

Northwest Regional Horse Project Rules

REVISED 2020

A. General Rules

1. Clubs must have representation at 70% of Northwest Regional Horse committee meetings. In order for members of the club to participate in the Regional Horse programming. This will also include the November and March Northwest Region horse committee meetings and the May Regional Horse Show (Focus).
2. All members must submit a Declaration of Mount Certificate that is signed correctly by member and leader and submitted by April 1st of each 4-H year to the Northwest Regional office. Any member who has not submitted a certificate may not be allowed to attend any regional horse show.
3. The exhibitor's horse must be his/her project horse with only one member for each horse, with this to be declared by leaders on show entry forms.
4. Participants must be horse project members in good standing in their own 4-H club, with this to be declared by leaders on program and show entry forms.
5. All members are required to wear an ASTM or SEI approved, non –expired helmet when mounted.
6. All the Northwest regional horse projects will follow the 4-H Alberta Equine Project Standards. It is up to the individual members and parents to be familiar with this document.
7. All members are subject to the rules and regulations of the Northwest Regional Horse Project Rules.
8. The Regional 4-H Horse Show will be governed by the latest updated Northwest 4-H Horse Project Rules. These rules are to be reviewed every 2 years.
9. Northwest Regional 4-H Horse Project Rules take precedence over current AEF Alberta Equestrian Federation Rules that are used as guidelines.
10. The Northwest Regional Horse Show committee is responsible for compiling the show schedule, the classes and for recording class results at the Regional show.
11. The Northwest Regional Horse Show Committee and the judge's subcommittees will decide on fees paid for judges, mileage, etc., for the Regional Show.
12. The judge may ask for an individual performance, and may also ask questions concerning horsemanship, anatomy, tack, etc.

13. The Judge, Ring Steward or Tack Steward shall have the authority to request the removal or alteration of any piece of equipment etc. which in his or her opinion would give a horse an unfair advantage, or which he or she believes is inhumane.
14. Unsoundness shall not penalize a rider unless it is sufficiently severe to impair the required performance. Unsoundness not only pertains to foot and leg lameness but also noticeable health problems impeding performance. Final decision to be made by the judge. If the judge's opinion is not respected the vet on call will make the final decision at the owner's expense.
15. All class patterns will be posted a minimum of one hour prior to the start of the class.
16. The show committee will address any point not covered.
17. Gate persons shall leave a cell number for Gate Chairman to maintain shift coverage
18. Messaging from the Show Chairman via text to the club representative at the show keeps ring and time changes running smoothly.
19. Proper riding attire will be acceptable for clinics and programming. Show attire and tack will not be required at clinics

B. 4-H Riding Levels

1. Once a rider has established a riding/skill level and has participated at a 4-H show including Achievement Day and Regional Show at that level, the rider may not drop to a lower level at future shows.
2. Riders must complete an entire level, tested on dismounted and mounted skills before being moved up to the next level.
3. Riders must compete in the same horsemanship level for all Western, English, Trail, Showmanship & Speed event classes.
4. A member will compete at the Regional Horse Show at the level the member is currently working on. Lead lining is not permitted.
5. Classes are compiled based on horse-mounted levels completed, and split by age of contestants in that level. The Show committee will determine class size. Level 1 class will not be combined with higher levels. All other classes with less than 6 members may be combined with higher levels. (Example level 6 and 7 could be combined).
6. Level 1 members will not be asked to lope/canter.
7. Jumping, Dressage, and Reining classes will be offered for Levels 4 to 7 only.

