



**Preparing for  
4-H Fitting  
&  
Showmanship**





## ***4-H Fitting and Showmanship***

Fitting & Showmanship embodies the very heart of the 4-H program. The purpose of the 4-H Fitting & Showmanship program is to encourage members to maintain high standards for horse management and responsibility to their 4-H project animal(s). Through Fitting & Showmanship members learn to properly care of their horse and how to show their animal to its best advantage.

Members must participate in 4-H Fitting & Showmanship at least once during the project year. Usually members compete in Fitting and Showmanship at horse shows, however, if this is not possible, the member may demonstrate Fitting & Showmanship before their 4-H leader or other qualified person.

There are two different forms of Fitting and Showmanship classes which can be offered: (a) Traditional, with one judge, or (b) Station, with two judges. (See MA 4-H Horse Show Rule Book for illustrations of forms of Fitting and Showmanship.)

### ***General Rules of Fitting and Showmanship:***

1. All exhibitors must be enrolled 4-H members with a horse verification form (mandatory picture) on file.
2. Each member must prepare their own project animal(s) or they may be disqualified.
3. Exhibitors must be responsible for their project animal for at least 90 days prior to participating in a 4-H Fitting & Showmanship class.
4. There is no fee for the Fitting & Showmanship class.
5. In Fitting & Showmanship classes, it is the exhibitor's efforts which are judged, not the breed, type or conformation of the horse.
6. Exhibitors must not be penalized for blemishes on horse. Fresh wounds/blemishes may be treated, but must, be done in a neat manner. Horses with wounds, if properly treated, shall not be penalized.
7. All Fitting & Showmanship classes are judged according to the Fitting and Showmanship score card.
8. Any 4-H member who exhibits in a 4-H division at a horse show must show in a Fitting & Showmanship class at that show.
9. Stallions over the age of one and nursing mares are prohibited from entering 4-H classes.
10. Rule violations (such as cruel and abusive treatment of horse or poor sportsmanship) will result in disqualification.

## 4-H FITTING AND SHOWMANSHIP SCORECARD

### A. APPEARANCE OF ANIMAL

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| 1. Condition             | 15 |
| 2. Grooming              | 15 |
| 3. Trimming and Braiding | 5  |
| 4. Tack                  | 5  |

### B. APPEARANCE OF EXHIBITOR 10

### C. SHOWING ANIMAL IN THE RING

|                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Leading                          | 15 |
| 2. Posing                           | 15 |
| 3. Showing animal to best advantage | 10 |
| 4. Attitude, alertness and poise    | 10 |

Total 100

Total points

Blue 90 – 100

Red 80 – 89

White 79 and below

## A. APPEARANCE OF ANIMAL (40 Total Points)

### 1. Condition (15 Points)

In Fitting and Showmanship classes, it must be remembered by all concerned that it is the exhibitor's efforts which are judged, NOT the breed, type, or conformation of the horse. That is why the score card has zero points allotted for conformation. It does however, have 15 points for condition.

Good condition is the result of proper care in feeding and exercise. It is determined by the condition of the coat, muscles and amount of flesh.

A well-conditioned horse doesn't just happen. It is the result of months of good stable management practices. This is one of the reasons for rule number 3 of the Massachusetts 4-H Horse Show rules that states "Exhibitors must have managed their projects for at least three months prior to the show date".

The following are some important things to think about in getting your horse up to peak condition.



#### a. Feeding

Feed your animal according to its individual needs. Some horses and ponies are especially "easy keepers". Some are not! Have a regular feeding schedule and stick to it. Good quality hay is a must. For guidance in adjusting your feeding program, consult your veterinarian, barn manager, 4-H Leader, or grain representative for a balanced diet. Always have fresh clean water available.

#### b. Health Care

An annual vet check up is imperative. If you plan on showing it is recommended to check with the Massachusetts Horse Show Rule Book for a listing of current health requirements. All horses have worms to varying degrees, so you should consult with your veterinarian on how to keep the many kinds of worms that horses have, under control.

#### c. Care of Teeth

You should also ask your veterinarian to check your horse's teeth to see if they are in need of floating (filing). Teeth should be checked at least once if not twice a year. A rough-edged tooth can be a hindrance to chewing food properly (wasting grain). It can also be the cause of head shaking and tossing when the animal is wearing a bitted bridle.

