

GEORGIA
4-H

HORSE JUDGING

Manual



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
EXTENSION



INTRODUCTION

Horse judging or evaluation skill is mandatory for any person who aspires to be a "complete" horseman. Horse judging skills help a horseman:

- Evaluate his or her own horses or potential purchases
- Train his or her horse for competition by focusing on the true ideal
- Understand placings made in the show arena
- Describe conformation and performance characteristics to other horsemen

Adults and youth who want to be competent judges, whether in the show ring or in horse judging contests, must possess knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Breed standard of excellence for conformation
- Performance standards of excellence for a variety of performance classes
- Rules, regulations and requirements governing all classes being judged
- Arena mechanics that allow the most objective and equal evaluation of each horse in each class

In addition, judges must be able to demonstrate:

- Honesty and integrity in making all decisions based on facts, rules and regulations, not personal biases and lack of understanding
- Ability to justify all placings with sound accurate reasons
- Willingness to continually work at improving horse judging skills



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CONFORMATION

➤➤➤ INTRODUCTION

Conformation (halter) is judged on how closely horses are conformed, relative to a standard set forth by a breed organization. Horses are bred to be athletes and various types of horses perform different jobs. "Form to function", therefore, is an important consideration that is a common denominator among the conformation standards of all breeds. Correct balance, sound structure, ample muscling, and travel patterns are functional categories built into all breed conformation standards. Some differences do exist between breeds in quality characteristics.

In short, when a judge becomes knowledgeable and competent at correctly evaluating conformation of one type of horse, other types of horses can be judged successfully by learning their unique breed type and characteristics.

Prior to studying conformation as a whole, a judge must learn the locations, names, and boundaries of the individual parts of a horse (Figure 1). Once this is accomplished, the parts can be then combined into five general categories for more complete evaluation. Categories are: Balance, Structure, Muscling, Quality, and Travel.

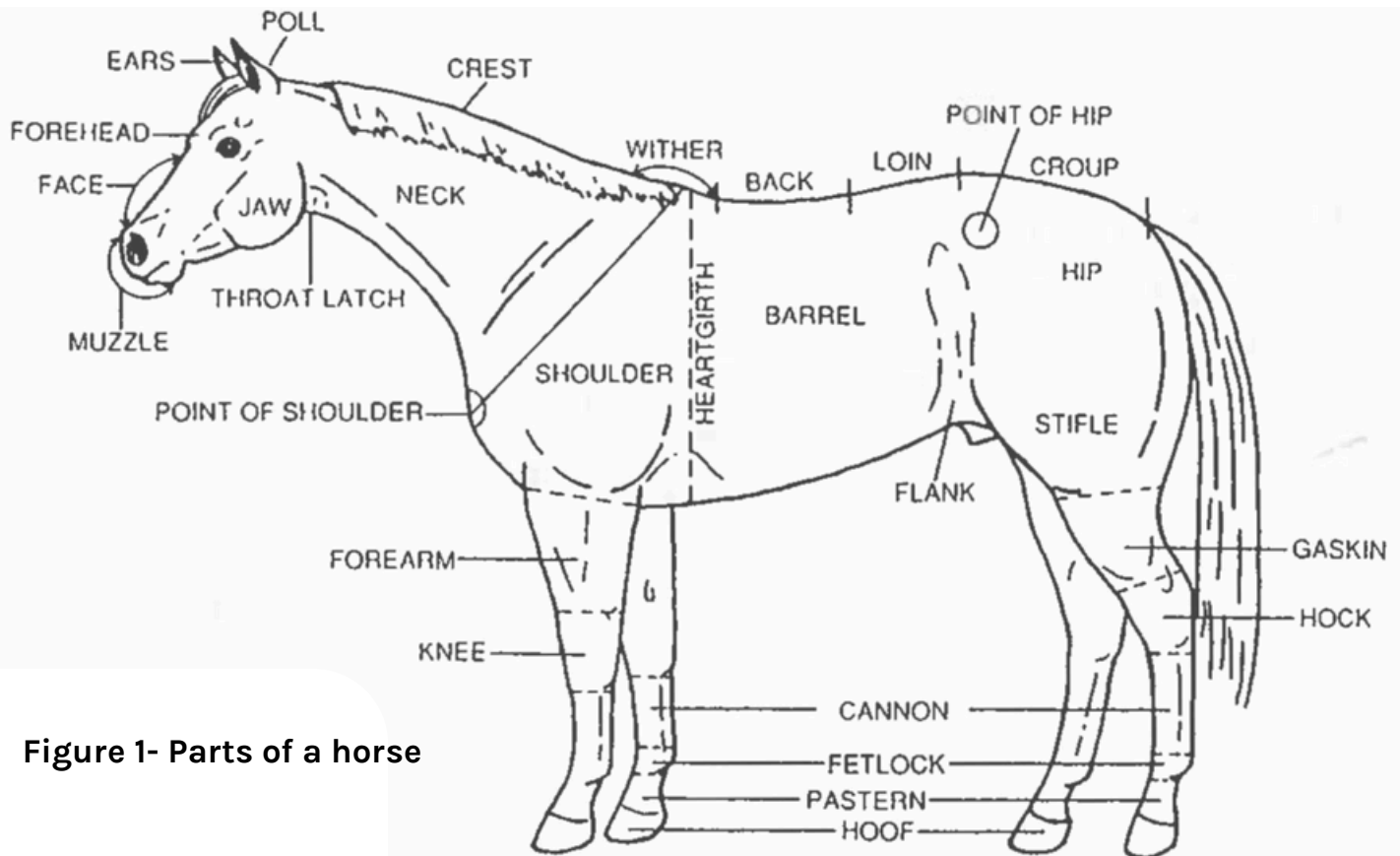


Figure 1- Parts of a horse

CONFORMATION CATEGORIES

Balance
Structure
Muscling
Quality
Travel

CONFORMATION

➤➤➤ BALANCE

The first category to evaluate is balance. Balance is the size and distribution of the individual parts and how they fit together to form a proportionate horse.

Horizontal balance considers the arrangement of the parts from front to rear, while vertical balance considers the arrangement from the withers to the ground. A well-balanced horse has a lower center of gravity, which enables the horse to shift weight more easily to perform athletic maneuvers.

Balance is evaluated by viewing the horse from the side at a distance of 25 to 35 feet, so the entire horse can be viewed without distortion caused by shadows and angles. Horizontal balance may be evaluated by drawing an imaginary vertical line at the heartgirth and another line at the point of the hip (Figure 2). A well-balanced individual will divide into three equal parts in a manner so that the front (shoulder), middle (barrel), and rear (hip area) thirds are proportionate to each other. In addition, the neck, shoulder, topline (back and loin) and hip should be similar in length. The shoulder should slope such that the topline (withers to hip) is shorter than the underline (heartgirth to flank). A vertically balanced individual will be the same height at the withers as at the hip. In addition, the depth of the heartgirth should be equal to the distance from the floor of the heartgirth to the ground.

