of gait at walk or jog for more than 2 strides**	
Break of gait at walk or jog for 2 strides or less	**Wrong lead or out of lead**	
Split log at lope		

Place below horses performing all maneuvers:	*Zero Score*	
Eliminates maneuver	**Illegal equipment**	
Incomplete maneuver	**Will abuse**	
	Major disobedience or schooling	

Trail:

- There will be a Handy Horse Trail class for English 4-7 riders.
- Trail experience recommended prior to entering.
- If you have questions about the pattern, ask the judge for clarification before you start the pattern.
- Members may enter one trail class in their level and one Junior Horse Trail class if they are showing a junior horse. Members may also enter in hand trail with a yearling or two-year-old.
- These classes are to be judged on the performance of the horse over/through obstacles with emphasis on manners, response to the rider and attitude.
- If you start the class riding with one hand you must continue holding the reins in that hand throughout the pattern. Riders will not be penalized for changing hands while working the gate or picking up or carrying an object.
- The gait between the obstacles will be at the judge's discretion. Levels 1 and 2 will not be required to lope.
- All obstacles are to have a time limit and limited number of attempts, to be decided at the judge's discretion.
- The following will result in a no score but not necessarily disqualification:
  - Doing an obstacle differently than described in the pattern.
  - Failure to complete an obstacle.
  - Failure to be in the prescribed gait.
  - Failure to be on the correct lead in Levels 4–7.
- The following will result in disqualification from the class:
  - Not doing the obstacles in the prescribed order.
  - Illegal equipment.
  - Willful abuse.
  - Major disobedience i.e., rearing.

Trail Obstacles

- Safety will be primary concern when designing the course.
- The mandatory obstacles in trail class will be the gate, the bridge and ride-overs.
- **The Gate:** The gate must be set so a rider can open it from their right or left side. The gate should be opened as indicated in the pattern.
  - There are several ways to open a gate, pushing it away, opening it toward the rider, or backing through it. It is the competitor's responsibility to be aware of all the various ways. Horses are not to be backed through gates with a bottom bar.
  - Level 1 riders will not be required to open or close the gate. Level 2 riders will be required to open the gate but will not be required to close the gate.
  - Level 3 and Junior horses may let go of the gate or change hands if necessary.
  - Levels 4 - 7 may change hands prior to opening the gate and then change back after the gate has been negotiated. Riders may not change hands or lose control of the gate while passing through.
- **The Bridge:** A bridge with a wooden floor, not to exceed 30 cm (12") in height, with no walls. Suggested minimum bridge length to be 150 cm (60") in length. No rocking bridges.
- **Ride-overs:** A walkover is to consist of at least 4 smooth logs placed at least 45-60 cm (20-24") apart. They must be at least 1.20 m (4 ft) long. Trot-overs must consist of at least 4 smooth logs placed at least .8-1.1 m (36 to 42 in. apart. Lope overs must consist of at least 2 smooth logs placed at least 1.8 – 2.2 m (72-84 in.) apart.
- **Other obstacles:**
  - **Carrying an object:** carry an object from one part of the arena to another. (Only objects of reasonable weight and that might be used on a trail ride may be used.)
  - **Back** through L, V, U, straight or similar shaped course. Obstacles must be placed 90 to 107 cm (36 to 42) inches apart. May be elevated no more than 60 cm (24").
  - **Slicker:** Put on and remove slicker. The slicker is to be located so the rider can put it on and remove it while mounted. Reins may be dropped on the neck of the horse or over the saddle horn or held while putting slicker off and on.
  - **Mailbox:** Remove and replace obstacle in a mailbox.
  - **Sidepass:** Elevated to a maximum height of 30 cm (12").
  - **Turn around box or square:** An obstacle consisting of 4 logs each 1.5 to 2.1 m (5 ft. to 7 ft.) long laid in a square. To be negotiated by riding over a log or a rail as designated. When all four feet are in the box rider should execute the turn as indicated and depart.
  - **Serpentine** obstacles at walk or a jog. Spacing to be a minimum of 1.8 m. (6 ft.) for a jog.
  - **Mounting or dismounting** – may use mounting block if necessary.
  - A combination of two or more obstacles is acceptable.
  - **Unacceptable obstacles are** Tires, animal hides, PVC pipe, jumps, rocking or moving bridges, water boxes or hazards, logs or poles elevated in a manner that permits them to roll.

Western Dressage: (Members may only enter English Dressage or Western Dressage, not both)

WSD 1 STANDARDS AND OBJECTIVES

WSD 1.01 Standard of Western Dressage:

1) A responsive, confident, willingly guided horse that performs all the required gaits correctly with strength and finesse shall be awarded optimum marks.
2) An ideal Western Dressage horse has a ground-covering stride of reasonable length in keeping with the individual's conformation. Ideally, the horse should have a balanced movement that requires no more than light contact by the rider.
3) The head and neck are carried in a relaxed, natural position appropriate for each individual horse's conformation and level of training.
4) The hindquarters display activity and engagement in all movements.
5) The horse and rider are seen to work in unison and harmony.

WSD 1.02 Objective of Western Dressage:

1) The objective of Western Dressage is the correct development of the horse to meet the standard in WSD 1.01 resulting in an athlete that is a pleasure to ride and works in harmony with the rider. The result of this training is a horse that is calm, supple, loose, balanced and flexible. The horse is also confident and willing to perform the correct basics with little effort.
2) The quality of this training is seen in:
    a) The freedom and regularity of the gaits.
    b) The harmony, lightness and ease of the movements.
    c) The lightness of the forehand and the engagement of the hindquarters.
    d) The acceptance of light contact with the bit, with compliance without any tension or resistance in accordance with the level of training.
3) The horse gives the impression of doing, of its own accord, what is required. The horse is confident and attentive, accepting the aids of the rider.

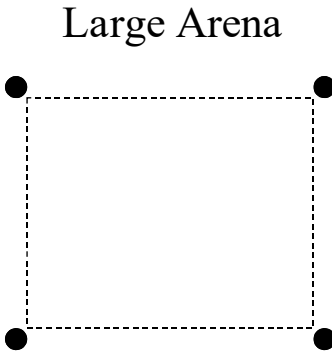
For more information on the elements of Western Dressage please check the web-site (www.westernstyledressage.ca)

Judging: Halter Classes:

The following time schedule is suggested:

(minutes)	Time
Side view	3.0
Front view	1.5
Rear view	1.5
Close inspection 2 min./group	4.0
Move class providing a front, rear and side view	4.0
Side view	*3.0*
Total	*17 minutes*

To provide both a rear and front view of the horse at a walk and trot and a side view of each horse at a trot, he following methods are suggested:



Divide those contestants judging one class into four equal groups. One at a time have each horse walk around the box, and then trot each side. This will allow each contestant the views discussed above.