#### d. Care of Feet

Your horse or pony will be of no use to you if you do not take proper care of its feet. The saying goes “no hoof, no horse” is very, very true. You should schedule regular visits with the farrier. Even if your animal goes barefoot, you should still have the farrier trim the hooves in order to improve your horse’s way of going. Regularly scheduled visits can prevent such things as thrush, hoof cracks, and feet grown out to an angle that puts strain on the tendons from becoming serious problems.

#### e. Exercise

Regular exercise is another important part in maintaining a healthy, well-conditioned horse. If your horse has had little work, during the winter months, start slowing and gradually build up the hours you exercise him. In this way, the muscles will become hard and firm. Always keep an eye on your horse’s weight. Remember your horse’s condition: Your feeding program may need adjustments with the addition of exercise.

### 2. Grooming (15 Points)

Grooming not only cleans the horse and improves its appearance it is also the sign of a healthy horse. Like condition, it counts for 15 points on the Fitting and Showmanship scorecard. Regular grooming is essential to the maintenance of good health in the horse. It helps to avoid: skin parasites, skin diseases, removes old hairs, cleans the hair and pores of the skin, massages the body muscles and improves circulation. Start at the front of the animal and work towards the rear. Be sure all grooming tools are clean. At all times use proper safety precautions.

#### a. Basic Grooming Equipment

Rubber Curry  
Stiff Bristled Brush  
Soft Bristled Brush or Dandy Brush  
Grooming Cloth or Rub Rag  
Mane and Tail Comb  
Hoof Pick  
Sponge  
Plastic or Rubber Buckets  
Sweat Scraper  
Shedding Blade  
Scissors/Clippers



#### b. General Daily Grooming Procedures.

Secure your horse in a safe manner i.e.: cross or safety tie. Remember work calmly and quietly. Talk softly to your horse occasionally, letting it know when you are moving to the rear. Develop a system, which allows more efficient grooming and allows your horse to become accustomed to your procedure. Work from the front to rear and from top to the ground.

#### i. The Neck and Body.

Start on the left side of the horse and complete this side before starting on the right side. Begin with the rubber curry comb, combing with circular motions. The circular motions loosened the dust, dirt, matted hair and manure more rapidly than straight motions. Now, use the stiff brush in short vigorous strokes in the direction of the hair growth (with the hair). Hold the brush in one hand and the curry brush in the other hand. You can now use both hands, each doing a separate job. Work from the neck toward the hindquarters. The correct procedure is to curry the horse several strokes and then brush, removing the loosened material. Continue this procedure until the entire neck and body have been curried. Be sure to curry the abdominal region as you did the rest of the body, paying special attention to the heart girth area. Most animals are sensitive in the loin, flank and abdominal areas. Be careful there. After currying, take a body brush and use long strokes to cover the same area from front to rear. You can then follow with a rub rag to put on the finishing touches.

Follow the same procedure on the right side of the horse.

#### ii. The Head

Gently and carefully brush the forehead, the jaw, and behind the ears. Use a soft sponge and cloth to wipe around the muzzle and eyes. If necessary, gently use a small soft rubber curry comb and soft brush to remove mud, loose hair, and dust. Finish the job by wiping the dust and dirt away with the grooming cloth.

#### iii. The Legs

Use extreme care when grooming the legs. You don't want to get hurt, and you don't want to hurt your horse. Be sure to complete one leg before moving on to the next. Begin with the stiff brush to loosen up the dirt, hair and manure. A soft brush should then be used to remove the loose material. Be sure to groom the fetlocks, coronet, pastern and both sides of the knee, hock, elbow and stifle. Excessive chestnut growth may be penalized in the show ring. To remove chestnuts, use Vaseline to help soften and you can peel off within five days. These are the most commonly overlooked places when grooming. Again, follow with rub rag for the finishing touches.

