

5. English Classes

In a flat class if a horse or rider should fall, it does not necessarily mean elimination, but may result in penalization at the judge's discretion. However, a fall of either a horse or a rider in all classes over fences does mean elimination.

5.1 English Pleasure

- Emphasis is placed on the horse's performance (the way the horse performs the gaits, how it reacts to aids and the style with which it executes the gaits), manners and way of going. The horse must give the distinct appearance of being a pleasure to ride and display a pleasant attitude. Disobedience is faulted. The horse should respond quickly to commands in a controlled manner.
- Members will work the rail in both directions at a walk, trot (sitting and/or rising), canter and hand gallop (if the class is suitable to allow a hand gallop) at the judge's discretion.
- The order of gaits is not specified and may vary. The judge may ask for any transition from gait to gait. All gaits must be performed with willingness and obvious ease, cadence, balance and smoothness. Excessive speed or slowness will be penalized. Horses are to travel to breed specifications.
- Horses should stand quietly and back readily.
- Medium to light contact through the reins to the horse's mouth should be maintained. The poll should be level with, or slightly above the withers. The head position should be slightly in front of, or on, the vertical.

5.2 English Equitation

- In Equitation classes, it is the riding skill of the competitor that is being judged - correct overall rider position and effective use of aids.
- All movements of the horse should be performed with precision and a subtle use of aids and cues.
- Exaggerated shifting of the rider's weight will be penalized.
- Gaits will be flat footed walk, ordinary trot (rising or posting), collected (sitting) trot, easy canter, counter canter, and hand gallop (if the ring size allows.) Horses may be asked to work both ways of the arena at all gaits. The order of gaits is not specified and the judge may ask for any transition from gait to gait.
- Contestants may be asked to rein back (back-up).
- The judge may ask the riders to drop their irons (ride without stirrups). The judge may also ask for an extended gait, which means a lengthening of the horse's stride.
- Proper diagonals at a trot and correct leads at a canter should be recognized and executed.
- Always post at the trot unless told to sit.

Riders may be asked to dismount and remount, as well as perform an individual pattern. If unsure of the pattern, ask for clarification before the class starts or any rider has started the pattern.

- When doing a pattern:
 - 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 and end transitions exactly at posted markers.
- Competitors may be asked individual questions on horsemanship, anatomy, tack, etc.

5.2.1 Position

The rider should sit in the deepest part of the saddle, squarely on both seatbones. Legs should fall naturally with a slight bend at the knee and the heel of the foot always lower than the toe. The inside thigh, knee and upper calf should be in light contact with horse's side and there should be invisible straight line through the rider's ear, 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 a

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 similar to using a snaffle except that either the little finger or the last two fingers separate the two sets of reins.

5.2.2 Position in Motion

At the walk, the rider's body remains upright with a slight movement at the hips 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, following the rhythm of the canter. Shoulders and elbows are very relaxed and supple to allow for the movement of the horse.

5.3 Hunter Hack

- The class will be judged on style over two fences, even pace, a smooth, quiet and willing performance, manners and rail work.
- Double bridle (full bridles), leg wraps and/or splint boots are not allowed.
- Horses are to be shown at a walk, trot and canter and may be required to show in both directions.
- At the discretion of the judge, contestants may be asked to hand gallop, pull up (or back) and stand quietly following the last fence.
- Horses are required to jump two fences, which may be x-rails or straight jumps to a maximum of 2'6", depending on the class level.
- Jumps are recommended to be spaced in increments of 12 feet (3.5 meters) apart but adjusted to no less than two strides.
- A ground pole or line is recommended for the "take off" side of each jump.
- Faults include:
 - knocking a jump
 - wrong leads and/or wrong diagonal
 - excessive speed or slowness
 - breaking gait or failure to take gait when called
 - balking or refusing
 - opening the mouth
 - being out of control
- Jumping too high, too soon or too late will be penalized.
- Horses eliminated in the "over fence" portion of the class shall be disqualified.
- A fall of either a horse or rider in all classes over fences will result in disqualification.

5.4 Equitation Over Fences

- The class objective is to judge the rider's ability over the fences, not the horse's. Only the effect the rider has on the horse is to be considered. How a rider elects to ride the course, the pace, and approach to the jumps are used to evaluate the rider's judgment and ability. Riders are to be judged on style and control. The judge will be looking for a neat smooth, workmanlike performance.
- At least four obstacles are required and horses must jump a minimum of six fences. At least one change of direction is required.
- The exhibitor is being judged as soon as he/she enters the arena. Exhibitors have the option of entering the arena at any gait (unless otherwise stated on the course), making transition to canter from halt, walk or trot before approaching the first fence. Each competitor may circle once before approaching the first obstacle, then proceed around the course keeping an even pace throughout. Rider must obtain correct lead to properly turn around end of arena before breaking into final trot circle. The class is not over until the exhibitor trots a circle and walks out of the ring. Riders should leave the arena at a walk unless otherwise instructed.
- 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.

- Except for refusals, jumping faults of the horse are not to be considered unless it is the result of the rider's lack of ability.
- Three refusals, the horse bolting out of control, rider going off course, or the fall of the horse or rider means elimination in that class. If elimination occurs during a ride-off, the competitor is placed last of all those chosen for the ride-off.
- A fence knockdown may or may not be penalized 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 course will be posted at least 1 hour ahead of the class. Riders may not walk the course prior to riding it.
- The judge may ask for individual ridden tests and may ask questions on horsemanship.

