



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION

# WASHINGTON STATE 4-H HORSE BOWL CONTEST RULES

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## **OBJECTIVES**

The primary objective of horse bowl contests is to provide an opportunity for youth enrolled in 4-H horse projects to demonstrate their knowledge of equine-related subject matter in a competitive setting where attitudes of friendliness and fairness prevail. The contests provide an educational experience for both participants and spectators.

## **CONTESTANTS AND ELIGIBILITY**

1. Each county may enter one (1) intermediate and/or one (1) senior team with four (4) or five (5) contestants in each team. One (1) team member will be designated as alternate if five (5) are entered. Teams may be selected by any procedure the county deems appropriate.
  - a. Intermediate age division is for members who are 11 to 13 years of age as of October 1<sup>st</sup> of the current 4-H year
  - b. Senior age division is for 4-H members who are 14 to less than 19 years of age, who have not reached their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday on or before October 1<sup>st</sup> of the current 4-H year
2. In order to encourage more county participation, the following exceptions are allowed:
  - a. Three-member teams are allowed. However, they are not eligible for team bonus points.
  - b. Mixed teams are allowed (seniors and intermediates). However, they must compete at the senior level.
  - c. If either a three-member team or a mixed team wins the senior contest, the highest placing complete team (four seniors) would compete at the national contest.
3. Counties may combine to form an intermediate and/or senior team..
4. Contestants must not have competed in a past Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup Horse Bowl Contest or Western National 4-H Classic Horse Bowl Contest.
5. In Washington, youth who were 19 years old on January 1 of the current year are eligible to participate in the State Contest, however, are not eligible to qualify for competing at the National level according to National Horse Bowl Rules.
6. Contestants must be enrolled in 4-H in the county they represent. Contest and team entry and eligibility must be certified by the county 4-H staff person including current year enrollment in 4-H on-line enrollment system.
7. State contest rules may need to be modified in case the contest may be held virtually as a result a state or national disaster.

**ENTRY DEADLINE** - The 4-H horse bowl contest actually begins with an entry deadline. Each team must enter through the county 4-H staff person prior to the contest including verification and approval that the 4-H members are member(s) in good standing and enrolled by contest registration deadline. Registration also includes payment of respective registration fees by the published deadline date.

**REPORTING—TIME & PLACE** - All teams shall report at the time and place listed in the contest information, which is sent to the county Extension office prior to the competition.

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## CONTEST PROCEDURES

### HOLDING ROOMS

1. Holding Rooms are an area for teams to study and prepare for upcoming rounds. All team members and coaches must keep the volume down as to not distract other teams. Quiz Bowl Buzzers are not allowed in the holding room.
2. All teams, alternates, and coaches must remain in the designated holding area until it is their turn to play.
3. After their match is played, they must return to the designated holding area to await their next match.
4. All coaches in the holding area are responsible for supervision of the teams. These rules are a matter of ethics and require the cooperation of all team members and coaches.

### GAME OFFICIALS

1. **MODERATOR** - It will be their responsibility at the beginning of the match to assure each contestant that their equipment is working properly. The moderator shall assume the responsibility for reading questions and will acknowledge the chairs that are eligible to respond to One-on-One and open questions, before the question is read. The moderator will accept all answers that are the same or mean the same as the expected answer to the question. Any answers different than the expected answer, will be referred to the judges' panel, who will make the decision to accept or reject the given answer. The moderator also serves as the 3rd judge. (or 2<sup>nd</sup> judge, if necessary)
2. **JUDGES PANEL** - The judges' panel will consist of two people. One person will be a knowledgeable horse person. If possible, one will be a veterinarian. It is especially important for the judges to give reasons for not accepting an answer, because the intent of this competition is to make it a unique learning experience for youth. These young people have made a very strong commitment to this program, and above all, we want to be fair and honest with them. This is an excellent opportunity to further educate them along these lines. The judge's responsibility will be to rule jointly on the acceptability of any question or answers to all questions. In the event of a challenge to a question/answer, with two judges, either both judges or one judge and the moderator must agree on the acceptability or rejection of any question and/or answer. When there is only one judge, both the judge and the moderator must agree on actions to be taken.