C. Horse Ownership and Replacement

1. Project Horse: member in the Northwest Region must have only one project horse, until completing Horsemanship Level 3. For Levels 4 to 7, the member may have more than one project horse.
2. Stallions and yearling stud colts are not allowed.
3. Ponies are to be 13.2 hands high and under.
4. Project horse replacement is allowed anytime with a vet certificate due to illness, lameness, death or unsuitability (to be determined by club leaders).
5. Junior Horse are horses 5 years old and under. Horses age is determined by whatever age your horse is as of January 1st (horses have their birthday on January 1 of the calendar year foaled). For the Young Horse classes, the horse may not be entered in any other classes. A young horse is a weanling, yearling, or 2 year old horse with no real training or handling. A green horse is a horse 5 years and older with very little training and can only be entered in green horse classes.
6. A member's 4-H project horse may be replaced for any of the following reasons:
 - a. If a member's horse is deemed unsuitable for that member, the horse may be replaced up to May 1 of the current project year.
 - b. Horse medically unfit or long term unsoundness.
 - c. Loss of a leased project horse: The leaser must be the person to break the lease.
 - d. Death of a project horse.
7. Procedure for replacement: A letter of approval signed by the club leader and any two executive members of the club. Along with any other appropriate documentation for the change of project horse, is to be sent to the NW Regional horse chairperson. A new Declaration of Mount certificate is to be sent into the Northwest Regional office.

D. Show Entries

1. Entries to Regional Show is limited to members registered in the Horse Projects.
2. Payment of entry fees must be made at the time of entries. It shall be each club's responsibility to collect all fees and submit payment to the host committee by the deadline date.
3. In the case of N.S.F. cheques, the Committee will notify the club after notification from the bank. Unless payment is made within 1 month's time after being notified, no further entries will be accepted until payment of fees and bank charges have been made.

4. Misrepresentation of any information on any entry form, unless notice is given to the Show Committee prior to the show, will result in forfeiture of fees and prizes. It is the club's responsibility to check entry forms and ascertain that all information is correct.
5. Entry fees will only be refunded with a veterinarian's Certificate, a doctor's note or at the discretion of the show committee. At the discretion of the show committee, the substitution of a project horse.
6. POST ENTRIES ARE NOT ACCEPTED.
7. Horses must be deemed show fit. This is to be at the discretion of the show committee.

E. Conduct and Behaviour

1. Any act of discourtesy or disobedience to a judge or official by the exhibitor or his family may, at the committee's discretion, expel the exhibitor from the show, with no refund of fees.
2. Any member may be disqualified or eliminated from any 4-H event (totally or portion of) by the ring steward, judge, regional council member or 3-4 leaders for misconduct.
3. Some infractions which result in discipline are:
 - a. unsportsmanlike behavior
 - b. racing
 - c. inconsiderate behavior which results in danger to others
 - d. use of foul language
 - e. consumption of alcohol or drugs by humans or horses
 - f. use of a non-registered project horse
4. Abuse or inhumane treatment of a horse by an exhibitor, his family, or 4-H leader will not be tolerated. The exhibitor will be excused from the show with no refund of fees, at the discretion of the Show Committee.
5. Parents, leaders, adults or non-4-H members are not allowed to ride any project horse at any time at the Regional Show. A Leader may step in to assist a member for ground handling of a project horse for safety reasons.
6. The judge's decision is final in respect to any horse in competition (placing, soundness, etc.).
7. The judge will excuse any unruly horse or one whose actions endanger other exhibitors or their horses.
8. No one shall approach a judge with regard to a decision however, a question may be directed to the Show Chairperson who will then direct the question to the judge and relay the judge's response to the questioner.

9. An exhibitor must be correctly attired for the class in question. The Show Committee or its representatives, may, at their discretion, ban any entry from entering the ring if not suitably presented.
10. Exhibitor numbers are to be worn on the exhibitors back or visible on both sides of the saddle pad.
11. Any exhibitor late for a class (regardless of reason) may be denied entrance to the class.
12. Any exhibitor acting contrary to the rules and regulations or in any manner deemed improper, dishonest or unsportsmanlike will be excused from the show without refund of fees, at the discretion of the Show Committee.
13. All protests and complaints will be submitted in writing with a \$50.00 fee to the Committee Chairman and will be dealt with at the Committee's next meeting.
14. Any drug or medication, which has a stimulant or depressant effect on the central nervous system, is prohibited. Local anesthetics are also prohibited. Any horse found to be under the influence of a prohibited drug will be expelled from the show without refund of fees.