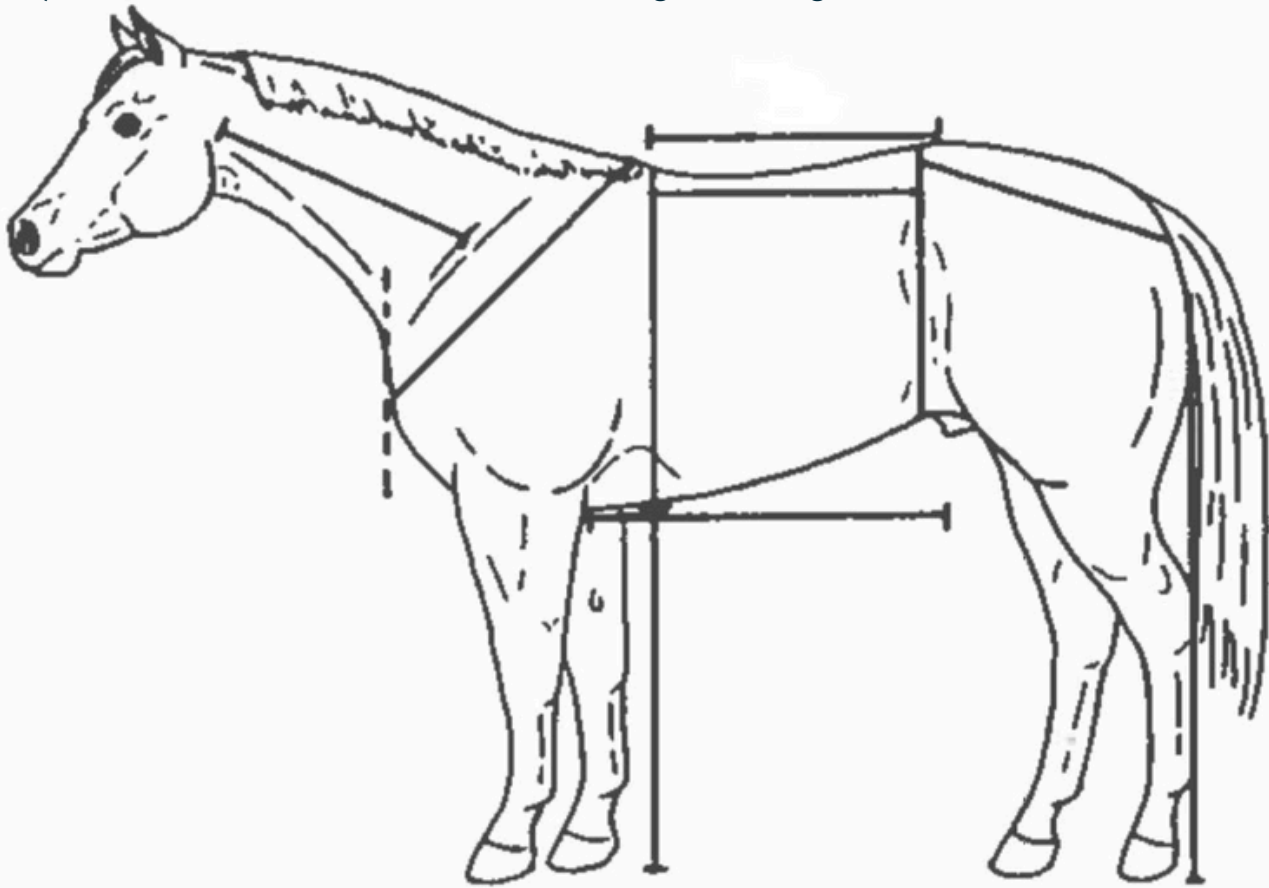


Figure 2- Evaluation of balance

CONFORMATION

»»» STRUCTURE

Structural correctness is the manner in which the bones of the skeleton (Figure 3) fit together to produce the proper angles and alignments that a horse must have for optimum capabilities as an athlete. A structurally correct horse has a greater chance of performing at maximum capability for a longer period of time. It generally will incur fewer blemishes and unsoundnesses than a structurally incorrect horse. Structure is most easily evaluated in the alignment of the long bones that make up the front and rear legs. However, the length of the shoulder, back and hip, as well as the slope of the shoulders and hip are important considerations in evaluating structural correctness.

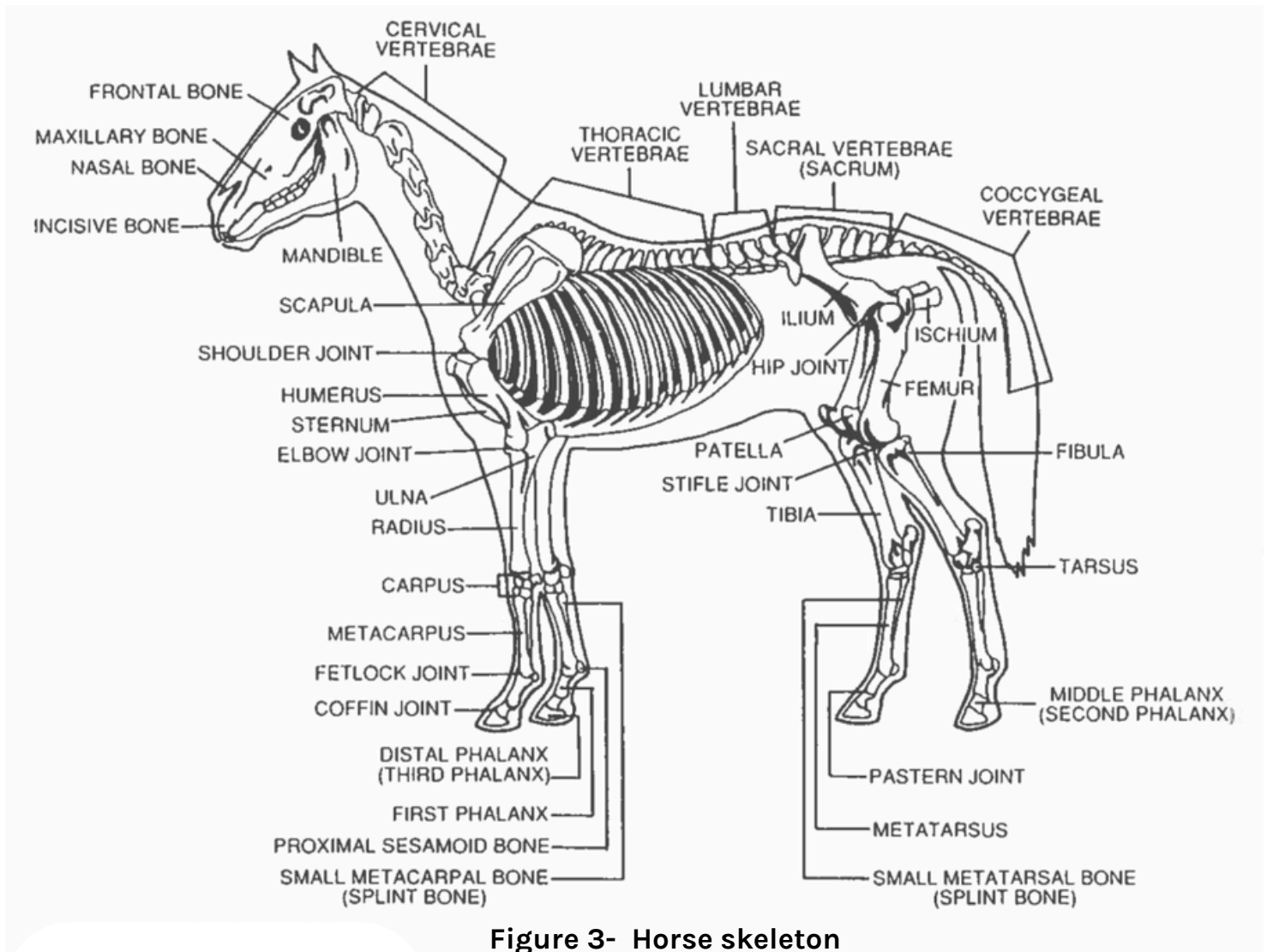


Figure 3- Horse skeleton

CONFORMATION

➤➤➤ MUSCLING

Muscle is the tissue that moves the skeleton. Therefore, muscle should be evaluated on how it will affect a horse's athletic ability. In general, muscle is evaluated on two criteria: quantity and quality.