If an answer was not clearly heard, the contestant may be asked to repeat their answer. If a question was read to completion and the answer given is different than the one expected, if it is technically or logically correct the answer may be accepted. If the answer given is "in the ball park", the judges may request the contestant to be more specific, expand, explain, or clarify their answer. If the question was interrupted, the judges may not ask for any kind of clarification. The answer is either correct or incorrect according to the way the question was written.

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All answers given must be correct for the way the question is written. An answer may be correct for a portion heard of a question that was interrupted but wrong for the way the question was written. The judges may not ask any questions and the answer will be counted as a wrong answer. If the answer is correct for the way the question was written, it will be accepted.

All of the game questions will have a reference code and page number. The required reference books will be available to look up information or to verify answers.

3. **TIME KEEPERS** - The time keeper will monitor all time intervals and designate when the time of response has been exceeded, and may handle all controls of the game equipment. It is strongly recommended that neither the moderator nor a judge be used as a timekeeper.
  - a. **TIME ALLOWED FOR** -
    - i. To activate a buzzer after question is read - 5 seconds
    - ii. To start answer after acknowledgement - 5 seconds
    - iii. To start answer after 10 seconds to confer for bonus – 5 seconds
    - iv. To complete an answer to one-on-one, open or toss up questions – 20 seconds
    - v. For team to confer on a bonus question - 10 seconds
    - vi. To complete an answer to a bonus question – 30 seconds
4. The contest Coordinator will have final authority over ALL procedures protests.
5. **SCORE KEEPERS** - There will be at least two (2) scorekeepers in each contest room. They are responsible for documenting accurate team and individual scores. There will be a visual score keeper who will record the team scores. The Table score keeper will keep a written record of the official team and individual scores. The visual scores will be set up so that they are visible to the table score keeper, the contestants and moderator and spectators, if possible. The written record of the scores must match the visual scores and will be the official records of all individual and team scores. A special score sheet will be available for the table score keepers.

Scores will be verified as accurate at the completion of the one-on-one questions and again at the completion of each round. In addition, the coach from each team will need to sign the score sheet upon completion of each round indicating they are in agreement with the final scores.

## **GAME EQUIPMENT**

1. **Game Panels** - An appropriate device will be used which will provide a clear indication of the first contestant to respond to a question.
2. **Time Recorders** - A stopwatch, control panel timer or other appropriate time device will be used.

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3. **Signal Device** - This signal device shall be used by the time keepers and shall have a distinctly different sound for each side, or a device that has a distinct sound and lights that indicate the contestant that is responding when their buzzer is activated. Back up units will be available in the event of malfunction or failure.
  4. **Score Keeping Devices** – One, such as a whiteboard, will be used to maintain team scores that are visible to the contestants and score keepers and, if possible, to the spectators. Special score sheets will be provided for keeping the written official individual and game scores for each match of the contest.

### **EQUIPMENT FAILURE**

1. It shall be the responsibility of the moderator to assure each contestant that all equipment is operating correctly at the start of the match. Back up units will also be available.
2. If a device ceases to function during a match or is believed to be malfunctioning, a “time-out” may be called by any contestant, the moderator, or by either coach.
3. If after checking, it is determined that there is equipment malfunction, the faulty part(s) or unit will be replaced and play resumed.
4. Scores accumulated up to the point of the “time-out” shall stand. All further points awarded during the remainder of the match will be added to or subtracted from this total.
5. If both referee judges or one referee judge and the moderator deem it advisable, points awarded for the two (2) questions asked immediately prior to determination of equipment failure may be recalled and two (2) additional questions used.
6. Under no conditions shall there be a replay of a match in which there was equipment failure.

### **TRANSCRIBING QUESTIONS**

Transcribing contest questions by any means during the competition is prohibited. There will be no hand-written, typed or in any way recorded documentation of questions. Use of electronic devices including cell phones, computers, I-pads, tablets, etc. is not permitted in the contest or holding rooms. Affiliated teams will be immediately eliminated from the competition and any awards earned will be forfeited for the current year. The respective county 4-H staff person will also be notified of this elimination.

### **CELL PHONES**

Cell phones must be turned off in the contest room.

### **PHOTOGRAPHS**

Photographs will be permitted only before or after a match.