All reasons will be written. Placings will be worth a maximum of 50 points and reasons will be worth a maximum of 50 points.

Guideline for Marking Reasons

Presentation (15 Points)

- logical, easy to follow
- comparative throughout - uses descriptive comparative terms - "more", words ending in "er", introduction and conclusion.
- class is identified completely and correctly.
- uses proper expressions - grant, advantage, etc.
- this is not a spelling test - just as long as you can tell what the member is trying to say.

Content (35 Points)

Reward points for:

- accurate information.
- thorough - covers all the points the judge mentions.
- "seeing" the animals in the class.
- uses the appropriate animal terms.
- uses the terms for body parts accurately.
- specific.

Deduct points for:

- inaccurate information.
- "canned" reasons.
- wrong use of terms.

English Division

Arena Etiquette:

The same arena rules apply to English as to Western. Enter the ring and travel counter clockwise. Reverse to the inside of the arena, not the rail.

English Equitation:

- In Equitation or Horsemanship classes, it is the riding skill of the competitor that is being judged - seat, hands, position and control.
- All movements of the horse should be governed by imperceptible aids.
- Exaggerated shifting of the rider's weight will be penalized.
- Proper diagonals at a trot and leads at a canter should be recognized and used in Levels 3 - 7. Always post at a trot unless told to sit.
- Level 1 will be a walk, trot class.
- Level 2 will have a minimum amount of cantering where the contestants choosing to canter will be given preference over those that choose not to, and they will not be severely penalized for not having the correct lead.
- Proper leads at the canter should be recognized and used in levels 3-7. In Level 3 classes riders on the correct lead will be given preference.
- Riders may be asked to do an individual pattern and may also be asked to mount and dismount.
- When using a figure eight in a pattern always start and finish in the middle or center of the figure eight unless otherwise directed.
- Accuracy is desired, so start transitions exactly at posted markers.
- A rider not having sufficient control of his/her horse may be excused from the ring by the judge.
- If a horse or rider should fall, they shall be allowed to continue the class but will not be judged. Prior to the member remounting, they must be assessed by the First Responder. However, if a horse or rider should fall and this was caused by another horse or rider they shall be allowed to continue and only be penalized at the judge's discretion. However, a fall of either a horse or a rider in all classes over fences does mean elimination.
- If unsure of the pattern, ask for clarification before the class starts or any rider has started the pattern.
- Competitors may be asked individual questions on horsemanship etc.
- **In Levels 3 – 7** the judge may ask the riders to ride without irons. The judge may also ask for an extended gait, which means a lengthening of the horse's stride. If the judge asks to ride without irons, irons must be run-up or crossed over.
- **Position:** The rider should sit in the deepest part of the saddle, squarely on both seat bones. Legs should land naturally with a slight bend at the knee. The thigh, knee and upper calf should be in contact with horse's side and there should be invisible straight line between the rider's shoulder, hip and heel when viewed from the side, Head and eyes should be up, arms and hands relaxed and following the movements of the horse's head, with straight line from the horse's mouth through to the rider's hand to the rider's elbow.
- Hold reins in two hands. When using Pelham or a double bridle, the reins are held so they would be with a snaffle except that either the little finger or the last two fingers separate the two reins.

- **Position in Motion:** At the walk the rider's body is upright with a slight movement at the hips and waist in rhythm with horse's walk. At a posting trot the body leans slightly forward to remain in balance with the horse. At a canter the seat is close to the saddle and the body has only the slightest lean forward with the back and hips, shoulder and elbow being very relaxed and supple to allow for the movement of the horse.

English Pleasure:

- The horse must give the distinct appearance of being a pleasure to ride and display a pleasant attitude. All gaits must be performed with willingness and obvious ease, cadence, balance and smoothness.
- The horse is to be judged on a walk, posting trot and easy canter. Medium to light contact through the reins to the horse's mouth. Level 1 will be asked to walk and do a sitting or posting trot only. Level 2 will be asked to walk, do a sitting or posting trot **and** minimal cantering where they are not penalized for being on the incorrect lead.
- Proper diagonals at a trot and leads at a canter should be recognized and used in Levels 3 - 7. Always post at a trot unless told to sit.
- Level 1 will be a walk, trot class.
- Level 2 will have a minimum amount of cantering where the contestants choosing to canter will be given preference over those that choose not to, and they will not be severely penalized for not having the correct lead.
- Proper leads at the canter should be recognized and used in levels 3-7. In Level 3 classes riders on the correct lead will be given preference.

Only Levels 4 – 7 will be allowed in the following English Classes:

In the event that a member falls off their mount, the member must be assessed by the First Responder, prior to remounting.

Hunter Hack:

Horses are to be judged on manners and way of going. Competitor will be asked to walk, trot and canter in both directions and jump two fences not exceeding 2 feet in height.

Equitation over Fences:

- Riders are to be judged on style and control; the judge will be looking for a neat smooth, workmanlike performance. To be ridden over a course not less than six jumps, with changes of direction.
- The competitors may ride one circle before the first fence to get the horse into an even cantering rhythm.
- When there are two jumps to be jumped as an in and out, they will be either two or three strides apart, never a bounce. The faults for each jump are counted separately. If the horse refuses or runs out at Jump B the rider may either re-present the horse at Jump B or go back and jump A again on the way to B.
- Three refusals, the horse bolting out of control, rider choosing the wrong course of jumps, or the fall of the horse or rider means elimination in that class.
- The course plan will be posted at least 1 hour ahead of the class. Riders may not walk the course prior to riding it.
- A fence knockdown may or may not get penalties depending on the cause. If the rider caused the horse to make the fault, then it would be penalized, but if the horse knocked the fence down, despite the best efforts of the rider, then it might only get a minor penalty. The decision is the Judge's.
- The judge may ask for individual ridden tests and may ask questions on horsemanship.