Quantity refers to total volume or amount of muscle present on the skeleton and quality refers to the muscle attachment pattern. Quantity is evaluated primarily in seven major muscle groups: chest, forearm, shoulder, loin, hip, stifle and gaskin. These areas are largely responsible for the horse's power and athletic ability. The muscle in these areas should be of ample quantity as evidenced by bulge and definition (creases) without sacrificing quality. Quality of muscle is measured by length, pattern and attachment. High quality muscle is characterized by a long, smooth muscle pattern where the muscles tie in deeply at the points of attachment to the skeleton. Low quality muscle is short and bunched and does not tie in deeply to points of attachment (i.e. knees, hocks). Since the muscular system of the horse does not extend below the knees and hocks it is important for the horse to have adequate quantity and quality of muscle to facilitate strong, coordinated movement of the lower legs and feet.

➤➤➤ QUALITY

Quality is defined as the overall refinement, smoothness and style that a horse possesses. Quality characteristics do not necessarily have a form to function purpose as do structure, balance and muscling, but simply contribute to the aesthetic value of the horse. A high quality individual is more pleasant to look at than a poor quality individual.

Refinement is defined as freedom from coarseness and unnecessary wastiness. Refinement in the horse is evaluated in the the head, neck, throatlatch, lower legs and feet. The head should have a chiseled appearance, wide set eyes, a relatively small muzzle and be proportionate to the body size of the horse. The neck should have a small throatlatch and be free of extra fleshiness. The lower legs should be free from blemishes with the cannon bones appearing flat when viewed from the side. The feet should be proportionate to the size of the horse.

Smoothness is defined as all the body parts fitting together with no roughness or projections and is measured by evaluating the horse's entire muscle pattern and haircoat. The high quality horse will have an adequate quantity of muscle, showing adequate thickness and creases. The muscles will be smooth, long and low tying with deep attachment into the joints. The haircoat, whether short or long, should be fine and lay flat on the horse, without excess feathering or long hairs down the back of the legs. Style is measured by presence (excellence and grace) in appearance and attentiveness when the horse is standing and moving.

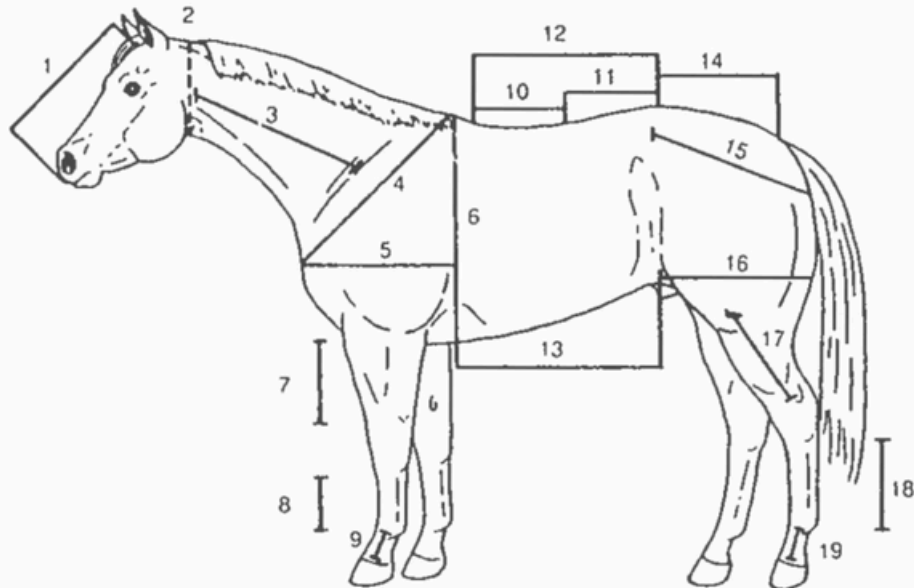
➤➤➤ TRAVEL

Travel is defined as moving from one place to another or moving in a given direction or path. Tracking specifically refers to the footprint pattern left while traveling and also is used to describe an individual's way of going. Horses should travel in a coordinated, agile and efficient manner. The horse's travel or way of going is evaluated on three characteristics: 1) straightness or trueness of stride, 2) length of stride and 3) snap and flexion. These characteristics are discussed in detail in the travel section of this manual.

CONFORMATION

➤➤➤ EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUAL PARTS

To recognize the ideal conformation characteristics of the horse, knowledge of the individual parts, their shapes and locations are necessary. When discussing individual parts, it is standard to refer to the length and/or slope of these parts. Where these lengths and slopes are measured is illustrated in Figure 4.



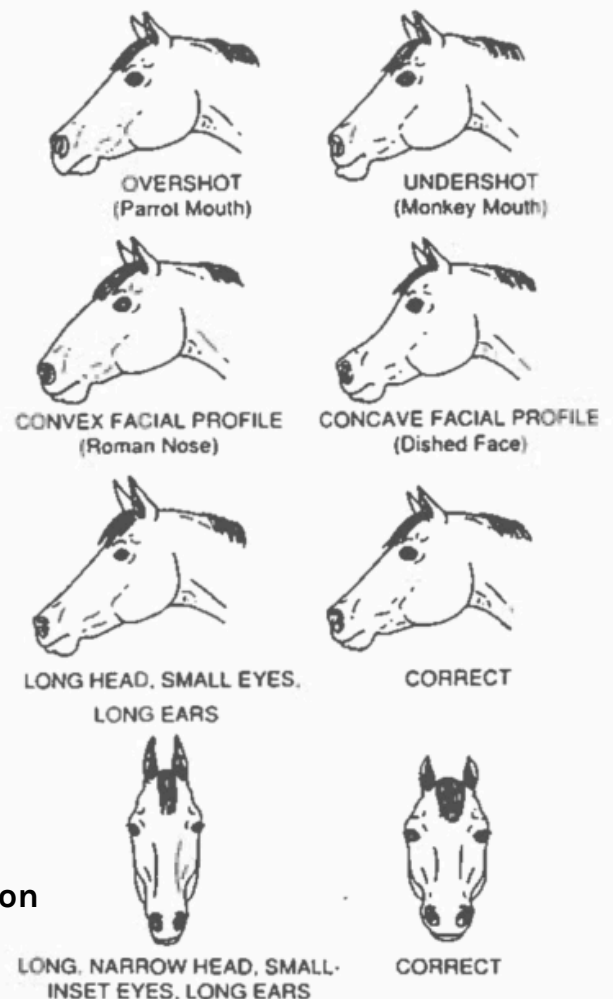
1. LENGTH OF HEAD
2. THROAT LATCH CIRCUMFERENCE
3. LENGTH OF NECK
4. SLOPE OF SHOULDER AND LENGTH OF SHOULDER
5. LENGTH FROM POINT OF SHOULDER TO HEARTGIRTH
6. HEARTGIRTH CIRCUMFERENCE
7. LENGTH OF FOREARM
8. LENGTH OF FRONT CANNON
9. LENGTH OF FRONT PASTERNS
10. LENGTH OF BACK
11. LENGTH OF LOIN
12. LENGTH OF TOP LINE (ie. back + loin)
13. LENGTH OF UNDER LINE (ie. heartgirth to flank)
14. LENGTH OF CROUP
15. LENGTH AND SLOPE OF HIP
16. LENGTH OF STIFLE FROM THE SIDEVIEW
17. LENGTH OF GASKIN
18. LENGTH OF HIND CANNON
19. LENGTH OF HIND PASTERNS