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## **MATCH PROCEDURES**

1. Teams are assembled and seated at their respective panels, with their backs to the audience. The designated team captain is seated in the #1 chair, nearest to the middle or the moderator. Each contestant is given the opportunity to check the equipment.
2. Spectators are allowed in contest rooms. However, they may take no part in the actual match and are observers only!
3. All team members will have a participation bonus card facing the contestant. They will be blank to the score keepers until that contestant gives a correct response to a question. At that time the card will be turned around to face the scorekeepers.
4. The designated set of questions for each round is opened by the moderator and verified with the judges' panel and referee before starting the game. Prior to reading a question, the moderator will announce the number, type of question (One-on-One, Open, or Toss Up) and the contestants eligible to respond. Each succeeding question will be read in this manner until all of the questions for that match are read. The correct answer will be given for all unanswered questions or wrong answers.
5. Contestants who respond to a question will receive the appropriate points applied to a particular question. Appropriate penalties will be deducted as warranted.
6. If the time (five (5) seconds) in which to answer a question elapses without a contestant activating a buzzer, there shall be no loss or awarding of points to either team. After the response time has elapsed, the answer will be given and the next question read.
7. If the buzzer is activated and an answer is not started within the 5 second allowable time, there will be a minus two (-2) pt. penalty imposed against the contestant who activated the buzzer.
8. If the judges elect to not use a game question, it must be replaced by another question so that the total number of questions to be asked will remain equal in each match.
9. If a question is answered incorrectly, the other team is not given the opportunity to answer the question. The correct answer will be given by the moderator and the contest will continue with the next question.
10. Spectators, parents and visitors may not protest any question, answer or procedure during the contest. They may, however, submit in writing to the contest officials any suggestion, complaints or protests at the conclusion of the contest.
11. Any contestant, coach, family member, friends or spectators, exhibiting **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT, BEHAVIOR OR ACTIONS DETRIMENTAL TO THE CONTEST** will be subject to dismissal from the immediate contest area. The respective county 4-H staff person will also be notified of this dismissal.

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## **RESPONSE PENALTY**

1. If any contestant, other than the designated contestants, responds to a one-on-one or regular question, that contestant/team will lose two (2) points.
2. A contestant who responds out of turn for a second time to a one-on-one or regular question directed to another contestant will be replaced at the panel by their team alternate. If an alternate is not available, the remainder of the match will be played with less than a full team and all one-on-one questions normally addressed to the eliminated contestant will be addressed only to the contestant in the opposite numbered chair. This contestant may return to further matches in the contest. A third such penalty will disqualify them from the competition. The (-2) point penalty will continue to apply for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> offence.

## **TIME OUTS**

1. The team captain, coach or any Contest Official may call for a "time out" for clarification of a rule, score, to seat an alternate or to allow for any unexpected problem. "Time outs" may be called only after a question has been answered and before the next question starts.
2. A "time out" for an unexpected problem may not exceed a 2 minute delay in the round of play. At that time the team member may be excused from the remainder of that round. If the team has an alternate (who has not already participated in the current round) they may replace the excused player. If there is no alternate, the remainder of the round will be played as a team of 3.
3. Teams are allowed a maximum of two (2) Time Outs per round.

## **PROTEST / VERIFICATION OF QUESTIONS AND/OR ANSWERS**

1. Verification of a question and answer is permissible.
2. ONLY PROTESTS THAT ARE MADE IN A COURTEOUS, RESPECTFUL MANNER WILL BE ACKNOWLEDGED.
3. Protests must be made before the reading of the next question.
4. Only the team captain or team coach may call for an "official" protest of a question or the answer to a question. The protesting team and coach are given three (3) minutes to support their protest. Reference source material is available in the contest room for their use. The judges and moderator will consider the protest. Their decision in all cases will be final.
5. If an "official" protest is acknowledged, play will be stopped, and the designated officials will consider the protest and make a decision. A (-1) point penalty will be assessed if the protest is not upheld. This (-1) penalty is in addition to the (-1) for the incorrect answer that was protested (total of -2 points).
6. To sustain a protest, at least two members of the designated judges' panel must agree to keep or replace a question or to determine the validity of an answer.