Working Hunter:

- The horse is being judged on a smooth workmanlike round. He should show an even rhythm in his pace and meet all his fences from the correct spot, looking pleasant and comfortable to ride.
- Hunter fences are neither numbered nor flagged. The competitors do not walk the course before riding it, but the course will be posted at least one hour prior to class time. This is because in real fox hunting you don't meet flags or numbers out in the country. The course is usually fairly simple and easy to canter around without the turns and combinations of an equitation or jumper course. There will be eight or more fences.
- The competitors may ride one circle before the first fence to get their horse into an even cantering rhythm. At the end of the course, they may make another circle to slow their horse to a walk before leaving the arena.
- When there are two jumps to be jumped as an in and out, they will be either two or three strides apart, never a bounce. The faults for each jump are counted separately. If the horse refuses or runs out at Jump B the rider may either re-present the horse at Jump B or go back and jump A again on the way to B. Three refusals, the horse bolting out of control, rider choosing the wrong course of jumps, or the fall of the horse or rider means elimination in that class.
- If a horse knocks down a jump with any part of his body, it counts as faults. A fence is considered knocked down when the height of any part is lowered.

Open Jumper:

You must acknowledge the judge on entering the arena

- This will test the horse's skill and obedience and the rider's ability over a course.
- Dropped nosebands, boots and running martingales are allowed in jumper classes.
- The course will consist of at least eight fences with uprights, spread fences, changes of direction and combination of fences, but no bounces. In combinations the related fences are numbered A & B, if the horse refuses at B, then the preceding fence is to be retaken.
- The competition will be based in Table A in the Equine Canada rules. There will be a generous time limit. If more than one horse goes clear, then there will be a jump off over at least 5 fences. The competitor with the fastest time will win.
- Jumper courses will be posted with the jump off variations at least one hour prior to competition.
- Competitors may walk the course before competition begins.
- Prior to the start of the pattern, you must salute the judge.
- All fences as well as the start and finish of the jumper course *must* be marked with red and white flags. The horse and rider must pass between these flags with the red flag on the right hand.
- Elimination from a class will happen when a competitor:
  - Has had three refusals.
  - Has had a fall of the horse or the rider.
  - Has failed to pass between the red and the white flags over fences and at the start and the finish of the course, or
  - Goes off course by failing to jump fences in the correct order.

Table A in the Equine Canada Book indicates penalties should be assigned as follows:

First disobedience	4 faults
Obstacle knocked down while jumping	4 penalties
One or more feet in water jump or lath defining its limits.	4 penalties
Second disobedience	4 faults
First fall of horse or competitor or both	Elimination
Disobedience plus knocking down an obstacle	4 faults, plus time penalties
Third disobedience or other infringement	Elimination
Exceeding time allowed	¼ penalty for each second commenced fraction of a second
Exceeding time limit	Elimination
Exceeding the time allowed in all jump-offs against the clock	1 penalty for each second or fraction of a second

Penalties for the disobediences accumulate not just at the same obstacle but also throughout the entire round.

Dressage:

The object of dressage is the development of the horse into a happy athlete through harmonious education. As a result, it makes the horse calm, supple, loose and flexible, but also confident, attentive and keen, thus achieving perfect understanding with the athlete. These qualities are demonstrated by:

- The freedom and regularity of the paces.
- The harmony, lightness and ease of the movements
- The lightness of the forehand and the engagement of the hindquarters, originating from a lively impulsion
- The acceptance of the bit, with submissiveness/toughness without any tension or resistance.

The horse thus gives the impression of doing, of its own accord, what is required. Confident and attentive, submitting generously to the control of the athlete, remaining absolutely straight in any movement on a straight line and bending accordingly when moving on curved lines.
The walk is regular, free and unconstrained. The trot is free, supple, regular and active. The canter is united, light and balanced. The hindquarters are never inactive or sluggish. The horse responds to the slightest indication of the athlete and thereby gives life and spirit to all the rest of its body.

By virtue of a lively impulsion and the suppleness of the joints, free from the paralysing effect of resistance, the horse obeys willingly and without hesitation and responds to the various aids calmly and with precision, displaying a natural and harmonious balance both physically and mentally.

In all the work, even at the halt, the horse must be “on the bit”. A horse is said to be “on the bit” when the neck is more or less raised and arched according to the stage of training and the extension or collection of the pace, accepting the bridle with a light and consistent soft submissive contact. The head should remain in a steady position, as a rule slightly in front of the vertical, with a supple poll as the highest point of the neck and no resistance should be offered to the athlete.

Cadence is shown in trot and canter and is the result of the proper harmony that a horse shows when it moves with well-marked regularity, impulsion and balance. Cadence must be maintained in all the different trot or canter exercises and in all the variations of these paces. *Taken from the Equine Canada Rule Book 2013 edition*

For more information on the elements of Dressage please check the Equine Canada website (www.equinecanada.ca)

The tests used will be chosen from Codora Dressage tests and will be announced prior to the show.

The dressage arena is 20 x 60 metres.

Please check the Bit Rule Example Document for information regarding permitted bits.

Gymkhana and Fun Events

Command Class:

- This is an elimination class. The last horse is the winner. There will be a minimum of four (4) "spotters" in the ring to a maximum of six (6) including the judge. The judge will record the numbers as the riders are called off the rail. The judge's decision is final in the event of a dispute.
- The commands will fit the level of the class.
- Level 4 and over riders must use the appropriate hands depending on the horse's bit. The reverse command means stop after the reverse unless the judge says "and walk/trot/lope on"
- Level 1-3 riders can ride in either English or western tack.
- Elimination is the refusal of the horse to do the commands in a timely manner. As you get higher in levels the finesse of the commands will be judged harder. For example: At Level 6 you must stop from a lope with no transitions to a trot or walk. Backups must be straight and fluid. Elimination includes: the horse moving after the stop command, walking on after the reverse when not called for, wrong leads in Level 4 and over and Level 3 as a final elimination, if necessary, wrong number of steps in a backup, changing gaits when uncalled for, inability of the horse to follow the command.
- Parent/Leader Class: All parents/leaders **must** wear an approved helmet.

Delsey Derby:

This is an elimination class. Members must be in Level 4 or over and partners must make every effort to be from 2 different clubs. If after all partners are matched and two members from the same club are left over, they may become partners.

Elimination happens only when partners drop or break the toilet paper at any time after the start of the class. Every effort must be made to follow the commands but continued refusal to follow a command will also result in elimination. For example, consistently trotting when a lope is asked for.

Rider hands may not touch, and the toilet paper may not be twisted.

Matched Pairs:

This is a pleasure class. Members must be Level 3 or higher to enter. Members should make every effort to find a matching horse and partner from another club. You may still enter with another member even if your horses do not match in colour. The class will be judged on the ability of the horses to carry out the commands together with the matching colours being secondary.