#### iv. The Feet

The order in which you clean the feet is of no importance, but as in grooming the rest of the horse, you should establish a regular system and stick to it. The following is one procedure for picking up a hoof: Approach the horse quietly, be sure to pick up the hoof with the hand closest to the horse. When picking up the left front hoof, stand beside the left shoulder of the horse, facing toward the hindquarters. Next, run your hand down the left leg and grasp over the pastern. Lift the leg in a comfortable position for both you and the horse. With your left hand holding the hoof, pick clean the entire sole from heel to toe including the groves of the hoof. Be careful not to damage the

frog or the skin around the heels. Being familiar with the anatomy of the hoof is helpful. Continue this procedure with each hoof, changing only the hand you use to grasp the leg. Be careful when handling the hind legs. After cleaning each hoof, carefully place the hoof on the ground. To clean the external wall, use a stiff brush or mild soap and water.

Hooves should be properly trimmed and if shod, the shoes should fit correctly and clinches should be neat. Hooves must be cleaned and may be shown naturally or hoof dressing may be used. If you have questions about the condition of your horse's feet ask your farrier.

#### v. The Mane and Tail

All animals should have a bridle path cut, which allows a space for the bridle or halter to be placed without interference from the mane and/or forelock. The width of the bridle path varies with each breed and or type. If your animal has a heavy neck, you might want to make the trimmed area an inch or so longer in order to refine the neck and vice versa. Use dull-pointed scissors, manual clippers or electric clippers. Be especially careful when introducing electric clippers. Be careful when using these tools, especially the scissors. General Rule – lay ear back to determine bridle path of 3 to 4 inches. Tail should be free of dander and tangles. Make note of tail rubbing – it could be caused by parasites.

### c. Washing & Vacuuming

Brushing and currying are effective and beneficial cleaning methods. There is no substitute for elbow grease. However, if you choose to vacuum your horse, make sure he is comfortable with the vacuum. You should shampoo your horse as seldom as possible. Washing with soap takes the natural oils out of the horse's skin and hair, and leaves it with a full coat. Good footing is essential throughout the washing procedure.

The water temperature is very important. You don't like an excessively cold bath and your horse doesn't either. The ideal water temperature depends on the weather conditions. Warm water is preferred. Do not wash your horse in a draft or wind, because it could cause illness.

With a sponge, brush, washing implement, and a bucket, start with the feet and legs of the horse carefully getting the horse wet, letting the horse adjust to the temperature of the water, gradually cover the body, neck, chest, and hindquarters. Be careful how you use water around your horse's face and head, never letting water get into the horses ears. After the horse is wet, take a bucket with mild, non-detergent soap, and using a sponge or other such implement start washing your horse using circular motions for best results in washing. Rinse with clean water, begin with the highest points and work you way down. After rinsing, use your sweat scraper to remove excess water. This allows for faster drying, and you can use a rag to dry the face. Do not use a sweat scraper on the horse's head, legs,(or below the knees). The tail can be dried by wringing it out.

Caution: Be sure you have removed all soap. If you haven't, the animal may develop a skin irritation that will cause prolonged rubbing of mane and tail. If

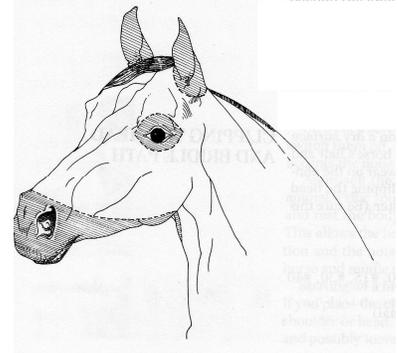
you have a gelding, check with your veterinarian on the proper procedure for cleaning the sheath.

### 3. **Trimming, Braiding and Banding** (5 Points)

The hair coat should be clean, well brushed and in good condition. The bridle path and legs should be trimmed according to breed association regulations. Long hairs on the eyes, muzzle, and face should also be trimmed.

#### a. **Trimming**

Neat trimming, like good grooming, improves your horse's appearance. Trimming the horse takes more skill than any other fitting procedures. You should do most of the trimming a few days before the show. This allows for trimming marks and errors to grow and be less noticeable. Electric clippers, if available, are easier to work with but the use of shears might be necessary on some horses that will not stand for noise that clippers make.



The areas to be trimmed on the horse are: whiskers on the muzzle, under the jaw and throat latch area, bridle path area, ears (exterior of ears), long whiskers around the eyes, fetlocks (feathers), coronet bands, excess hairs on legs

#### i. Using Electric Clippers:

Arrange the electric cord so that the horse cannot step on it if it happens to move. Stand near the front of the horse and let the clippers run before you start trimming. This gives the horse a chance to get used to the sound. It also should give you some indication as to how the horse will react to trimming. Before you start trimming, it is a good idea to hold the clippers on the horse so it can become used to the vibrations. Then, gradually, move the clippers to the area you desire to trim.