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7. If the protest is sustained by the officials, the moderator and/or the score keepers will take one of the following actions:
    - a. If the question is determined by the officials to be a poor question, it will be replaced and open to a specific chair on each team or to all contestants seated at the game table, depending on the type of question (one on one or open).
    - b. If the answer to the question received a call for verification, the designated judges' panel will determine the validity of the answer. Points will then be awarded or subtracted as appropriate.
    - c. If a question was protested after an answer is given, the designated judges panel will determine the validity of the protested question. If the validity of the question is allowed, points will be awarded or subtracted as appropriate. If not, the questions will be replaced.
  8. All protests/challenges will be acknowledged by the contest staff.

### **ABUSE OF THE PROTEST PROVISIONS**

1. In this competition, every effort will be made to be fair and courteous and understanding to the contestants and the coaches.
2. Abuse of this protest provision by any contestant or coach will result in one or more of the following:
  - a. Dismissal of team coach from the contest area.
  - b. Dismissal (or replacement) of any contestant from the competition.
  - c. Dismissal of an entire team from the competition, with forfeiture of points or standing.

### **READING AND ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS**

1. The moderator will read all questions - identify the type and number of question and designate the chairs eligible to respond when necessary. Five seconds will be allowed for starting a response. If an answer is not given or is wrong, the moderator will give the correct answer and the next question is read. If the answer given is the same as or means the same as the expected answer, it will be accepted. If the answer is different than the expected answer, it will be referred to the judges' panel for decision.
2. Once a contestant activates a buzzer, they must be **ACKNOWLEDGED** before they can answer the question. After they have been acknowledged, the contestant has five (5) seconds to start a valid answer. First answers will be considered valid answers. It is the responsibility of the acknowledger to determine if an actual answer was started within the 5-second time limit. The answer must be completed within 20 seconds after initiating the response.
3. An acknowledgement penalty of one (-1) point will be deducted from contestant's score and their team if they answer a question before being acknowledged.

The first answer given will be accepted as the official answer, including multiple response questions. Repeating the question will not be considered the initiation of the answer.

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If a question is read to completion, the judges may ask the contestant to explain, expand, be more specific, or clarify their answer.

4. If a question is INTERRUPTED during the reading of it, the moderator will stop reading as soon as a buzzer is activated. The contestant responding has five (5) seconds AFTER BEING ACKNOWLEDGED, TO BEGIN THEIR ANSWER. If the answer given is correct for the way the question was written, it will be accepted. If the answer given is correct for only the portion of the question heard but wrong for the way the question was written, the answer will not be accepted. If the question was interrupted, the judges will not be allowed to ask for any type of clarification of the answer given.
5. The judges' panel will be allowed to verify an answer or the validity of a question. If verification cannot be made, the question will be replaced.
6. The moderator will not repeat (reread) any of the questions. However, when a question is interrupted before it is read to completion, the entire question may be read after the contestant has completed their response.

### **INFORMATION SOURCES**

No source of information is infallible. At times there may be answers given that are in agreement with the recommended reference books, which in fact are erroneous or out of date. Every effort is made to eliminate such questions, however, in the event one slips in, the judges may agree to:

- a. Accept the answer and give an explanation of the correct or up-dated information, for future use of the question.
- b. Accept only the correct answer.
- c. Replace the question to the appropriate contestants.

### **PLAYING TEAMS AND ALTERNATES**

1. Only four (4) contestants shall be seated at the panel at any one time. Seat position must be declared prior to competition and youth must remain in this seat for the duration of the entire contest. The only exception is when an alternate replaces a seated player during a match or the competition. See #2 below.
2. During any match, only one (1) alternate may be replaced at the panel when:
  - a. The moderator, team captain, team coach deems it impossible for one of the seated members to continue.
  - b. The captain/coach of a team requests the replacement of a team member.
3. The team member removed from a match becomes ineligible to return to that particular match. The team member removed and the replacement member are both eligible to participate in further matches. A five-member team is strongly recommended.
4. Members removed from the game table for disciplinary reasons, may not come back to any more matches in the competition.