Drill Team Competition:

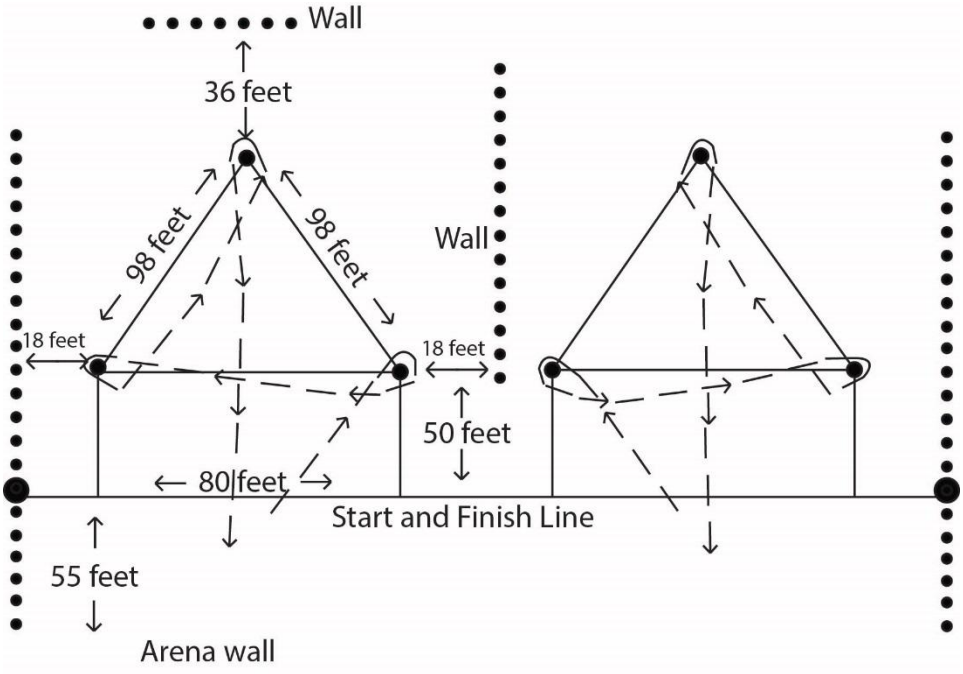
- Order of Drill Performance will be by draw.
- Performance will be a maximum of 5 minutes. There will be penalties assessed for time over 5 minutes.
- There is a minimum of 4 members per drill team. Two clubs may join together to make a team.
- A leader may ride with the drill team but not in a lead position.
- For a judged event, teams will be judged on the following two categories:
  a. *Entertainment:* includes such things as costumes and grooming, overall uniformity and look of the team, choice of music, flow of the moves and choreography, difficulty (or appearance of difficulty) of the drill, theme, uniqueness, smiles and playing-to-the-audience, and overall entertainment value.
  b. *Equitation:* This will judge spacing of the horses, correctness of transitions and gaits, attitude and behavior of the horses, riders' position - seat hands and control, speed and difficulty of the moves... always looking for precision and clean uniformity, roundness of circles (etc.) and spacing.
- Equitation will carry more weight for scoring purposes
- Drill teams may be made up of any Level riders, but the drill routine must be ridden at the gait of the lowest level rider on the team. If a club chooses to have two teams of different riding levels riding at the same time this rule will apply for the appropriate group. Safety will be paramount.

General Rules for Gymkhana Events:

- Contestants may use both hands when riding and may touch their saddle. A reasonable use of spur is acceptable but only behind the cinch.
- Horses must be in the ring before he can be authorized to start. The contestant must wait for the signal (whistle or other) from the announcer before starting.
- Riders not completing the course in the required fashion or going off course will be disqualified.
- In the event that a rider drops a piece of equipment or clothing, the contestant is not to remain in the arena after completing their run. An official will return the dropped piece to the hitching ring.
- All distances between poles and barrels are center to center, except where otherwise specified.
- When ring is not 61.53 m (220 ft.) in length, the distance between the finish line and the rail may be too short for safety. If the course is too large for the available space, the pattern should be reduced by 1.53 m (5ft) until the pattern fits the arena.
- In the timed events of Barrel Racing and Pole Bending knockdowns will result in a five (5) second penalty for each knockdown.
- If a pole or barrel falls down after the end of the run (once the time has stopped) the pattern is correct unless the knocked down marker is the finish line marker.
- Starting line markers must be a distance of 15.48 m (50 ft.) apart and electric timers, if used, are to be set against the arena walls.
- Whenever there are too many disqualifications, which produce a shortage of place horses, disqualified contestants will not re-run to fill the placings. If only one horse is not disqualified there will only be one ribbon.
- Crossing the centerline results in disqualification in any event where two riders are in the arena at one time. Once the gate has been opened to allow contestants to leave the arena, the center line may be crossed.
- All horses must come to a complete stop after completing their run.

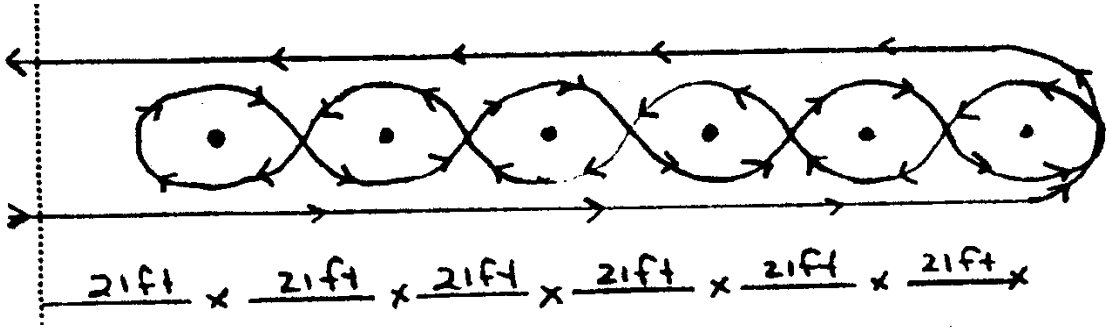
Barrel Racing: (Levels 4–7 only)

- The course may be run right or left as long as one of the two diagrams is followed.
- Barrels must be of the 45-gallon (202.5 liter) size and set in the acceptable triangular shaped pattern, with pattern dimensions not to exceed the diagram. With reductions to the pattern to be made five feet at a time. It is recommended that there be at least 45 feet from the end of the arena to the start line and 18 feet from the barrels 1 & 2 to the arena walls and 36 feet from arena wall to barrel 3.
- Knocking over a barrel will carry a five (5) second penalty
- Disqualification will result from:
- Going off course.
- Crossing the finish line before completing the course.
- Depending on the quality of the footing in the arena, raking of the footing in the arena particularly around the barrels should be part of the ring crew's duty. This is to help prevent horses from falling thus preventing injury.