F. General Safety

1. Warm Up Arena Rules
 - a. Absolutely NO riding without adult supervision.
 - b. Saddles, bridles, boots with heels and helmets are mandatory.
 - c. Only 4-H members may ride in warm up ring.
 - d. Lunging is only permitted when no riders are in the ring. Only 2 horses lunging at a time. Riders have priority.
 - e. No more than 25 riders in the ring at one time.
 - f. No stopping on the rail.
 - g. Riding side by side is allowed if deemed safe.
 - h. Only one rider per horse (no doubling).
 - i. A red ribbon must be tied in the tail of any horse that kicks.
2. Barns and Hitching Rings
 - a. All clubs are responsible for bringing their own forks, shovels, muck tubs, wheelbarrows to keep their alleys/areas clean and clutter free.
 - b. Members are responsible for bringing feed and water buckets with clips and feeding and watering their horse(s). Horses must have water at all times!
 - c. If not mounted, English stirrup irons must be up.

- d. Stall doors are not to be left open, with ropes across the doorway, with the horse left unattended. If horses are not stalled, they must be tied to their horse trailer, stalled within their trailer (hooked up), contained within livestock panels next to their trailer or another form of containment at their trailer. No hobbles or electric fences may be used for containment. Under no circumstances are horses allowed to roam loose to graze.
 - e. A halter should be available hanging on the outside of every occupied stall.
 - f. All dogs to be kept on a leash.
 - g. NO SMOKING IN THE BARN.
 - h. No bikes, skateboards, rollerblades or low wheeled children's toys allowed.
3. Wash Rack Safety
- a. A leader or parent MUST supervise all club members under 16 while at the wash rack.
 - b. Members are encouraged to wash their own horse. Assistance is allowed for younger or inexperienced members or members with excited horses.
 - c. Appropriate footwear is required by all members, leaders and parents at the wash rack, at all times.
 - d. No piling of manure in the wash rack area. It must be removed and placed in the manure bin immediately.

G. Showmanship

1. Attire for Showmanship

The appearance of the exhibitor must be neat and clean. Showmanship shall be judged strictly on the contestant's ability to fit and show his horse. The attire should be appropriate in the manner the horse is being shown (English or Western).

- i. If a contestant is dressed in English attire a clean English bridle with leather English reins or either a leather or nylon web halter with a clean, new, looking lead shank must be used.
 - ii. If contestant is dressed in Western attire, a well-fitting, clean, leather or web halter must be used. The end of the lead shank must be coiled with a finger between coils, or held in a figure 8.
 - iii. Contestant needs to wear a helmet or cowboy hat.
- 2. Showmanship shall be judged strictly on the contestant's ability to fit and show his horse.
 - 3. If using a chain, it must either go through the left side of the nose, under the chin, through the right side of the nose and attach to the right side below the ear or go through the bottom of the halter and clip back to itself.
 - 4. Chaps and spurs are not allowed.

5. Rope or cotton halters are not allowed.

H. ENGLISH

1. Riders Attire: Riders must be neat and clean.
 - a. Jacket: Tweed or Black, Navy, Green, Brown or any other dark conservative color (a solid colored sweater is acceptable in exchange for Jacket).
 - b. Light colored shirt or blouse complete with tie, or choker must be worn. The pin is optional in Dressage and Equitation, but should not be used in Jumping as for safety.
 - c. Jodhpurs or breeches, neutral colors such as beige, buff, light grey, white, tan or rust.
 - d. Boots tall English boots (either leather or rubber) or paddock boots with half chaps as long as they match the color of the boot.
 - e. Helmet an ASTM or SEI approved and non- expired helmet complete with harness. Should be of neutral color. Neutral colors would be tan, brown, navy blue, black, white, or grey.
 - f. English spurs (unrowelled type) are optional. No longer than $\frac{3}{4}$ "shank length.
 - g. Gloves are optional, dark gloves are recommended.
 - h. Contestant's hair should be neat and contained inside helmet or tight above collar.
 - i. Numbers must be worn in a manner which is easily visible from both sides of saddle pad or on riders back.
2. Tack: Tack is to be clean, neat and in good working order.
 - a. Saddle must be of an English type.
 - b. Saddle pad may be of fleece or cotton: White Numnah shaped contoured pads is recommended. Square will be permitted. They should be solid (not patterned) and conservative colored (white, tan, brown, hunter green, navy, black).
 - c. Bridles are to be conservative brown or black leather, English style with a nosebands, throatlatches and joined leather reins. Brow bands are to have minimal decoration must not be colored or Sequined
 - d. English snaffles do not have a chin strap, unless using a Kimberwick or Pelham which are leverage bits.
 - e. Allowable equipment includes:

i Snaffles with a smooth, egg shaped, round or oval mouthpiece, with a minimum 5/16" diameter, measured 1" in from cheek piece.