Figure 4- Length and slope of parts

HEAD

The horse's head serves as a pendulum to help control the movement of the body. Therefore, the size of the head should be in proportion to the rest of the body. An excessively large head is not attractive and may hinder the horse's ability to achieve an even, balanced way of moving. In addition to being an acceptable size, the head should exhibit both breed and sex character. Standards vary across breeds, but generally the head should be short, wide between the eyes and taper into a small muzzle with large nostrils. The eyes should be large and set on the corners of the face. Ears should be short and alert. The upper and lower lip should meet and form a square muzzle. Common faults (Figure 5) are long, narrow heads; thick muzzles; small, inset eyes; small nostrils; long, floppy ears; small jaws; convex or concave facial profile; teeth that are over or under shot.

Figure 5- Head conformation



CONFORMATION

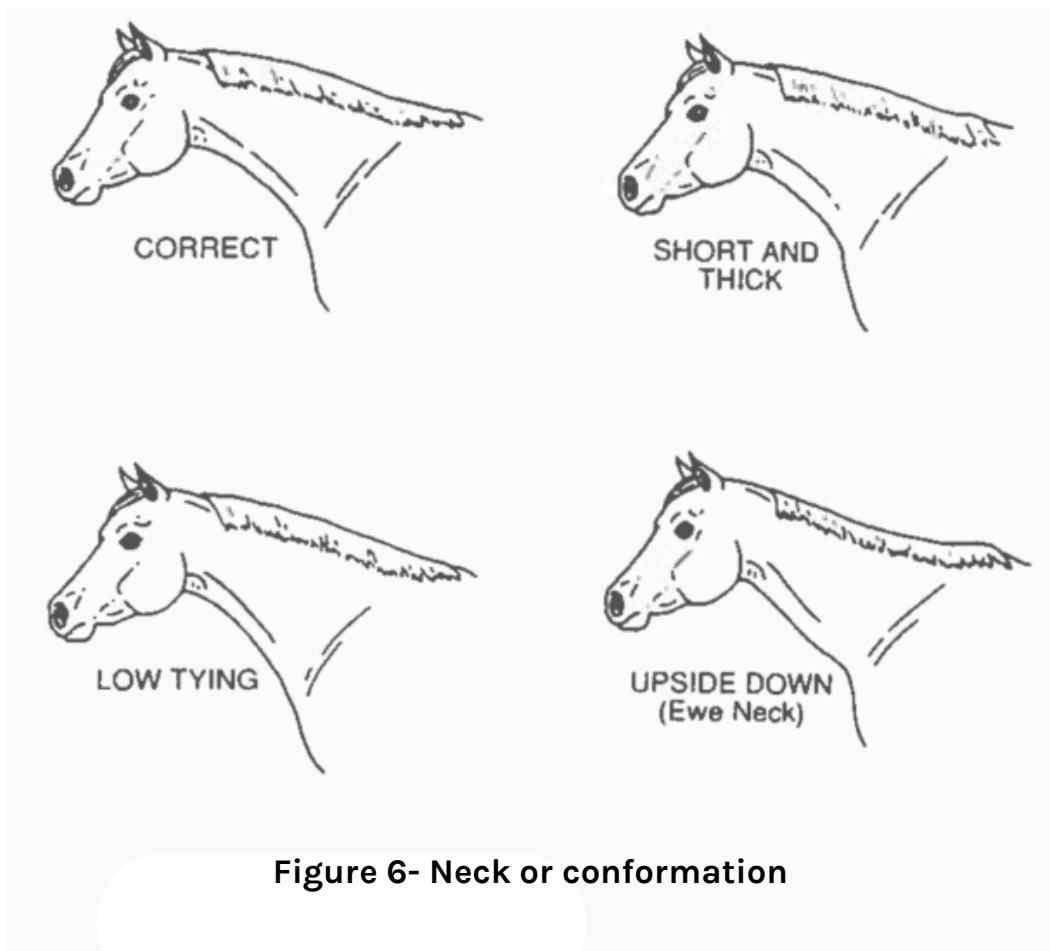
NECK

The neck is used along with the head for balance during movement. Consequently the structure of the neck (Figure 6) is of major importance because it can affect a horse's ability to perform. The length of the neck is measured from the throatlatch to the shoulder as shown in figure 4. The neck should be long, trim in the throatlatch, tie in high at the chest (shoulder point) and smoothly at the withers. A neck that is the proper length in proportion to the rest of the body and is trim, particularly in the throatlatch, is more easily flexed both laterally and vertically for balance and maneuverability. A short, thick-necked horse does not have this flexibility.

Shape of the neck is also an important consideration. The ideal neck should come out of the shoulders and arch slightly upward and forward. It should be strong and muscular over the top without being cresty, and should be free from fat or bulging muscle along the underside. A neck structured in this manner is strong enough to aid the horse in movement, yet light and flexible enough to be easily carried in a natural, relaxed position with lateral and vertical flexibility. Horses with necks that are weak over the top and muscular along the underside will generally not be comfortable when they are asked to flex at the poll.

Common faults in the neck include:

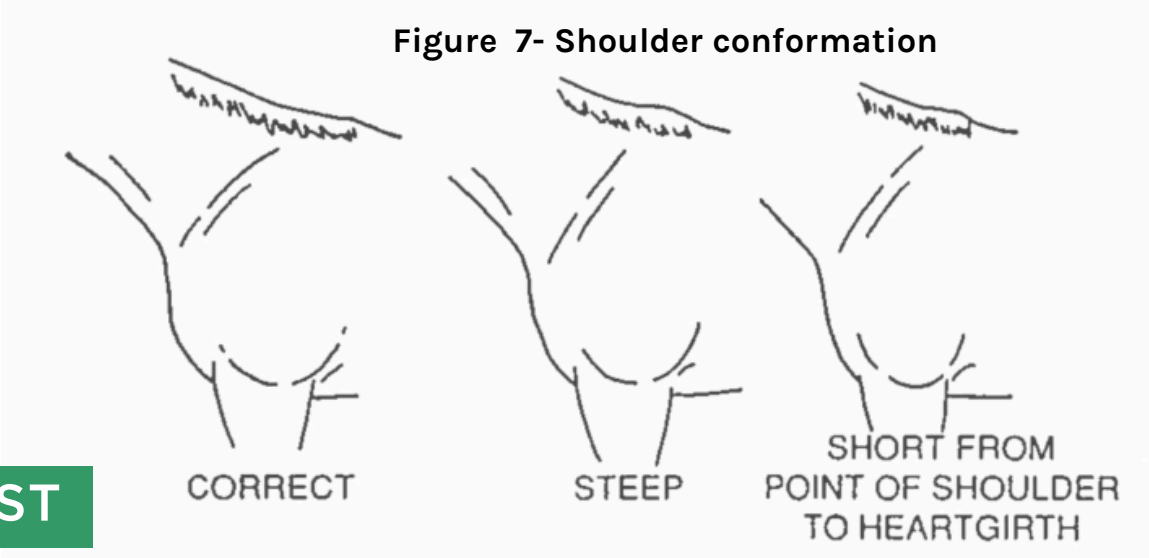
- Short and thick
- Excessively long and weak
- Upside down (weak over the top and excessively muscled on the bottom)