Pole Bending: (Levels 4 – 7 only)

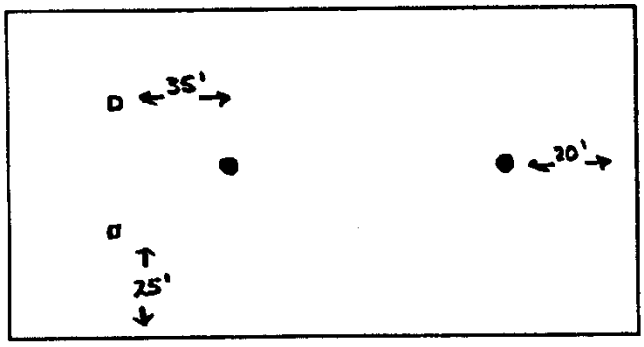
- Pole Bending is a timed event.
- Horses may start to either the right or the left of the first pole, and then run the pattern accordingly.
- The pattern is to be run around Six (6) poles. Each pole is to be 6.4 m (21 ft.) apart and the first pole to be 6.4 m (21 ft.) from the starting line. Poles shall be set on top of the ground 1.83 meters in height, and with no base more than 14 in. in diameter.
- Knocking over a pole will carry a five (5) second penalty.
- Failure to follow the course will result in disqualification.
- Two competitors may run in the arena on two separate patterns at one time. Crossing over the center line will result in disqualification.
- All horses must come to a complete stop after completing their run.



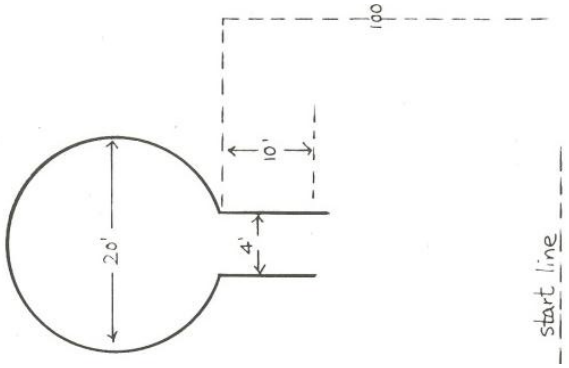
Flag Race: (Levels 4 – 7 only) **NOT CURRENTLY BEING RAN**

- Object of this event is to take the flag in the first barrel, go around the second barrel and put the flag back in the first. This is a timed event.
- The pattern is to be set up as per diagram.
- About 7.5 cm. of sand will be needed in the bottom of the first barrel. 45-gallon barrels may be used, and the flag must have a length of 120 cm. or 4 ft.
- Flags may be placed left, right or at the center of the barrel at the contestant's instruction.
- A correct pattern shall be run across the timing line to the right or the left of the first barrel, picking up a flag on the way by, run to the second barrel turn around the barrel sprint towards the finish line placing the flag back in the first barrel, then sprint to the finish line.

- **Keyhole Race: (**Levels 4 – 7 only) **NOT CURRENTLY BEING RAN**



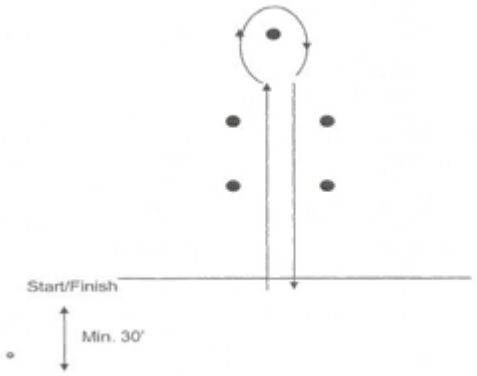
- The Keyhole Race is a timed event.
- After crossing the starting line, the contestant must travel up the arena to go through the entrance of the keyhole, turn around within the circle of the keyhole and exit without stepping outside of the boundaries of the keyhole and run back to the finish line.
- A judge should be placed near the circle to verify the correctness of the pattern.
- The keyhole should be marked with lime or flour.
- If the horse steps beyond the marker forming the entrance or circle, the contestant is disqualified.
- Two competitors may run in the arena on two separate patterns at one time. Crossing over the centerline will result in disqualification
- All horses must come to a complete stop after completing their run.



<u>THREAD THE NEEDLE</u>: (Levels 4 – 7 only)

The course will be set using 5 poles as shown in the diagram. 2 poles will be placed four feet apart approximately 100 feet from the start/finish line. The next 2 poles will be placed 10 feet from the first 2 with the final pole in the middle approximately 5 feet from the second set of poles. The rider will run from the start line between the first four poles, turn around the 5th pole (in either direction), run back through the four poles to the finish.

- All horses must come to a complete stop after completing their run by a designated cone in order to Receive a time.

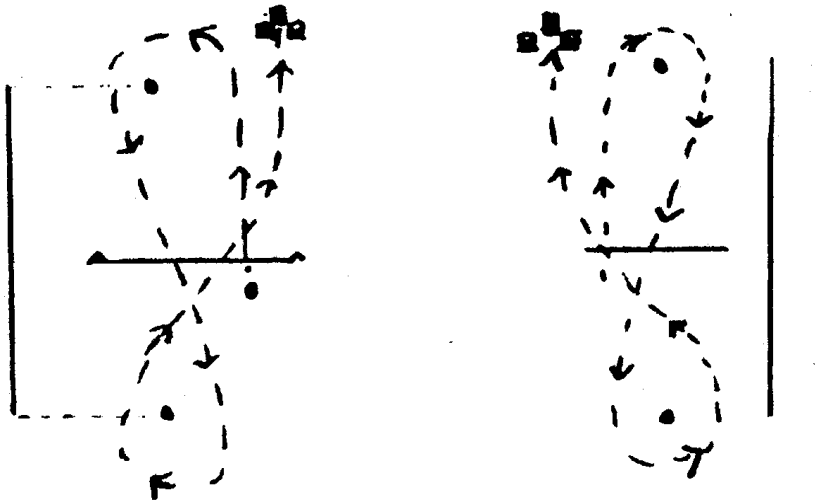


Flag Picking Race: (Levels 4–7 only) **NOT CURRENTLY BEING RAN**

- Object of this event is to take the flag from each barrel, one at a time and putting the flags back in the first. This is a timed event.
- The pattern is to be set up as per diagram.
- About 7.5 cm of sand will be needed in the bottom of the first barrel. 45-gallon barrels may be used, and the flag must have a length of 120 cm. or 4 ft.
- Flags may be placed left, right or at the center of the barrel at the contestant's instruction.
- A correct pattern shall be run across the timing line to either the right or the left of the second barrel, picking up a flag on the way by, run back to the first barrel, turn around the barrel, race to the third barrel picking up the flag on the way by, returning it to the first barrel, turn around barrel and race to the fourth and last barrel, retrieve the flag and return it to the first barrel, then sprint to the finish line.
- A complete turn must be made around each barrel while picking the flags and all turns must be made in the same direction (clockwise or counter clockwise).
- A five (5) second penalty will result from every flag dropped or that does not fall into the barrel. Disqualification will result from: crossing the finish line before putting the flag in the barrel, intentionally hitting the horse with the flag, not going around one of the barrels, crossing over the center line, or knocking over a barrel.
- All horses must come to a complete stop after completing their run.

