



4-H LIGHT HORSE SHOWMANSHIP



Scoring

100 points total

Member

Neat and clean, properly dressed, prompt and alert, confident (poised), courteous 25%

Animal & equipment

Animal clean and brushed, in good condition, feet cared for.

Halter and lead fitted, equipment clean and safe 25%

Showing the animal

Following directions, leading, turning, standing, backing, stopping, showing to advantage, controlling on lead and in line, attention in line 50%

The purpose of showmanship is to teach courtesy, good grooming, poise, confidence, and how to fit, train, and handle your horse. Showmanship is a demonstration of the member's ability to show the animal, in hand, to its best advantage. Conformation of the animal is not considered.

Attire may be western or English. Driving attire is also allowed except for skirts or dresses.

The type of headgear for the exhibitor in showmanship is optional. ASTM/SEI helmets, although not required for showmanship, are encouraged. Either an appropriate hat or helmet must be worn.

Showmanship Equipment

The horse may be shown with a safe, properly fitted halter or show bridle, each complete with a throatlatch. Bridles may be used when appropriate to breed and/or attire. If you show with a double bridle, you may use either the snaffle or curb reins for leading. The other set of reins is put over the neck near the withers. The halter and lead should be leather, rope, or webbing. The lead should be 6–10' (about 2–3 m) long. Be sure the lead is long enough to allow picking up a hind foot.

If used properly, lead shanks with chains attached are permissible for safety or control. A chain approximately 15–24" is long enough. The chain may be run through the ring on the side of the halter or through the ring on the bottom, then over the nose or under the chin to the other side. With a very long chain, you may run the excess up the off cheek. If your chain is too long, it may be doubled back through the bottom ring and snapped back to itself. In all cases, the snap should face out. When leading your horse, do not put your hand on the chain. Whips and/or bats are not allowed.

Western tack. Horses must be shown in a halter.

Hunt seat or saddle seat tack. Horses may be shown in a halter or show bridle when appropriate to breed and/or attire.

Class Procedure

Enter the arena as directed by the judge, ring steward, or announcer. Keep at least 1 horse length behind the horse in front of you. If necessary, pass on the inside and return to the rail. The exhibitor should be aware of the judge's position at all times.

The member should walk ear-to-ear with the horse, about an arm's length from the near side. Hold the lead 8–18" from the halter in the right hand with the end folded in a figure-8 in the left hand. Do not coil the lead or fasten it with a rubber band in a figure-8.

If instructed to line up, do so side-by-side leaving 6–8' between horses if possible. This allows the judge to pass safely between horses and to have a good view of your horse. Quickly stand the horse square, balanced or stretched, consistent with the breed and your attire. While in line, do not let your horse circle you. Always turn the horse away from you for turns 90 degrees or more (quarter turn).

If asked to move to another position in line, back out quietly and promptly lead to the new place. Speak to the animal to prevent it from becoming startled when another horse is moved nearby.

Pose (set up) your horse with all 4 feet square or according to breed type. The horse's head should be up and its weight should be on all 4 feet. Do not let the horse "go to sleep," but do not do anything that will attract attention. A gelding may "let down" when standing relaxed; correct by moving him forward or back. You should not use your feet to touch the horse's hooves to get it to set up, nor should you change hands on the lead to set up. If the horse moves out of position, quickly reset it. Quiet voice commands may be used.

When the horse is set up, the exhibitor should face the horse diagonally at a 45 degree angle off the horse's shoulder in front and to the side of the head, moving from side to side as necessary. Be in a position to see your horse and keep eye contact with the judge without blocking the judge's view or standing directly in front of your horse.

When the judge inspects your horse, respond to his or her movements with the quartering system by mentally dividing the horse into 4 quarters. When the judge is in the right front quarter, you are on the left front quarter of the horse, keeping an eye on the judge. When the judge is in the back right quarter, you are in the front right quarter watching the horse. The objective is for you to be in the quarter next to the judge's position.

Change sides when the judge is at the heartgirth and when the judge crosses the tail and the nose. You should step around the horse's head quickly and quietly, using 3 or 4 steps and keeping eye contact with the judge. Do not change hands on the lead when you change sides, and never stand in front of your horse in the "danger zone."

Listen carefully to instructions. When asked for your individual performance, follow the judge's instructions. Be ready to move promptly when signaled. Lines should be straight, and you should remain 5–7' away from the judge. Haunch turns and forehand turns should have forward motion. Turn the horse away from you if the turn required is 90 degrees or more. For turns less than 90 degrees, you may turn the horse toward you.

To back, face to the rear of the horse. In Washington and Idaho, do not change hands on the lead to back. In Oregon, changing hands on the lead is optional. Back the horse the requested distance in a straight line. Four steps are considered 1 length, counting the movement of the front feet. If the pattern includes "closing the back," return to your position at the start of the back and balance your horse.

Exhibitors may touch their horses only when requested to perform sidepass or forehand turn maneuvers (or to smooth the mane or forelock). This means you must not touch your horse when asking for a haunch turn or back, nor pet your horse until the class is dismissed.

Judging Requirements

Horses should be well-groomed, clean, and clipped according to breed. The horse should also be well-trained to the required routine and well-mannered so that it stands quietly, but alertly, while in the class.

Exhibitors will be asked to demonstrate their ability to lead, turn, set up, and move their animals as the judge requests. Additional tests, as listed, may be asked.

The following principles always apply:

- ❖ Individual tests must be performed with official(s) involved in the same relative position to each exhibitor.
- ❖ The exhibitor shall not stand directly in front of the horse.
- ❖ The quartering system is required.
- ❖ Horses may be shown, trimmed, and groomed according to breed type.
- ❖ The exhibitor shall not touch their horse except when executing a requested test that allows such touch (for example, sidepass and turn on the forehand), and to smooth the mane or forelock if the judge's inspection has disturbed the grooming.

Tests

- ❖ Back horse.
- ❖ Sidepass. The exhibitor may touch the horse.
- ❖ Turn on haunches (forward motion preferred).
- ❖ Turn on the forehand (forward motion preferred). The exhibitor may touch the horse.
- ❖ Lead at the walk or trot from either side.
- ❖ Pick up the feet.
- ❖ Stop and set up, square and balanced, or according to breed standard. Do not change hands to set up.
- ❖ Answer questions from project materials.
- ❖ Perform a circle at a walk or trot.

*Information from PNW574 4-H Horse
Contest Guide, provided by:*