The whiskers can be trimmed by holding the clippers level on the muzzle. Move the clippers in a direction so the points of the blade are away from the horse. This will prevent the horse from being stabbed.

Excess hair under the jaw, can be trimmed by clipping in the opposite direction of the hair growth. Do not hold the clippers level on the jaw bone; hold them about  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch off the bone. Clipping this way will prevent clip marks which ruin the appearance of the horse.

The bridle path length will vary as we have already stated. The area should not look rough.

Trimming the ears can be tricky. To help keep the horse calm and to lessen the noise, squeeze the ear with one hand while you trim the outside hairs only with the clippers in the other hand. Do not clip hairs on the inside of the ear if you plan on turning your horse outside during the summer months. It would be cruel to do so for you have taken away its only protection against flies and insects.

The fetlocks (feathers), coronet bands and excess hair on the legs can be done as one step. In this case, it is best to work down the leg. Start at the coronet band by removing all hair extending below the hairline where the hoof ends and the hair begins.

Coming up the leg is the feather, excess hair in various amounts that extend from the pastern and fetlock. The feather should be removed by clipping against the hair. Lay the clippers on the leg and cut starting at the knee and work down the leg only trimming small amounts of hair at a time. After the feather is removed, move up the leg  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch off the leg bones, trimming long excess hair.

In a solid colored leg just trim around the coronary band so that no longer hairs extend onto the hoof. White legs may be shaved and blended into solid color. Run your clippers downward to blend the colored hairs into the clipped white hair. Repeat this procedure for each leg.

The western type horse with the roached mane differs only in the mane. The mane is clipped from poll to withers only leaving a lock of hair about 1 to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long at the withers. Do not attempt to roach a mane unless and until you can do a first class job.

Clipping is an acquired skill, so it is suggested you practice before the show season. Ask an experienced 4-Her to help you learn. Allow your clippers a chance to cool about every five minutes and be sure to keep them cleaned and oiled. Above all, remember to you use your voice.

#### ii. Using Scissors:

The areas should be trimmed in the same order and manner as with electric clippers. What is very important to remember is to always keep the point away from the horses' limbs and body. Any sudden movement might mean the point of the shears could be buried in horseflesh. Besides scaring the horse, making it more difficult to trim next time, many permanent injuries could occur.



You must remember that clipping and trimming affect the final appearance of the horse. Use care and judgment when clipping and trimming. Go slowly and only trim small amount of hair at a time.

#### iii Other Procedures:

Remove any excess growth of the chestnuts on each leg. This can be done by peeling the chestnut off by its natural formed layers. Do not use a knife, scissors or any other sharp object for removing these. Vaseline applied for several days in advance will help soften the growth and help with the peeling procedure.

A long ergot is found on some horses. The length varies per individual horse. This can be removed by your blacksmith when he trims or shoes your horse. He can easily remove it with his nippers. Do not do it yourself if you do not know what you are doing!

Remove all botfly eggs. They are small, yellow eggs which stick tightly to the hair especially on the forelegs, arm and elbow, the long hair of the mane and the area around the chin and throat. There are several methods of removing these unsightly and potentially dangerous eggs that appear during warm weather. Consult your veterinarian.

### Remember

Except for help in holding “exhibitors must prepare their own projects for any Fitting and Showmanship class”

With many months of your good stable management, hard work and practice, you will truly take pride in showing your animal at its best.

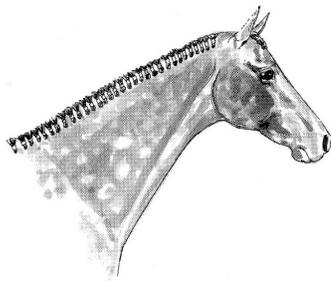
#### b. Braiding and Banding

Braiding or banding if used should be neat and suitable for type of horse. Miniature horses should not be braided or banded.