Short Stakes: (Levels 4–7 only) **NOT CURRENTLY BEING RAN**

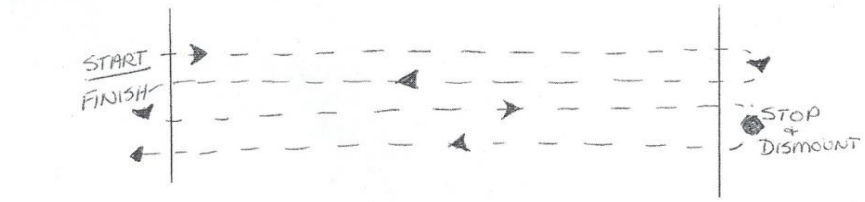
- The Short Stake Race is a timed event.
- The correct pattern shall be run as follows: run across the center timing line, turning left or right around the stake at that end, return through the center, turn the opposite way around the other short stake, and then sprint back through the center crossing the timing line.
- Knocking down a short stake will result in a five (5) second penalty.
- Disqualification will result from not following the required pattern.
- Two competitors may run in the arena on two separate patterns at one time. Crossing over the centerline will result in disqualification.
- Times should be taken when the horse's nose crosses the start line and the finish line.
- All horses must come to a complete stop after completing their run.



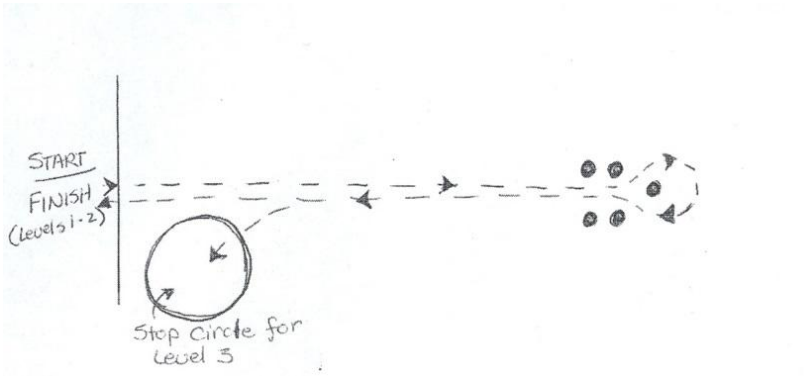
Walk, Trot, Lead: (Levels 1 – 3 only)

- **Level 1**- From the start cones, WALK your horse across the arena to the other cones. Completely pass the cones, turn and JOG/TROT your horse back past the start cones. Turn and WALK your horse to the far cones, stop, and dismount and lead your horse back to the start cones. Any incorrect gaits will result in a 5 second penalty for each infraction. Riders must completely cross the lines before they make their turns. Any crossing of center lines will result in disqualification.
- **Level 2**- Same as Level 1 except riders must JOG/TROT their horse on the third leg of the race instead of walk.
- **Level 3**- Same as Level 1 except riders can JOG/TROT or LOPE/CANTER the third leg of the race. The same penalties apply as with the other levels.

Thread the Needle:

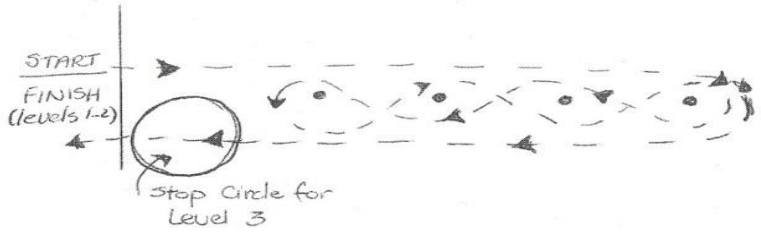


- **Level 1**- WALK/JOG/TROT from start through pylons, around the back pylon, through pylons and back to finish cones. Any loping/cantering or knocking over pylons will result in a 5 second penalty for each **infraction. Crossing the center line will result in disqualification.**
- **Level 2- WALK/JOG/TROT/LOPE/CANTER from start through pylons, around the back pylon, through pylons and JOG/TROT/WALK back to finish cones. Any loping/cantering on the return leg or knocking over pylons will result in a 5 second penalty for each infraction. Crossing the center line will result in disqualification.**
- **Level 3- WALK/JOG/TROT/LOPE/CANTER from start through pylons, around the back pylon, through pylons and stop between the cones. Count for 5 seconds and if the horse stays between the cones, the time is good. Knocking over the pylons will result in a 5 second penalty. Any crossing of the center line or stepping outside the circle before the 5 second count is finished will result in NO TIME.**



Dream Weavers:

- **Level 1**- From the start cones, riders can WALK/JOG/TROT up to the fourth pylon, weave back through the pylons; weave back up through the pylons and WALK/JOG/TROT back to the finish cones. Knocking over of pylons or incorrect gaits will result in a 5 second penalty for each infraction. No Time will be given for going off pattern or crossing the center line. May only ride pattern at walk or jog/trot.
- **Level 2**- Same as Level 1 except riders can WALK/JOG/TROT/LOPE/CANTER up to the end of the pylons and through the pylons. However, they must WALK/JOG/TROT back to the finish cones.
- **Level 3**- Same as Level 2 except riders WALK/JOG/TROT/LOPE/CANTER through the entire pattern but must stop between the cones instead of crossing between them. The horse must remain between the cones for 5 seconds before the time will be accepted. Penalties and disqualifications will be the same as the Level 1 and 2's.



West Central 4-H Horse Committee

Bit Rule Examples

Revised 2022

This material has been adapted from the 2011 Florida 4-H Area and State Horse Show Rules and Bit Examples. Thanks to Florida 4-H for allowing us to use their document.