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## QUESTION TYPES

There are four types of questions are used:

1. ONE-ON-ONE are worth two (2) points during one-on-one competition, when only one member of each team may respond. These questions count toward individual and team scores. All incorrect answers receive a (-1) deduction. ONE-ON-ONE questions shall be addressed to only one member of each team, beginning with the contestants in the #1 chairs on either team and progressing with subsequent questions going to the contestants in the #2 chairs, #3 chairs, #4 chairs, respectively, until the one-on-one questions are completed. There will be twelve (12) total one-on-one questions per match.
  - a. The moderator shall clearly indicate the start of one-on-one play by announcing the chair number of the contestants eligible to respond prior to reading the question.
  - b. A three member team would have no opportunity to respond to questions for the #4 chair.
  - c. Toss-up/Bonus questions will not be used during One-on-One Competition.
2. OPEN questions are worth one (1) point during OPEN questions, when any member of either team may respond. Each match will include sixteen (16) Regular Questions asked at the completion of the One-On-One Questions. These questions count toward individual and team scores. All incorrect answers receive a (-1) deduction
3. TOSS-UP QUESTIONS are worth one (1) pt. and are open for response to any member of either team. The toss-up question is used in the OPEN part of the match. If there is a correct answer to the toss-up question, a bonus question will be attached. Toss-up questions are generally a little more difficult than an OPEN question. Each match will include two (2) Toss-Up Questions. The points will count toward individual and team scores. All incorrect answers receive a (-1) deduction.
4. BONUS questions are worth three (3) points and will be asked of the team whose member have just correctly answered a toss-up question. When multiple answers are required, (3) POINTS will be awarded if ALL of the required answers are correct. No points will be awarded or taken away if there is less than the required number of answers or if there are no correct answers. No part of the bonus question will be repeated nor will any additional information be given to the contestants. There will be two (2) Bonus Questions offered in each match. These points will count toward team scores only.
  - a. The team should allow the moderator to read the complete question. The team will be given ten (10) seconds to confer. The time keeper will call time at the end of ten (10) seconds. The team captain or designee must then start giving the required number of answers within five (5) seconds. Team members may give answers to the captain/designee during the 30-second answering period.
  - b. A bonus question attached to an unanswered or incorrectly answered toss-up question will be transferred to the next regular Open question (which becomes the new toss-up question), until a correct answer is given.
  - c. If the match ends with an unanswered bonus question, the bonus question will not be utilized.

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## SCOREKEEPING

The point value of correct/incorrect responses, bonuses, penalties are as follows:

Correct answer – One-on one question	2
Correct answer - Open question	1
Toss-up question - All answers required	1
Bonus question - All required answers required	3
Bonus question - All incomplete answers, no answers or all incorrect answers	0
Team Participation- 4 correct answers	2
All incorrect answers	-1
Response penalty - No answer started in 5 seconds	-2
Response penalty - Contestant not acknowledged	-1
Response penalty - Out of turn	-2
Response penalty - Out of turn second time in same match	-2 and eliminate from match
Response penalty - Out of turn third time in contest	-2 and eliminate from contest
Protest penalty (not upheld)	-1 (in addition to -1 for incorrect answer)

## TEAM PARTICIPATION BONUS POINTS

1. In order to encourage full team participation, two (2) bonus points will be awarded in each match to the teams in which each team member has correctly responded to at least one question other than bonus questions. After having earned this team bonus once within a match, teams are eligible to earn additional bonuses of two (2) points by repeating the process specified for team bonus awards.
2. In order to obtain these bonus points, each of the four members of the team SEATED AT THE TIME, must have correctly answered a question. When an alternate comes to the game table, if a bonus card is showing for that chair, it must be forfeited (turned around) and earned by the contestant coming into the game.
3. No team is credited toward a team bonus with a member's second correct response until the first team bonus has been awarded. Each time team bonus points are awarded the team may again begin accumulating credits for team bonus points.

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## **COMPLETING THE CONTEST**

1. Following the final question, the team with the highest number of points is declared the winner of that match.
2. In the event of a tie after the designated number of questions, five (5) additional regular questions are asked. If a tie still remains after the overtime, the first team to win a point (or because of a loss of a point by the other team has a 1-point advantage) is declared the winner.
3. Tie-breaker points do not get added to individual, team or team bonus scores. They are used to break match ties only.
4. Once the moderator has declared a winner based on the scores, there shall be no protest. The decisions of the referee judges' panel will also be final.
5. There shall be no protest of any questions or answers following the declaration of the winner.