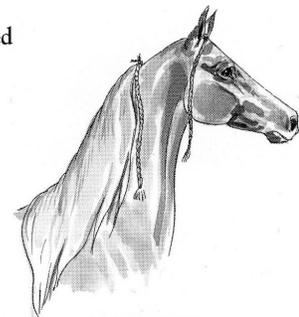
A well braided or banded horse can greatly improve the horses’ appearance, but braiding or banding takes lots of practice. Until you are very good at it, it is best to pull the mane neatly and leave it clean, combed and unbraided.

#### MANE STYLES

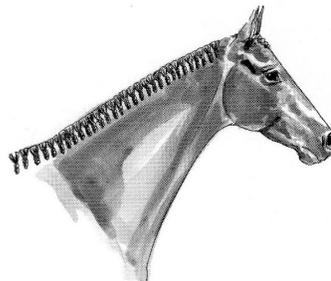
There are many styles of manes, according to breed and use. Five different ones are shown here.



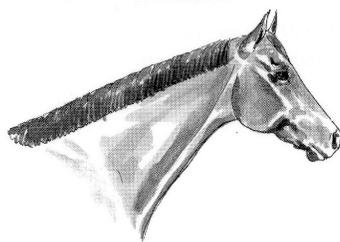
DRESSAGE



SADDLEBRED



HUNTER



WESTERN



ARABIAN

##### i. Hunter:

The most common types of braids for manes are the running/French braid and the button braid. When using a running/French braid, the mane is usually left long, although it may be trimmed or thinned if necessary. When braiding the mane should be pulled to approximately four inches in length, and should lie completely to one side of the horse’s neck. To braid, dampen and divide the hair into equal bunches, braid, turn under and secure, close to the neck with either string/yarn or a rubber band. The yarn should match the mane in

color and be subtle. String ties sewn braids will be more secure, but neat rubber band tied braids are fine. Remember to clip an inch or two for the bridle path and remember to braid the forelock if the mane is braided.

Today, horse's tails are usually left unbraided at local shows. Tails may be either shaped naturally or as a banged tail (cut flat across the bottom). The top of the tail is often pulled to lie smooth. However, pulled tails cannot be braided. To braid a tail, start with a clean, combed and dampened tail. Starting high up, take one strand from either side and one from the center, continue to plait to the end of the dock using hair from each side alternately. At the end of the dock, stop adding side hairs and continue braiding to the end of the braid and make a loop at the end.

ii. *Western:*

The mane, tail forelock and wither tuft may not contain ornaments (ribbons, bows, etc.) but may be banded. If banding the mane, the length should be of a useable size and not over five inches in length. The edges should be even and straight. (Tip: trim the bottom edge of the mane AFTER banding, keeping the horse's head level (from poll to withers) at all times during trimming) If not banding, the length of the mane and tail may vary as long as they are neat, clean, and free of tangles. The mane should be even in length or may be roached, but the forelock and tuft over the withers must be left. The bridle path, eyebrows and long hair on the head and legs must be clipped, except where breed regulations prohibit.

Tails can have a straight edge or remain a natural point. Tails should be full and free of any tangles. (Tip: if your horse has thin tail, instead of brushing the tail, pick out each section of hair before each class with your fingers. This will "fluff" up your tail giving it more volume.)

iii. *Saddleseat:*

*Pleasure types:* The mane and tail should be clean, combed and free flowing.

*Three Gaited:* The mane may be roached. The tail may be roached 6 to 8 inches down the dock, with the rest free flowing. The forelock should be left unbraided and tucked under the brow band to the side.

*Five gaited:* The mane should have a clipped bridle path down the neck, followed by a single ribbon in the braid with the remainder free flowing. The forelock should be unbraided and tucked under the brow band to the side. The tail should be left unbraided, full and flowing.

#### **4. Tack (5 Points)**

Horses must be shown in a clean well fitted halter or bridle. Tack should be clean, supple, neat and fit properly. Weanlings and yearling must be shown in a halter to protect the mouth for future biting. Miniature horses are shown in a halter.

*Hunters:*

Horses are usually shown in a snaffle bridle. If using a Pelham bit, with two sets of reins, the snaffle rein must be removed and the animal is lead with the curb

rein. If using a full bridle, remove the snaffle bit, cheek piece, and rein so that only the curb rein and bit is left and use that to lead the animal.

If a crop or whip is carried, it should be carried in the left hand and used only for asking your horse to trot. The crop should not be used to set up the horse.