Introduction

We realize that there are many types of bits, headstalls and other tack available for use. The West Central 4-H Horse Committee encourages safe and humane practices at all equine events.
These rules have been put in place to ensure that:

- The bits and other tack used is humane. There are types of tack that are not comfortable for a horse and can cause damage to the horse's mouth or other parts of the animal. Understanding the mechanics of a bit and other equipment will assist you to understand which types of equipment are more or less humane. That said, remember that any bit, no matter how humane can do damage to a horse's mouth if used incorrectly.

- The approved tack helps to make an even playing field for everyone competing at the show. Certain types of tack or training aids will give a competitor an unfair advantage in the show ring, so we limit the types of equipment that can be used.

In this document, the following symbols are used:

Acceptable

Not Allowed

May or May Not be Acceptable, depending on measurement

Western Division

Bits-Western And Speed Events

References to hackamore mean the use of a non-mechanical flexible, braided rawhide or leather, or rope bosal, the core of which may be either rawhide or flexible cable. Absolutely no rigid material will be permitted under the jaws, regardless of how padded or covered.

*** BOSALS - ARE ONLY ALLOWED IN JUNIOR HORSE CLASSES ***

Rawhide Bosal

Bosal: 1. must have rawhide or rope core (no cable) and may be covered in rawhide. 2. can be a maximum of 3/4" at the cheek (not the nose button) (1 5/8th is normal). 3. Mecate reins (rope or hair) may only be used with a Bosal. 4. When fitting a Bosal it is recommended that there be room for two fingers between the jaw & where your reins tie off (in the neutral position).

Easy/Fast Stop
Rigid Material under jaw

Fast Stop
Rigid Material over nose

Mechanical Hackamore

Would have to measure ≥ 5/16

Connecting bar should meet measurements described.

Not smooth

Not smooth

Not smooth

Connecting bar would have to meet measurements described and center section (dogbone) must LAY FLAT on horse's tongue

Wire wrapped, not smooth

B. Reference to snaffle bits in western performance classes mean the conventional O-ring, egg-butt or D-ring must be between 2" and 3 1/2 inches in diameter—outside measurement. Rings may not be less than 1/4 inch or more than 3/8 inch in diameter. The mouthpiece should be round, oval or egg-shaped and unwrapped metal. It may be inlaid. The diameter of a bit must be a maximum of 5/16". This is measured 1" in from where the mouthpiece attaches to the cheek piece. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces (ie. dog-bone or French link), and should fit the horse's mouth. A three-piece, connecting ring of 1 ¼" or less in diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 3/8" to ¾" (measured tip to bottom, with a maximum length of 2"), which lies flat in the horse's mouth is acceptable.

Mouthpiece not smooth

Off-set D-ring with slow twist

Egg-butt

O-Ring

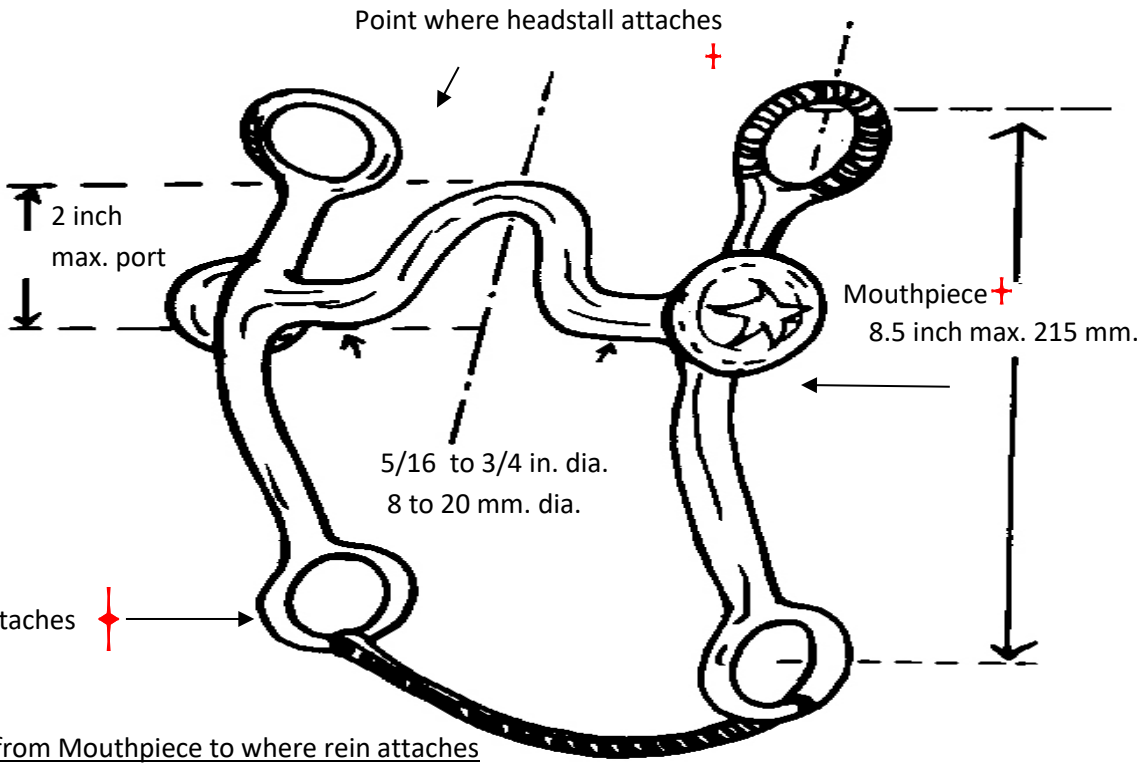
Rubber O-Ring Snaffle

Off-set D-ring

C. References to a bit in western performance classes mean the use of a curb bit that has a solid or broken mouthpiece, has shanks and acts with leverage. All curb bits must be free of mechanical devices and should be considered a standard western bit. A description of a legal, standard western bit includes:

1.) 8 ½" maximum length shank to be measured as indicated in the diagram on the following page illustrating legal bit. The shank on a leverage may not go beyond a 3:1 ratio. Shanks may be fixed or loose.

2.) Curb bit mouthpieces must be round, smooth, and unwrapped metal of 5/16" to ¾" in diameter, measured one inch from the cheek. They may be inlaid, but must be smooth. Nothing may protrude below the mouthpiece (bar) , such as extensions or prongs on solid mouthpieces. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces. A three-piece, connecting ring of 1 ¼" or less in diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 3/8 to ¾" (measured top to bottom with a maximum length of 2"), which lies flat in the horse's mouth is acceptable.