CONFORMATION

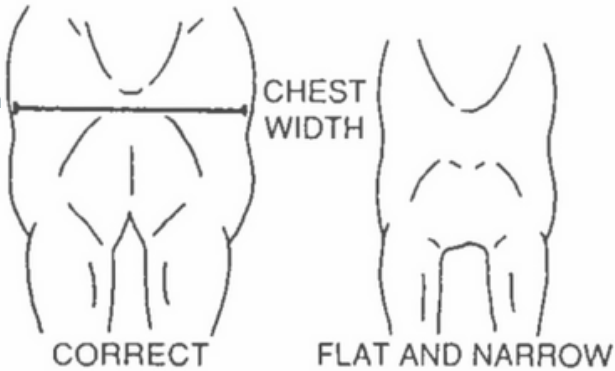
SHOULDER

The horse's front legs have no skeletal attachment to the rest of the body. Instead, they are attached solely by muscles and tendons. Since the shoulders are the site of attachment to those muscles, conformation of the shoulder dictates the strength of movement and length of stride in the front legs. Length of the shoulder is measured in two places (Figure 4). One measurement is from the top of the withers to the point of the shoulder, which reflects the actual vertical length of the scapula or shoulder blade. The other measurement is taken from the point of the shoulder horizontally to the heartgirth. This distance is determined by the length and slope of the humerus or arm bone. The arm bone is measured from the point of the shoulder to the elbow. The shoulders (Figure 7) should be long, sloping and blend smoothly with the neck and heartgirth. The angle or slope of the shoulder blade should be about 45 degrees relative to a horizontal line. In addition, the shoulder blade and arm bone should fit together at approximately a 90-degree angle (Figure 3). A longer, more sloping shoulder allows a greater range of movement, more strength and power in the front legs and generally a smoother gait. Short, steep shoulders usually contribute to a short, choppy stride, often with excessive concussion and strain on the knees and ankles of the horse. A short, steep shouldered horse is often rough to ride.



CHEST

The muscles of the chest aid in control of the lateral and extension action of the forelimbs. Therefore, the chest area should be wide enough to allow room for adequate muscling. Width of the chest is measured from point of shoulder to point of shoulder as shown in Figure 8. From the front view, the chest should have ample, well defined muscling that carries well down the inside of the front legs forming an up-side-down V up in the chest. When viewed from the side, the chest should exhibit depth from the base of the neck to the floor of the chest with a definite bulge evident in the pectoral region.



Common faults include:

- Chest too narrow
- Flat across the floor of the chest
- Lacking adequate muscle.

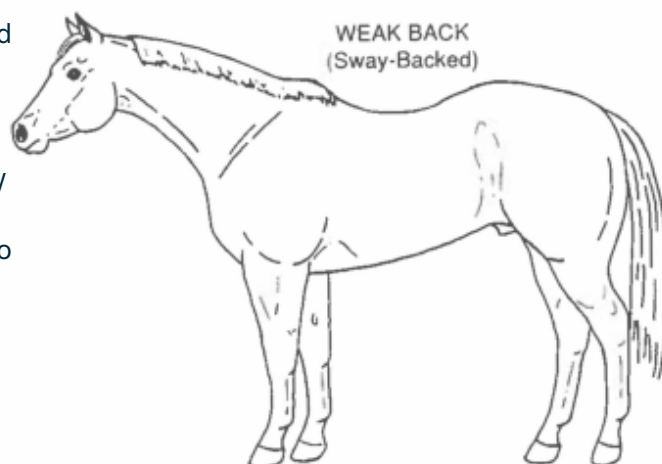
Figure 8- Width of chest

WITHERS

The withers serve as the base of attachment for the muscles supporting the neck and shoulder. When properly conformed, they hold a saddle in place. The withers should be high and prominent as opposed to flat and thick. Withers should not be sharp and make a rough transition from the neck to the back, but should be prominent enough to hold a saddle in place without an excessively tight girth.

BACK

The horse's back is part of the "bridge" between the front and hind quarters. Since the back serves to support the ribcage as well as the weight of the rider, the back should be short and strong. Strength is illustrated in a smooth transition from the withers to the back, while weakness is indicated by a significant dip in the topline where the withers blend into the back. Length of the back is measured from the withers to the loin, as shown in Figure 4. Absolute length of the back is not as important as the length of the back in relation to the underline. The most common back faults (Figure 9) include excessive length, weak or swayback.



LOIN

The loin makes up the remainder of the bridge between the front and hind quarters of the horse. The back and loin together make up the "topline" of the horse, which should be shorter than the underline (Figure 4). The length of the loin is measured from the back to the croup. The juncture between the back and loin begins at the first lumbar vertebra, which does not have a rib attached to it. A well muscled loin is important for strength and support because no ribs are attached to the skeleton at this point. Muscle in the loin plays an important role in many performance maneuvers, such as jumping and stopping and in overall collection. Strength in the loin is indicated by a smooth transition from the back into the croup with a slight bulge in the loin area. Weakness in the loin is characterized by a depression immediately in front of the croup and, in extreme cases, the vertebrae will be prominent. Common faults in the loin are weak, long and abnormal elevation of the lumbar vertebrae or "roach backed."

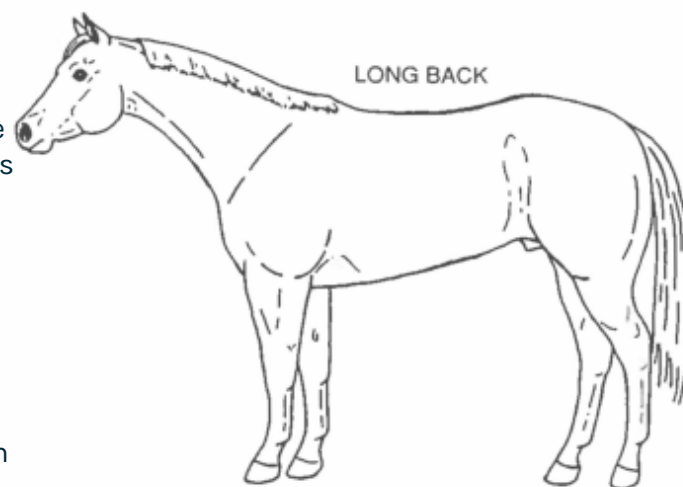


Figure 9- Back conformation
(See page 4 for Correct Back Example)

CROUP

The croup is formed by the sacral vertebrae (Figure 3), the base of attachment for many of the muscles of the hindquarter, back and loin. The croup should contain adequate muscling to propel the rear quarters and be long and smoothly turned over the top. The length of the croup is measured from the loin to the tail head, as illustrated in Figure 4. The croup should be relatively level but not flat or slight in muscling.