5.5 Working Hunter

- A hunter course is one which organizers deem a fair test of a hunter.
- The class is judged on style of jumping, way of going, manners, transitions and trot in. Horses shall be credited with maintaining an even hunting pace that covers the course with free-flowing strides. 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.
- Fences shall simulate obstacles found in the hunting field, such as natural looking posts and rails, brush, walls, coops and ascending oxers. 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 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 a minimum of four obstacles. Horses will jump a minimum of eight fences.
- One change of direction is mandatory.
- Judges shall penalize unsafe jumping and poor form over fences, whether touched or untouched, including twisting of the horse's body.
- Any error that endangers the horse and/or rider, particularly refusals or knockdowns, shall be heavily penalized.
- Distance between fences is recommended to be in 12-foot (3.5 meters) increments.
- 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.
- 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.
- Elimination: A total of three disobediences that can include any of the following:
 - Refusal, stop, run out, or extra circle
 - Jumping an obstacle before it is reset
 - Bolting out of control
 - Off course
 - Deliberately addressing an obstacle

5.6 Open Jumper

- This will test the horse's skill and obedience and the rider's ability over a course.

- Dropped nosebands, boots and/or bandages 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.
- 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.
- 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 white flags over fences or at the start and the finish of the course
 - Goes off course by failing to jump fences in the correct order

Penalties will be assigned as follows:

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

Penalties for disobediences accumulate throughout the entire round.

5.7 Dressage

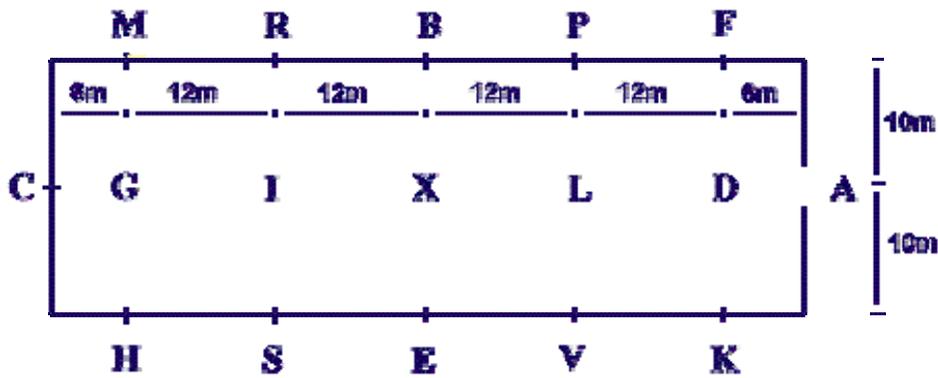
There are two types of dressage: tests and freestyle. Most 4-H shows offer two levels of competition if they offer dressage. They are:

Starter - To show beginning to move forward, with rhythm becoming more established and suppleness beginning to develop. Walk and trot only. Riders should be focused on accurate riding with balanced and steady seat and sympathetic hands, beginning to develop appropriate contact. Riders are required to demonstrate knowledge of posting diagonals. All trots should be rising except in downward transitions.

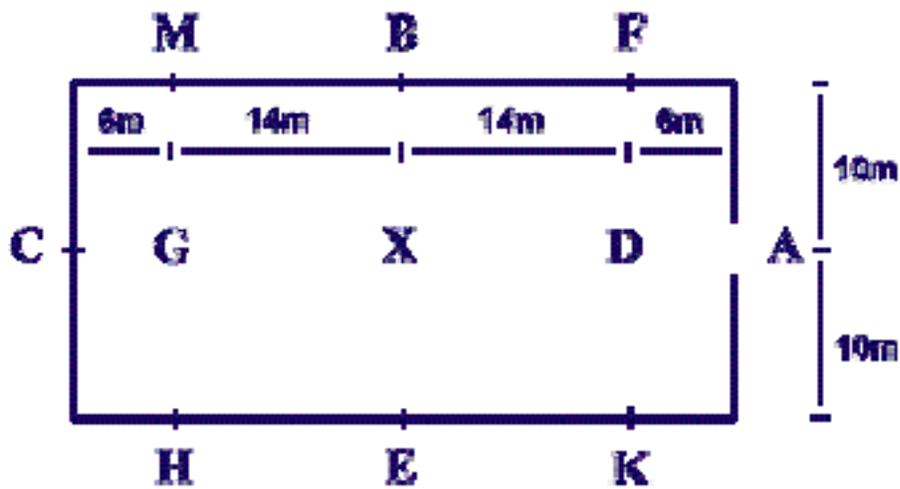
Pretraining - To show moving forward in a steady rhythm, with increased evidence of suppleness, and beginning to accept contact. Walk, trot and canter gaits. Riders at this level should be able to deliver an accurate ride, while demonstrating a more effective seat and increased connection from leg to hand. Riders have a choice of sitting or rising trot.

The Free-style competition has a 4 minute time frame in 20x40 arena. Music on CD or tape to be provided by the competitor prior to the competition.

The dressage arena is either 20 x 40 or 20 x 60. The patterns for the tests are as follow:



Standard (large) dressage arena
20m x 60m



Small dressage arena
20m x 40m

In Freestyle Dressage, there are some compulsory elements. They are as follows:

Starter

- Medium walk (minimum 10 m)
- Working trot rising
- 20 m. circle left – trot rising
- 20 m. circle right – trot rising
- Free walk on loose rein (min. 20 m. uninterrupted)

Pretraining

- Medium walk (minimum 10 m)
- Working trot
- Working canter
- 20 m. circle left – trot
- 20 m. circle right – trot
- 20 m. circle left – canter
- 20 m. circle right – canter
- Free walk on loose rein (min. 20 m.)