ii Pelhams with two reins (no converters level 4-7)

iii Kimberwicks

iv Breastplates

Equipment not allowed:

i. Rubber or cloth reins

ii. Coloured or decorated brow bands

iii. Chin straps. iv. Western bits.

v Twisted wire snaffles.

vi Flashes, figure 8 or drop nosebands.

vii Leg wraps or splint boots, except in Jumpers. viii. Whips. ix. Crops, except in Hunter or Jumper classes and must not exceed 75cm in length.

x. Martingales, except for Jumper Classes

xi. Side reins or draw reins

xii. Bitless bridle or sidepulls

xiii.xiii. Coloured stirrups

f. Bits must follow the guidelines of the 4H Provincial bit poster.

3. English Equitation

- a. To be shown at a flat-footed walk, ordinary trot, collected (sitting trot), extended trot and easy canter. Hand gallop at the judge's discretion. Light contact is to be maintained. Riders may be asked to do individual tasks within their rider level abilities. Horses may be worked both ways of the arena at all gaits. The class is judged on the rider and his or her effect on the horse.

English Pleasure

- b. The horse and rider are judged. Members will work on the rail in both directions at a walk, trot, canter and hand gallop. The order of gaits is not specified and may vary. Horses are to stand quietly and back readily. In judging, emphasis will be placed on the horse's performance, manners and way of going.

4. Poles and Cavaletties

- a. Open to all rider levels, is a walk/trot class only. Horses are allowed to canter 2 strides before and after the jump. Horses may not cross enter another jumper class.

5. Hunter Classes:
 - a. Horsemanship level 4 is a pre-requisite to entering hunter classes.
 - b. Patterns will be posted.
 - c. There are three divisions: 18", 2', & 2'6". A member may only compete in one division and must be registered in the jumping project. There is 1 round per division. Courses will consist of 8 jumps.
 - d. Leg wraps and/or splint boots are not allowed.
 - e. Crops, not to exceed 75cm in length, and martingales are permitted.
 - f. An ASTM or SEI approved and non-expired helmet with full harness is required.
 - g. The class will be judged on form over fences, even pace, a smooth, quiet and willing performance and manners. Faults include wrong leads, excessive speed or slowness, balking, refusing, opening the mouth or being out of control. Jumping too high, too soon or too late will be penalized.
 - h. For safety reasons, 2 refusals during warm-up or on course will result in dismissal from all remaining hunter or jumper classes.
 - i. Level 1-3 riders will not be allowed to enter Hunter classes.

6. Jumper Classes:
 - a. Horsemanship level 4 is a pre-requisite to entering jumper classes.
 - b. Pattern will be posted. There is only one class to a maximum of 2'6".
 - c. This is a time and fault class. As a pre-requisite to this class, you must also enter and have a clear round (no rails lowered or refusals) in the 2'6" hunter division.
 - d. Protective leg wraps, rubber reins, colored brow bands, martingales (running and standing) and saddle pads are permitted for this class. If using a running martingale you MUST HAVE rubber rein stops on your reins so the martingale rings don't slide up and get tangled with the bit causing a wreck.
 - e. For safety reasons 2 refusals during warm-up (held before hunter classes) or on course will result in dismissal from the class.

7. Dressage
 - a. Horsemanship level 4 is a pre-requisite to entering.
 - b. Rules in English Section apply except that riders may only use a snaffle bit and are permitted to use a flash noseband.
 - c. Riders must either memorize their test or provide their own reader.