HIP

The length, slope and musculature of the hip all have an affect on the strength, stride length, overall balance and ultimate athletic ability of the horse. The desirable hip is long and fairly level, which allows for longer muscling, resulting in more power and impulsion from the rear quarters. The length and slope of the hip is measured from the point of the hip to the point of the buttocks, as shown in Figure 4. Common faults are too short, too steep and lacking muscle.

STIFLE

The stifle contains a large quantity of the muscle mass responsible for producing strength from the horse's hindquarter. The stifle should have adequate length and muscling when viewed from the side. Stifle length is measured from the flank across to the lower buttock as shown in Figure 4. Length across the stifle in this manner suggests there is more muscle lying deep into the lower leg than with a shorter stifle. When viewed from the rear, the stifle muscle should bulge so the width through the center of the stifle is greater than the width through the top of the hip, as shown in Figure 10. Common faults in the stifle area include being short across when viewed from the side and being narrower through the stifle when compared to the top of the hip when viewed from the rear.

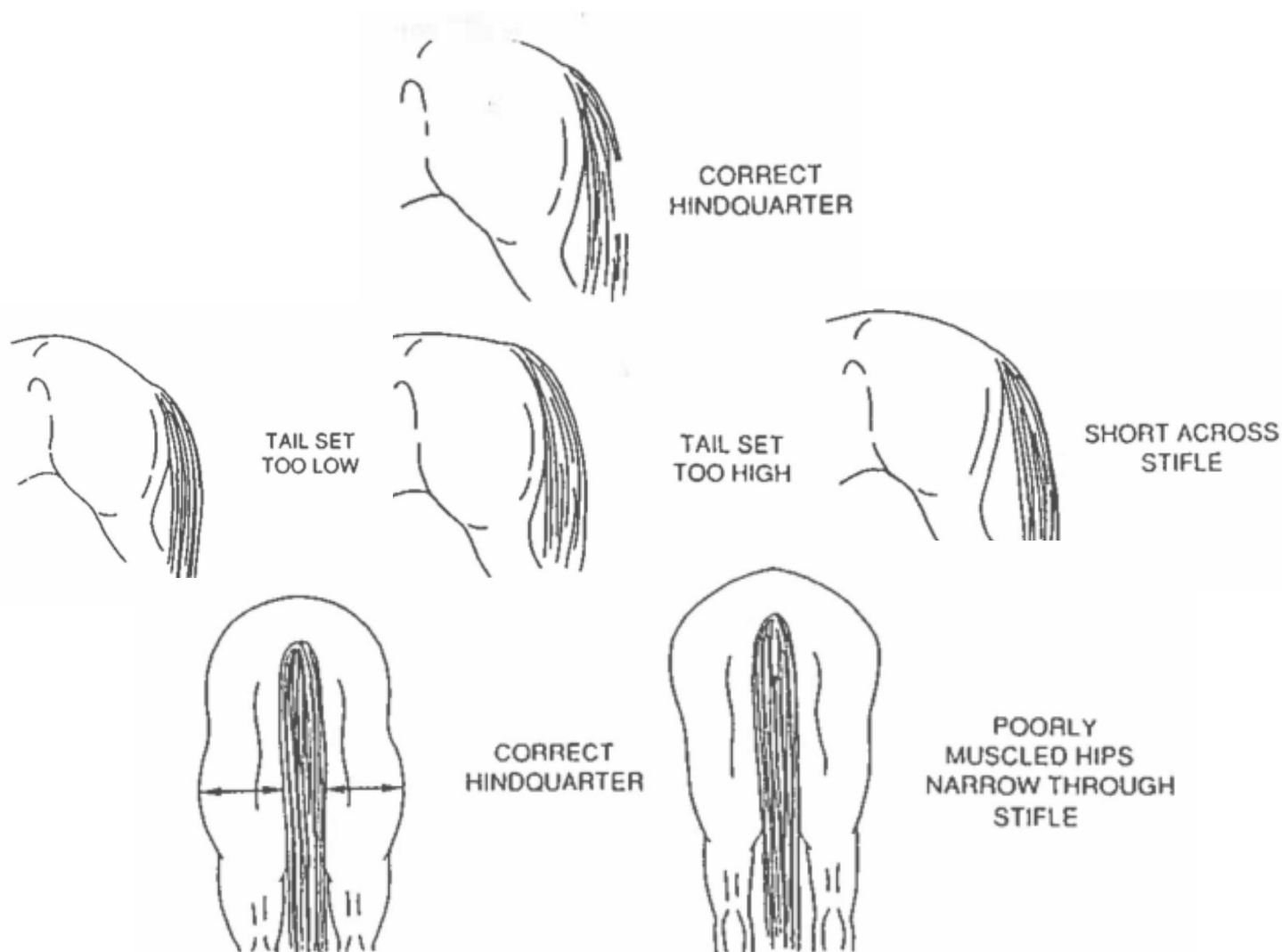


Figure 10- Hindquarter conformation

FRONT LEGS

FOREARM

The forearms provide attachment for muscles that control the lower forelegs. Therefore, forearm muscle is responsible for coordination and strength of the lower forelegs. The forearms should exhibit sufficient bulge with definition of muscling as measured by a greater circumference around the forearm than at the knee. Forearm muscling is measured on both the inside and outside of the forearm and should taper down to a deep attachment into the knee. When viewed from the front, the forearms should be set directly under the points of the shoulders. Also, the length of the forearms, which is measured as shown in Figure 4, should be greater than the length of the cannon bones. Common faults are short, bunched, slightly muscled, set on the outside of the point of the shoulder, short in length relative to cannon bones.

KNEES

The horse's knees withstand a great deal of concussive force, particularly when the horse is running or jumping. So, knee conformation is highly correlated with soundness in the front legs of horses. From the front view, the knee should be symmetrical and centered between the forearm bone and the cannon bone (Figure 11). The front surface of the knee should be relatively flat and should face directly forward. When viewed from the side, the front surface of the knee should show a smooth transition from the forearm through the knees to the cannon bone (Figure 12). Common faults include excessively small or large knees, unsymmetrical (bench knees), turning out or in, being aligned forward (over at the knees), or backward (back at the knees) when viewed from the side, excessive bumps or puffiness.

CANNON BONES

The cannon bones should be short relative to the forearms and appear flat when viewed from the side. This appearance is caused by a strong connection of tendons and ligaments in the lower leg. From the front view, the cannon bone should be aligned directly under the center of the knees and they should be free from blemishes. Common faults in the cannon bones are long relative to forearms, extremely small in diameter, set to the outside or inside of the knee, bulging or puffy along the back of the bone, narrower at knee than at the fetlock when viewed from the side.

FETLOCKS

The fetlocks should be centered directly under the cannon bones. The size of the joint should be proportional to the knee joint and free from swelling.

PASTERNS

The horse's pasterns serve as a shock absorption mechanism during travel. The length and slope of the pastern affects the shock absorbing capabilities of the legs. Ideally, the pastern bone should be set directly under the center of the fetlock when viewed from the front. When viewed from the side, the angle of the pastern should be similar to that of the shoulder (about 45 degrees) and of a moderate length. Common faults in the pasterns include long, excessive slope, short or steep.