## **DOUBLE ELIMINATION**

1. Teams—each team will play in a pre-numbered position, according to the position number drawn by the team captain.
2. A total of two (2) losses in the Double Elimination games will automatically eliminate a team from the competition. All winning teams will advance to the next round.
3. Individual Scores will be tabulated at the end of the double elimination.

## **TEAM AWARDS**

1. Team awards will be based on a predetermined procedure of play. The exact procedure to be followed must be determined by the number of teams participating and the time allocated for the contest.
  - a. Every team will participate in a minimum of two (2) matches in the double elimination competition.
  - b. Double elimination brackets will be used until a winner is determined.
2. The rank of teams will be determined on the basis of their position within the double elimination brackets. To place teams eliminated in the same rounds in the lose bracket, the team with the highest score will take the higher rank; the second highest scoring team will take the next highest place; and so on.

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## **INDIVIDUAL AWARDS**

1. Scores will be kept for each individual contestant. Special recognition will go to the Top Ten high-scoring individuals. Scores will be based on the high three (3) match scores for each individual in cases where individuals have competed in more than three (3) matches. Final scores will be tabulated after all ties have been broken. Individuals competing in two (2) matches are eligible for individual awards.
2. Ties are broken in the following manner:
  - a. First Tie-breaker: High individual average for entire contest. (Score divided by games)
  - b. Second Tie-breaker: High individual match score. (Highest score for any one match)
  - c. Third Tie-breaker: Total number of individual points in the contest.

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## SOURCES FOR QUESTIONS

In an instance where there is a conflict of information between sources, the most recent source (publication date) will prevail. For example, if there is a conflict between Equine Science and Horse Smarts, Horse Smarts would be considered correct as it is a newer publication. In the circumstance when a reference is considered to be inaccurate, refer to the previous section detailed under *PROTEST / VERIFICATION OF QUESTIONS AND/OR ANSWERS*

1. ILLUSTRATED DICTIONARY OF EQUINE TERMS.  
New Horizons Education Center, Inc. Alpine Publications, Inc., 38262 Linman Road, Crawford, CO 81415  
[www.alpinepub.com](http://www.alpinepub.com), Phone: 970-921-5005, Fax: 970-921-5081
2. HORSE INDUSTRY HANDBOOK.  
American Youth Horse Council AYHC, 1 Gainer Rd, McDonald, NM 88262  
[www.ayhc.com](http://www.ayhc.com), Phone: 817-320-2005
3. FEEDING AND CARE OF THE HORSE (2nd edition)  
Lon D. Lewis Wiley-Blackwell, 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030  
[www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com), Phone: 201-748-6000
4. EQUINE SCIENCE  
Jean T. Griffiths Equine Network /Source Interlink Media
5. THE COLORING ATLAS OF HORSE ANATOMY  
Robert A. Kainer & Thomas O. McCracken. Alpine Publications, Inc., 38262 Linman Road, Crawford, CO 81415  
[www.alpinepub.com](http://www.alpinepub.com), Phone: 970-921-5005, Fax: 970-921-5081
6. HORSE SMARTS: AN EQUINE REFERENCE & YOUTH ACTIVITY GUIDE  
American Youth Horse Council, AYHC, 1 Gainer Rd, McDonald, NM 88262  
[www.ayhc.com](http://www.ayhc.com), Phone: 817-320-2005

All Washington State 4-H Horse project publications as listed in the current year 4-H Publications & Projects Guide-EM2778 and available online at <https://pubs.extension.wsu.edu/>.

If teams need assistance in locating and/or downloading the Washington 4-H horse publications, please contact the respective Extension office for assistance.

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Revised April 2020 by Pat Pehling, State Horse Bowl Coordinator and reviewed by Jennifer Leach, Assistant Professor, WSU Extension 4-H Equine Specialist/Cowlitz County 4-H.

WSU Extension programs, employment, and volunteer service are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of non-compliance may be reported through your local Extension office.  
Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication or program information or reasonable accommodation should contact their respective county 4-H staff person, at least two weeks prior to this event.