*Western:*

Horses are to be shown in a halter with a lead shank, or a bridle can be used for better control.

Tack should fit properly and be neat, clean and in good repair. When exhibiting in a halter, chain shank can be used in a humane manner, but never through the mouth, as this is prohibited. Chain will be over the nose or under the chin, with both pulled up the side and clipped to the cheek ring, with snap facing out, with under the chin preferred.

*Saddleseat:*

Horses are usually shown in a full bridle although a Pelham may be used. If using a full bridle, remove the snaffle bit, cheek piece, and rein so that only the curb rein and bit is left and use that to lead the animal.

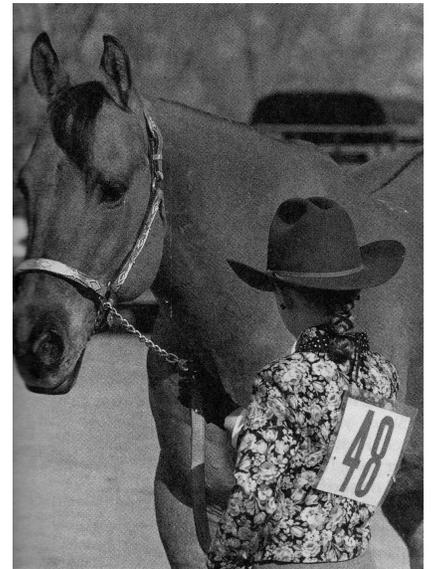
When using the whip, it should be carried in the left hand and used only for asking your horse to trot. The whip should not be used to set up the horse.

## **B. APPEARANCE OF EXHIBITOR (10 Total Points)**

Your appearance is just as important as the appearance of your horse. Always dress in appropriate attire, which is designated by your seat. This class is not based on the latest styles or how much money you spend on your outfit. This class is based on your appearance and your ability to show your animal to its best advantage!

### **IMPORTANT TIPS**

1. Always respond to the judge's comments and questions quickly and politely using sir or ma'am.
2. Choose clothing that is clean, in good repair and is suitable to your horse and your seat
3. Boots with a heel should be clean and polished.
4. Be sure long hair does not cover your number, and is contained neatly.
5. Avoid excessive makeup and jewelry.
6. SMILE
7. Be courteous to judges and other exhibitors and ring officials
8. Be sure your exhibitor number is clearly visible and that you know it! Numbers should be securely fastened in the middle your back.



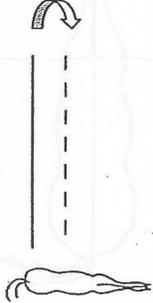
***REMEMBER: NO NUMBER, NO SCORE!!!!***

## C. SHOWING ANIMAL IN THE RING (50 Total Points)

Showing the horse in hand requires as much practice and skill as riding the horse in performance classes. The show ring is NOT the place to train your horse. Try and attend clinics during the year on how to train your horse in fitting and showmanship. Many counties and clubs offer such educational activities. Plus check with your leaders about training techniques.

Once your horse has been properly prepared for the ring, the exhibitor must show the animal to its best advantage, in a safe manner, to the judge, and be aware of your fellow exhibitors at all times.

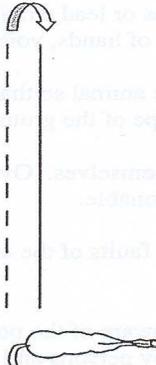
**Traditional Judging Pattern A**



1. Position horse side or  $\frac{3}{4}$  view to judge;
2. Judge examines horse, stops;
3. Walk horse away from judge (straight line)
4. Execute 180 degree pivot (to the right)
5. Trot back to judge (straight line)
6. Position horse in side or  $\frac{3}{4}$  view