FEET

The size, shape and alignment of the foot can affect the travel and ultimate soundness of the horse. The toes should point straight ahead and align directly with the center line of the pastern. When viewed from the side, the foot should follow the angle of the pasterns. In addition, the foot should be round (front feet tend to be rounder than rear feet) and of adequate size to support the weight of the body. Common faults in the feet are excessively small, narrow at the heels, set at a sleep angle or too low at the heels and not in alignment with the pastern angle.

FRONT LEGS

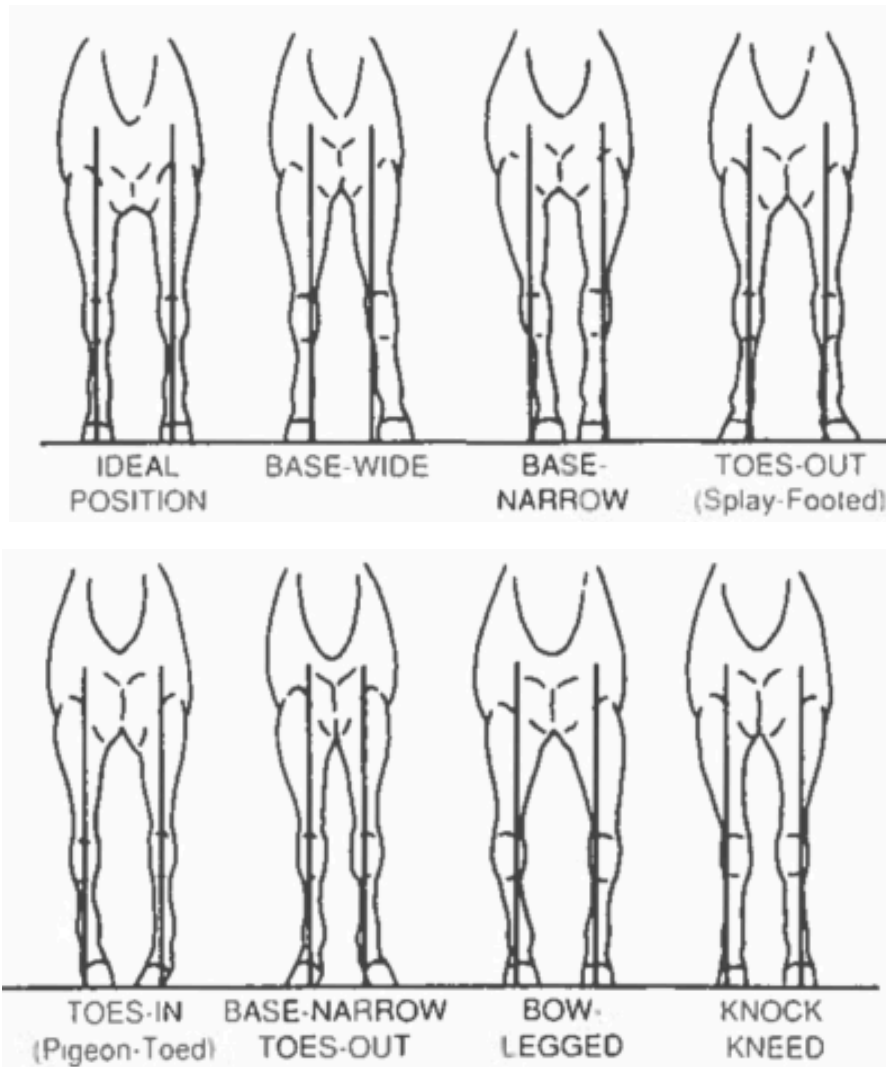


Figure 11-Foreleg conformation (front view)

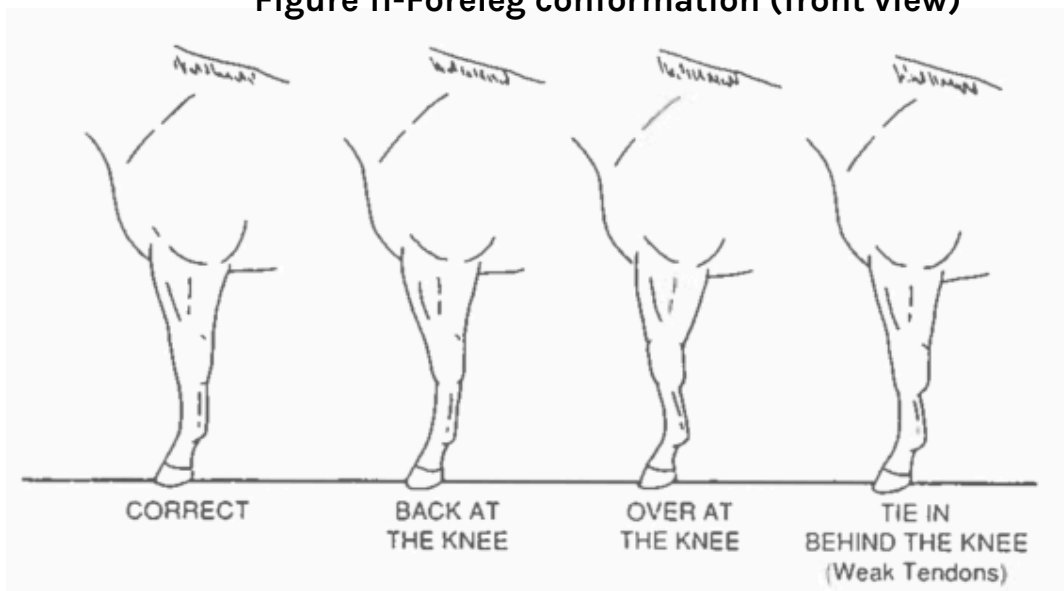


Figure 12-Foreleg conformation (side view)

HIND LEGS

GASKINS

The gaskin muscle is responsible for much of the propulsion of the hind legs. Therefore, this area should be well muscled both inside and outside, with the muscle lying high up into the stifle muscling and carry down to a deep attachment with the hocks.

HOCKS

The hocks should line up directly under the point of the hip when viewed both from the side and the rear. This alignment can be evaluated by dropping a plumb line from the point of the buttock to the ground as shown in Figure 13. With regard to alignment, a straight line should extend from the point of the hip, down the back of the hock and cannon bone to the ground. Hocks should be in proportion to the size of the horse and free from blemishes. Common faults include excessive angle in the hock such that the hock is set out behind the point of the hip when the cannon bone is perpendicular to the ground (sickle hock), insufficient angle in the hock such that the hock is set in front of the point of the hip (post legged), small joint relative to the size of the horse, and excessive puffiness or bumps.

The cannon bones, fetlocks, pasterns and feet of the hindleg should have all the characteristics that were described for the front legs, however, a few exceptions should be noted. The angle of the pasterns and feet in the hind legs are often slightly steeper than in the front legs. The rear cannon bones are slightly longer than the front ones, but they should not be excessively long relative to the gaskin.