- d. A dark colour whip may be carried, but must not exceed 110cm of 43" in length (including the lash)
- e. Kimberwicks are not permitted
- f. Saddle pads are to be square and either black or white

I. WESTERN

- 8. Rider Attire: Riders must wear clean and neat appropriate Western attire, which would include
 - a. Riders must wear a ASTM/SEI approved and non-expired helmet equestrian helmet.
 - b. Shirt, blouse, jacket or vest with long sleeves and collar (band, tuxedo, stand-up, etc.),
 - c. Cowboy boots. Pull on boots are preferred. Horseshoe runners are NOT permitted.
 - d. Shirts with cut outs are not acceptable.
 - e. Shirts with turn down collars must be closed with a tie or pin except those that are already adorned with a decorative design or button at the closing.
 - f. Mandarin and tuxedo collars, Slinky shirts are allowed. Slinky shirts have zippers and must have an acceptable v neck and not be too revealing. Long tailed shirts must tuck in.
 - g. Pants should be of the Western type (slacks, trousers, jeans, etc.). Blue jeans are acceptable, providing they are clean, in new condition, not frayed or rolled up. and fit over boots.
 - h. Hair should be tied back neatly and not cover up rider's number.
 - i. Chaps, gloves and spurs are optional.
 - j. Spurs must be humane (by discretion of Tack Steward) and of the western type.
- 9. Tack:
 - a. Horses must be shown with a western saddle without tapaderos on stirrups.
 - b. If using a back cinch, it must be hobbled to front cinch.
 - c. Any western pad or blanket.
 - d. Silver equipment shall not be given preference over good working equipment.
 - e. Tack is to be clean & in good repair.

- f. Saddles are to have a stirrup hobble above the stirrup.
- g. A western bridle with a brow band must have a throatlatch.
- h. It is recommended bridles that are split ear or a two ear bridle should have a throatlatch.
- i. Any suitable humane western bit, as described below, is acceptable
 - iv It must have a maximum overall length of 8 ½" (measured from the inside of the top ring to the pull point of the bottom ring).
 - v Mouthpieces must be a minimum of 5/16" measured 1" in from the cheek and may be 1, 2, or 3 pieces and should be smooth, egg shaped, round or oval.
 - vi The port of a curb bit must not exceed 2".
 - vii Chin straps are required with a snaffle bit and must be mounted below the reins .A chain chin strap is not allowed with a snaffle bit it must be leather or nylon.
 - viii Curb straps on a leverage bit may be either leather, nylon or chain but must be at least ½" wide and lay flat. This applies to each portion of the chinstrap, combined width. Chain curb straps must have leather on each end that attaches to the bit (see bit poster).
 - ix Snaffle bits are acceptable on junior horses (age 5 and under) and level 1-3 riders only.
 - x Bosals are acceptable on junior horses (age 5 and under) and level 4-7 riders only.
 - xi Horses over the age of five must be shown in a shanked bit, one handed, for levels 4,5,6 and 7.
- j. Equipment not allowed includes:
 - iv Nosebands, English reins, draw reins, martingales, tie downs, barrel/roper reins, side pull, leg wraps, splint or skid boots exceptions for gymkhana and reining events.
 - v Twisted wire, wire wrapped or chain mouthpieces, gag bits, donuts and prong bits (see bit poster). iii. Mechanical hackamores are not acceptable and bosals with metal in the nose band are not permitted.
 - iv. Chain chinstraps on a snaffle bit.
- k. Reins must be attached to each shank.
 - iv If split reins are used:

- 1 One finger is permitted between the reins and the end of the reins must fall on the same side as the rein hand. Level 1-3 riders may ride in two hands, with reins crossed over neck or bridged.
- v When using romal reins:
 - 1 The rider's hand shall be around the reins with the thumb on top and the fingers closed lightly around the reins. No fingers between the reins are allowed.
 - 2 The extension may be carried in the free hand with 16" spacing between the reining hand and the free hand holding the romal.
 - 3 The requirements for hobbles to be on a saddle when one-piece reins are used will NOT be enforced.