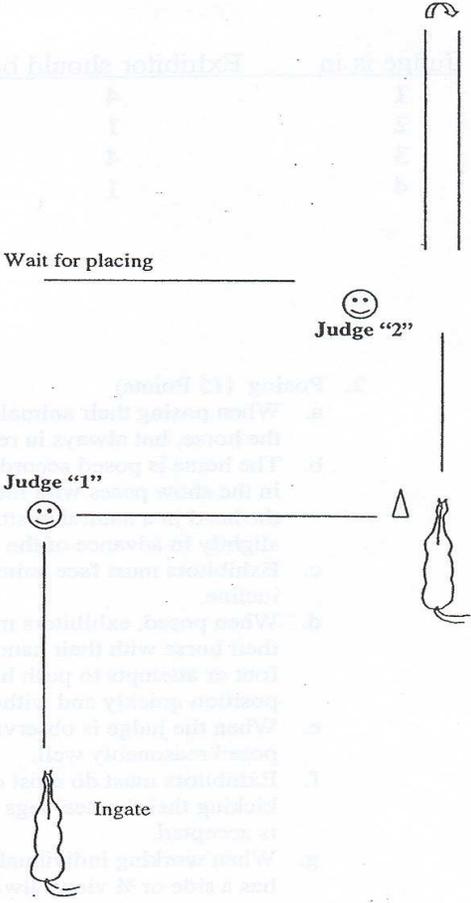
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**Traditional Judging Pattern B**



1. Position horse  $\frac{3}{4}$  view to judge;
2. Judge examines horse and stops;
3. Trot horse away from judge (straight line);
4. Execute 180 degree pivot (to the right);
5. Walk horse back to judge (straight line);
6. Position horse in  $\frac{3}{4}$  view

**Station Judging**



Wait for placing

Judge "2"

Judge "1"

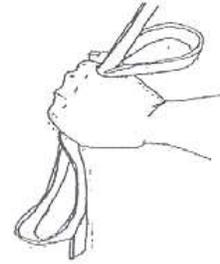
Ingate

1. Have horse ready and waiting at gate;
2. Walk horse to Fitting Judge "1"
3. Position horse side or  $\frac{3}{4}$  view to Judge "1"
4. Judge "1" examines horse, at completion, Hands folded score card to exhibitor To deliver to Showing Judge "2"
5. Exhibitor walks horse to cone where They wait until Judge "2" is ready;
6. Walks to Judge "2", hands folded score Card to judge and is told which pattern (traditional A or B);
7. Exhibitor does designated patten, completing Pattern with horse positioned in side or  $\frac{3}{4}$  View to Judge "2";
8. Exhibitor is then excused and walks to Outgate or where judge directs

## **1. Leading (15 Points)**

The exhibitor should perform the work accurately, precisely, smoothly and work with a reasonable amount of speed. The horse should lead, stop, turn, back and set up willingly, briskly and readily with minimal visible or audible cueing. Failure to follow the prescribed pattern, knocking over or working on the wrong side of cones, or severe disobedience will be penalized severely and the exhibitor should not place above an exhibitor that completes the pattern correctly. Always know the pattern before you begin, and if you have questions, ASK before the class starts!

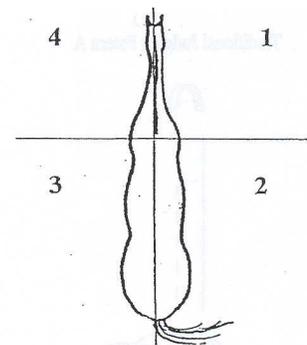
- a. Always lead from the left side of the horse.
- b. Hold all the excess reins or lead in your left hand. The excess should be arranged so that your hand won't be in danger of being tangled if the horse should suddenly pull back. (See diagram on proper ways of holding reins)
- c. Hold reins about 4 to 12 inches from the bridle or halter. This allows the horse to have natural head carriage.
- d. The horse should be led directly to and away from the judge in a straight line or as instructed and tract briskly and freely at the prescribed gait as instructed.
- e. The horse's head and neck should be straight and in line with the body.
- f. The stop should be straight, prompt, smooth and responsive.
- g. The horse should back up readily with the head, neck and body aligned in a straight line or as instructed.
- h. Always turn the horse away from you or to the right.
- i. When traveling, the horse's head should be carried at a height appropriate to the type or use of the animal.
- j. When leading, the exhibitor should be positioned half way between the horses head and the shoulder.
- k. The ideal turn consists of the horse pivoting on the right hind leg while stepping across and in front of the left front leg. An exhibitor should not be penalized if their horse should perform a pivot on the left hind leg, but an exhibitor whose horse performs the pivot correctly should receive more credit.
- l. The horse should set up quickly with the feet squarely underneath the body or by breed type. Example: i.e. The American Saddle Horse in the show poses with feet slightly spread and head up, and the Hunter with the head in a natural position and feet squared, but one hind foot may be slightly in advanced of the other.
- m. Avoid crowding in the lineup. Always keep 10 feet away from any exhibitor when lining up head to tail. When lining up side by side, keep enough space between you and the next exhibitor in order to let the judge walk between you safely.
- n. When changing positions in line, follow the judge's directions. Keep safety in mind at all times. Never block the judge's view of another horse, and never stand between the judge and your horse.