Bit Ratio = Distance from Mouthpiece to where rein attaches
Distance from Mouthpiece to where headstall attaches
MAY NOT be greater than 3:1

3.) The port must be no higher than 2" maximum, with rollers and covers acceptable. Broken mouthpieces, halfbreeds and spades are standard.

4.) Donut and flat polo mouthpieces are not acceptable.

5.) Gag bits are acceptable for speed events only, providing mouthpiece and shanks are within

Port would have to measure ≤ 2 inches high and shank ≤ 8.5 inches long, and ratio of less than 3:1

Half-breed

Gag Bit AND not smooth

Flat Polo Mouthpiece

Spade Bit

Split Reins—Correct

Romal Reins—Incorrect

Romal Reins—Correct

OK for Curb or Leverage Bits ONLY

Cannot be used with a snaffle bit. All chains must be flat

Chain ≤ 1/2 inch wide

D. Except for speed event classes, or junior horses shown with hackamore/snaffle bit, only one hand may be used on the reins (level 4-1 to 7)and hand must not be changed. Levels 1 to 4-2 may be shown with two hands. When using split reins, the hand is to be around the reins, and if desired only one finger may be between the reins.

E. References to a romal means an extension of braided material attached to closed reins. This extension may be carried in the free hand with a 16 inch spacing between the reining hand and the free hand holding the romal. The rider's hand shall be around the reins with the fingers closed, thumb on top, and no fingers between the reins.

F. The romal shall not be used forward of the cinch or to signal or cue the horse in any way.

G. Junior horses (5 years old and under) competing in junior western pleasure, western horsemanship, reining, western riding and trail that are shown with a bosal hackamore or snaffle bit must be ridden with two hands on the reins.

H. Horses five-years old and younger may be shown in a snaffle bit, bosal hackamore or a curb bit. For riders in Levels 4-1 to 7, horses six years old and older may only be shown in a curb bit. In the speed events only, horses of any age may be shown with a snaffle bit. Riders in Levels 1—3 may ride any age horse in a curb or snaffle bit only, with one or two hands.

I. Chain curb straps are permissible, but must meet the approval of the judge, be at least ½" in width, and lie flat against the jaw of the horse. Absolutely no rigid material will be permitted under the jaws, regardless of how padded or covered. Curb straps should be attached at the cheekpiece ring.

OK for Curb and Snaffle Bits

OK if > 1/2 inch

Split Reins—Correct

Mecate Rein—allowed with snaffle in Western Division

Snaffle Reins—Correct

Snaffle Reins—Incorrect

Kimberwick, Low port
Smooth, 1 piece mouthpiece
Not allowed in Dressage

Dr. Bristol—central link is flat and longer and more rectangular than a French link and at slight angle to the plane of the bit.

Egg-butt D-ring
Smooth, 2-piece mouthpiece

Hunter Classes

Bits used in hunter classes must be at least 3/8" or larger in diameter. The mouthpiece may consist of one, two, or three pieces and must be smooth. Waterford bits are permitted. Any port may not be taller than 1 ½". Slow or fast twist, corkscrew, twisted wire, double twisted wire, and triangle (knife edge) bits are not allowed. If a bit is used that requires two reins, it may not be used with a converter. True gag action and elevator bits are not allowed.
Curb chains must be twisted so that they lie flat in the chin groove on Kimberwick and Pelham bits.

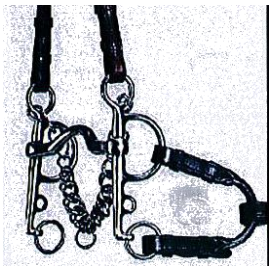
Dressage Classes

All dressage tests must be ridden in an English Snaffle Bit. Kimberwick bits are not allowed in Dressage Classes. For details check the Equine Canada Dressage Rules (www.equinecanada.ca)

Elevator Bit

Port height would be acceptable if it measures ≥ 3/8 inch and port measures ≤ 1 1/2 inches.
Not acceptable if reins attach to the small ring on the lower portion of the bit as this would make it a leveraged bit.

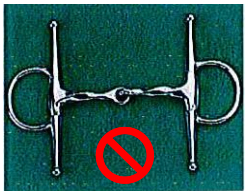
Elevator Bit



Pelham Bit—is acceptable used with two reins or a converter (as shown above) and a single rein.

Full Cheek w/fast twist

Mouthpiece not



Full Cheek w/Slow Twist

Mouthpiece not

European Elevator

Elevator Bit

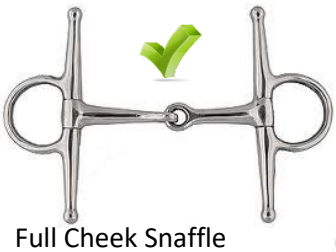
Waterford Bit—due to small fixed balls

O-ring snaffle

Mouthpiece would have to measure > 3/8 inch

Baucher Snaffle

Mouthpiece would have to measure ≥ 3/8 inch



Full Cheek Snaffle

Mouthpiece would have to measure ≥ 3/8 inch

O-ring w/twisted wire

Speed Events

TACK: Western-type saddles will be used. A mechanical hackamore may be used provided they contain no rigid material under the jaw. Use of two hands on the reins is allowed in speed events. Riders may use snaffle or curb bits. Judge or appointed equipment official may prohibit the use of bits or equipment deemed too severe. Use of martingales, tie-downs, and nosebands is permitted in these classes. Draw reins are not allowed in speed events. Bandages (leg wraps) are not permitted in any speed event class.

BITS: IMPORTANT: See description of bits for western and speed events on page1 for description of legal bits for Western and Speed Events Divisions.

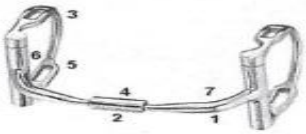
Rutledge Roper

Gag Bit—mouthpiece not smooth

Wonder Bit—mouth piece moves making this a gag bit. If the measurements are acceptable, this is an acceptable bit for speed events.

Mechanical Hackamore—speed events only.

Stop & Turn
Rigid Material Under Jaw



Myler Bit—the reins, curb strap, headstall must move freely on the cheek pieces ring. (no fixed reins) OR reins cannot be attached to the inner rings

Spurs

Spurs are optional but not encouraged. They are not allowed in showmanship.

For English, if they are used, they are to be of the unrowelled type. They must be blunt, round and no longer than 1 inch, silver in colour and pint down.

For Western, if they are used, they must not be used forward of the cinch. If rowels are used, they must be blunt/smooth and free to rotate. No sharp points allowed. The shank must not be longer than 3". English spurs are allowed in Western classes.

Spurs may be slip-on or strap on, and should fit the boot correctly.