L. Bits must follow the guidelines of the 4H Provincial bit poster.

Western Pleasure

- a. Horses are to be shown at a walk, jog and lope in both directions of the ring. Horses will be required to back easily and stand on a loose rein. Extension of any gait may be asked for. In Western Pleasure, the horse is judged more than the rider and will be judged on performance, manners and way of going.
10. Western Horsemanship
- a. Horses are to be shown at a walk, jog and lope and may be asked to back up. Participants may be required to perform an individual pattern based on their rider level requirements and may also be asked questions regarding horsemanship, anatomy, tack, etc. The rider will be judged more than the horse, and will be judged on seat, hands and the ability to control and show the horse. Cues and aids should not be noticed. Riders should display a precise ride in total unison with their horse, exhibiting poise and confidence. Patterns (if required) will be posted one hour prior to class.
 - iv Members in Levels 3 and under may ride with one or two hands in western classes, regardless of age of horse in a curb (leverage) bit. If riding in a snaffle bit or bosal, 2 hands must be used on the reins. This applies to Horsemanship, Pleasure and Trail Classes, but not speed events.

- v Members in Levels 4-7 must ride with one hand and a leverage bit with the exception of Junior horses, 5 and under (in 2006, any horse born in 2001-2004 would be considered a Junior Horse), which may be ridden with two hands ONLY if using a snaffle bit or bosal. This applies to Pleasure, Horsemanship, Trail and Reining Classes, but not speed events.
11. Trail Horse Class
- a. Rules for Western Attire and Tack as described above. Western attire must be used for trail horse classes.
 - b. A horse must work over and through obstacles as directed by a predetermined course. Obstacles will not be dangerous or hazardous to a horse.
 - c. Once the trail class has been set, there will be no practicing.
 - d. Mandatory obstacles include a gate, ride over logs or poles at a walk, jog or lope, and backing through markers, logs, rails etc.
 - e. Acceptable obstacles include the following: Slickers, bridge, mailbox, side passing, carrying an obstacle and any combination of the above items.
 - f. Prohibited obstacles include the following: tires, animals, hides, jumps, ground tie, moving bridges, plastic tarps, dismounting, and water box with floating moving objects, flames and dry ice.
 - g. Horses are not to be backed through gates with a bottom bar.
12. Reining Class
- a. Horsemanship level 4 is a pre-requisite to entering.
 - b. Rules in Western Section apply except that splint and/or skid boots are permitted and riders may use 2 hands on any bit on any aged horse.
 - c. Pattern will be posted an hour before the class

J. Speed Events

1. Rider Attire:

- iv Western tack and clothing must be used (refer to clothing rules I1 & I2 in Attire and Tack section of Western).
- v Pins and neckties are not required.
 - iii. Baseball hats, T- Shirts, tank tops and horseshoe runners are not permitted.
 - iv. Feet of the rider are not to be tied in.

2. Tack and Equipment

- i. Whips, bats or quirts, not to exceed 30" or 75cm in length, may be used in moderation behind the cinch.

- ii. Bits are the option of the competitor but must be humane and its recommended that headstalls have a throatlatch. Legal leather chinstraps are required on all snaffle bits.
- iii. Tie downs, running martingales, barrel/roper reins, splint and skid boots are acceptable in game events only.
- iv. No barb wire on equipment will be allowed.
- v. Humane spurs are optional.
- vi. Side pulls, crossed reins or draw reins are not permitted.
- vii. Gag bits, donuts and prong bits and mechanical hackamores are not permitted.
- viii. Bits must follow the guidelines of the 4H Provincial bit poster.

3. General Rules

- i. Excessive use of a whip, striking a horse in front of the front cinch, or excessively rough hands will result in disqualification.
- ii. Use of any equipment that the judge considers too severe will result in immediate elimination.
- iii. Riders may use 2 hands and may hold onto saddle
- iv. Running starts are not permitted.
- v. Horses will be timed on the nose to start and finish when using a manual timer.
- vi. In events where (2) contestants are being run at the same time, members cannot cross the arena center line. The center line will extend from end to end length wise of the arena and crosses the start/finish line. Once the gate has been opened to allow contestant to leave the arena the center line may be crossed.
- vii. Reruns are not allowed unless there is timer difficulty or any kind of interference from another competing horse. (This is to be determined by the judge).
- viii. Reruns are not allowed on the account of faulty tack or falling of horses.
- ix. A break in pattern will result in a no time.
- x. Knocking over a barrel or pole will result in a 5 second penalty.