## 2. Posing (15 Points)

Exhibitors should be poised, confident, courteous, and genuinely sportsmanlike, quickly recognizing and correcting faults in the position of the horse. Exhibitors should continue showing their horse until the class has been placed or they have been excused, unless otherwise instructed by the judge. The exhibitor should appear professional, stand and move in a straight, natural and upright manner and avoid excessive, unnatural, or animated body positions. The exhibitor should stand so they can have an unobstructed view of all four legs of the horse and see the judge at the same time.

- a. Both arms should be bent at the elbow with the elbows held close to the exhibitor's side, and the forearms held in a natural position. Height of the arms may vary depending on the size of the horse and exhibitor, but the arms should never be held straight out with the elbows locked.
- b. 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 toward the horse's head and have the horse move away from them to the right.
- c. When executing a back, the exhibitor should turn from the leading position to face towards the rear of the horse with the right hand extending across the exhibitor's chest and walk forward beside the horse moving backward.
- d. Always keep in mind the slope of the ground. Never show your horse down hill.
- e. When setting the horse up for inspection, the exhibitor should stand angled toward the horse.
- f. When the exhibitor is ready for inspection, look at the judge. This will cue the judge that you are ready to be inspected.
- g. The horse should be set up quickly with the feet squarely underneath the body or by breed type. Example: i.e. The American Saddle Horse in the show poses with feet slightly spread and head up, and the Hunter with the head in a natural position and feet squared, but one hind foot may be slightly in advanced of the other.
- h. It is mandatory that the exhibitor use the "quarter system" when presenting their horse. When moving around the horse, the exhibitor should change sides in front of the horse with minimal steps and should assume the same position on the right side of the horse as they had on the left. The exhibitor should maintain a position that is safe for themselves and the judge.
- i. The position of the exhibitor should not obstruct the judge's view of the horse and should be aware of the judges position at all times.
- j. At no time should the exhibitor ever stand directly in front of the horse.
- k. Minimal use of hands, voice or whip is accepted.
- l. If the judge pushes your horse off balance, you may steady your animal with your left hand on the shoulder.
- m. If the judge flips the mane over the opposite side of the horse and DOES NOT put it back in the previous position, you may reset the mane.



- n. The exhibitor should not touch the horse with their feet, or visibly cue the horse by pointing their feet at the horse during the set up.
- o. Show your animal at all times, not yourself, do not overshadow. Excessive fussing may upset the horse and try the patience of the judge.

**3. Showing the Animal to Best Advantage (10 Points)**

Keep in mind all the above material. Remember this class is based on the exhibitor's showmanship abilities and not on the conformation of the horse. However, the exhibitor should be aware of their horse's faults. Some faults can be corrected by the positioning of the horse's body; others by simple grooming techniques. Always remember to show your horses uphill and never position them downhill.

- a. Check out the ring or show area ahead of time and position the horse accordingly.
- b. Keep in mind safety too. Always keep 6-10 feet between you and the next horse when in the ring.
- c. Before entering the ring, always be aware of who the judges are and their positions in the ring, and show your horse to that person(s). If the exhibitor is unaware of which person is the judge, ask the ringmaster before the class!

**4. Attitude, Alertness, & Poise (10 Points)**

Exhibitors should be poised, confident, courteous and genuinely sportsmanlike, quickly recognizing and correcting faults in the position of the horse.

- a. The exhibitor should appear professional, stand and move in a straight natural and upright manner and avoid excessive, unnatural, or animated body positions.
- b. The exhibitor should be aware of all things happening in the ring, especially with the other horses around them. Always keep safety in mind.
- c. The exhibitor should respond quickly and politely to all requests from the judges and officials.
- d. Keep showing until the class is finished or otherwise instructed by the judge. When your number is called, accept your award graciously. Leave the ring at a walk or trot.

Good Luck!!