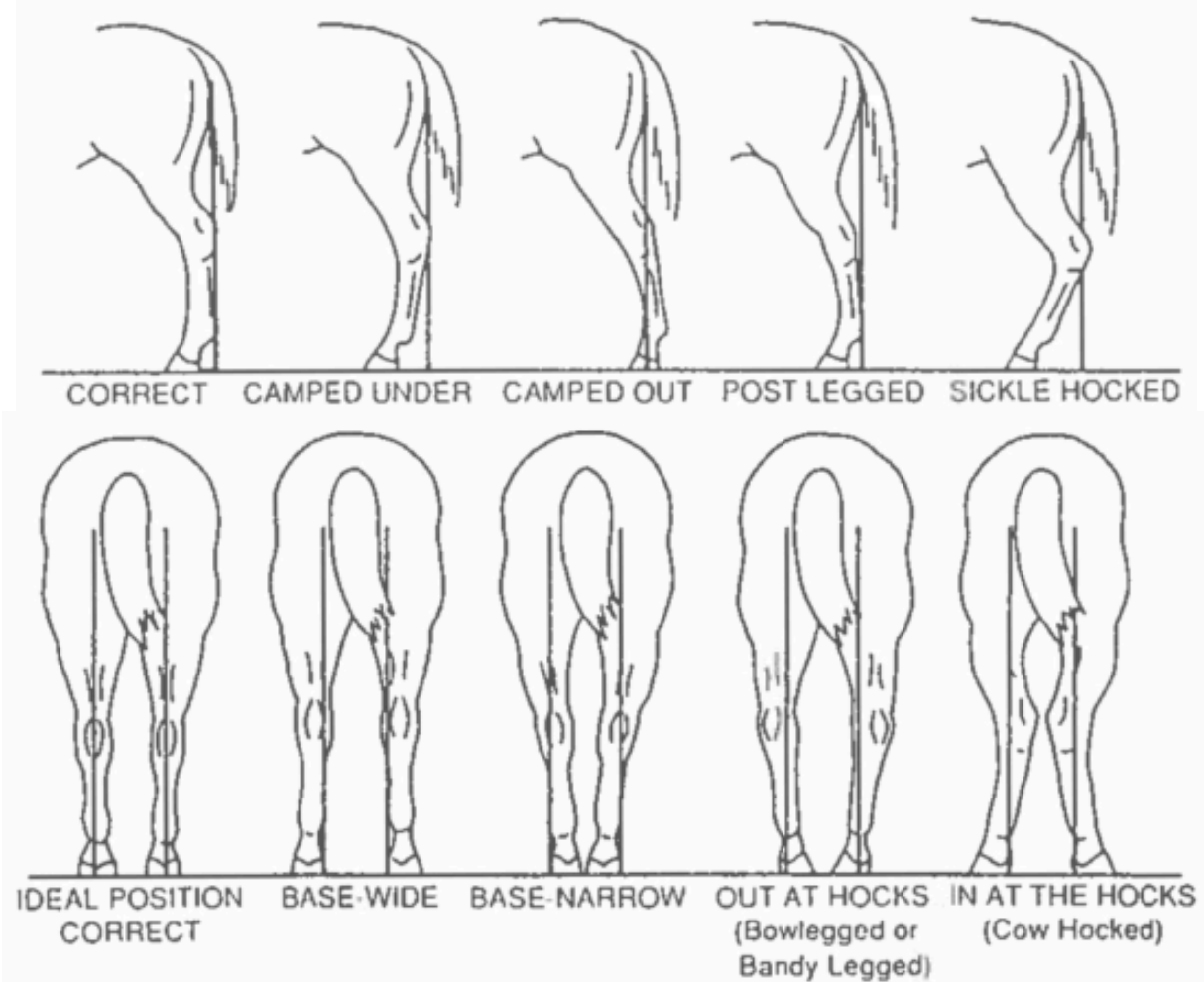


Figure 13- Hindleg conformation (front and side views)

CONFORMATION

»» TRAVEL EVALUATION

Straightness or trueness of stride is evaluated by observing the horse traveling to and away from a judge. The horse's feet and legs should travel in a straight path and not deviate from an imaginary vertical line (plumbline) extending from the point of the shoulder or hip to the ground (Figure 14).

Length of stride is best evaluated from the side, although it can be evaluated somewhat from front and rear views. Absolute length of stride is affected by the size and type of horse. Length of stride should be long enough so the hind feet land on or in front of the print left by the front feet. Stride length is affected by conformation. For example, a short stride generally indicates a structural defect such as steep shoulders and short hips.

Snap and flexion refers to how the feet are snapped as they leave and return to the ground. As the supporting foot leaves the ground, the horse should quickly flex the fetlock so the hoof clears the ground. Then that foot should snap forward allowing the hoof to land flat on the ground. The hoof should clear the ground as a result of fetlock flexion, rather than high knee and hock action. When a horse flexes the fetlocks sufficiently, the entire sole of the hoof can be seen as the horse travels away from a judge.

A horse's travel is most often evaluated while moving toward and away from the judge. In some horse show situations, judges ask for horses to be tracked in a circle or across the arena so they can evaluate travel. In halter classes, travel is always evaluated at the walk and the trot. Travel deviations are usually more obvious when a horse is trotting than when walking.

Below are some of the most common tracking faults observed in horses. Some faults involve only deviation at the toes while others will also include deviation up the limbs in the knees and hocks. The latter combined condition is generally considered a more severe fault.

WINGING OUT (PADDLING)

This fault is usually observed in horses that stand toed in (pigeon toed). Winging out is more frequently found in the front than the hind legs. During travel, the feet tend to follow an outward arc in the flight path as they leave the ground. The feet move away from the supporting leg during the stride.

WINGING IN (DISHING)

This traveling fault is often observed in horses that stand toed out (splay footed). Winging in occurs not only in the front legs but also in the hind legs because most horses normally tend to toe out slightly in their hind leg conformation. With the winging in condition, the feet follow an inward arc as they leave the ground. The feet move closer to the supporting leg during the stride. If they actually interfere with the supporting leg, a blemish or even lameness can result.

WINDING (ROPE WALKING)

This condition is characterized as a twisting of the striding leg and foot close to and then around the supporting leg and foot. The resultant tracks appear very close or one track is seen in front of the other track. This deviation is often observed in base narrow horses (stand close at ground). It can be seen from both front and rear views.

OVER-REACHING

This traveling problem occurs when the striding hind foot hits the front foot or leg as it begins to leave the ground. Scalping and forging are also used to describe interference of the front feet or legs with the hindfoot or legs. The interference may occur at the fetlock, bulb of the heel or only at the toe of the front leg. Weakness in the front pasterns may contribute to this condition, because it results in the front feet remaining on the ground longer during the stride. Over-reaching can also be caused by faulty hoof trimming and/or shoeing.

ROTATING THE HOCKS

This traveling fault is usually seen in horses that stand wider at the hocks than at the ground (bow legged) and the hind feet may also toe in. The feet generally travel in a straight path, but as the feet hit the ground and bear weight, the hocks rotate outward and cause the feet to twist in their prints. Evaluation of travel should also include detection of possible lameness. Obvious lameness is generally a disqualification in a horse show; however, some horses are "suspect." Horses are either lame or not lame. If there is question in a judge's mind, the benefit goes to the horse. A horse may not be lame, but exhibit slight soreness, stiffness, etc. This condition will influence a horse's way of travel and must be evaluated accordingly in the final placings.

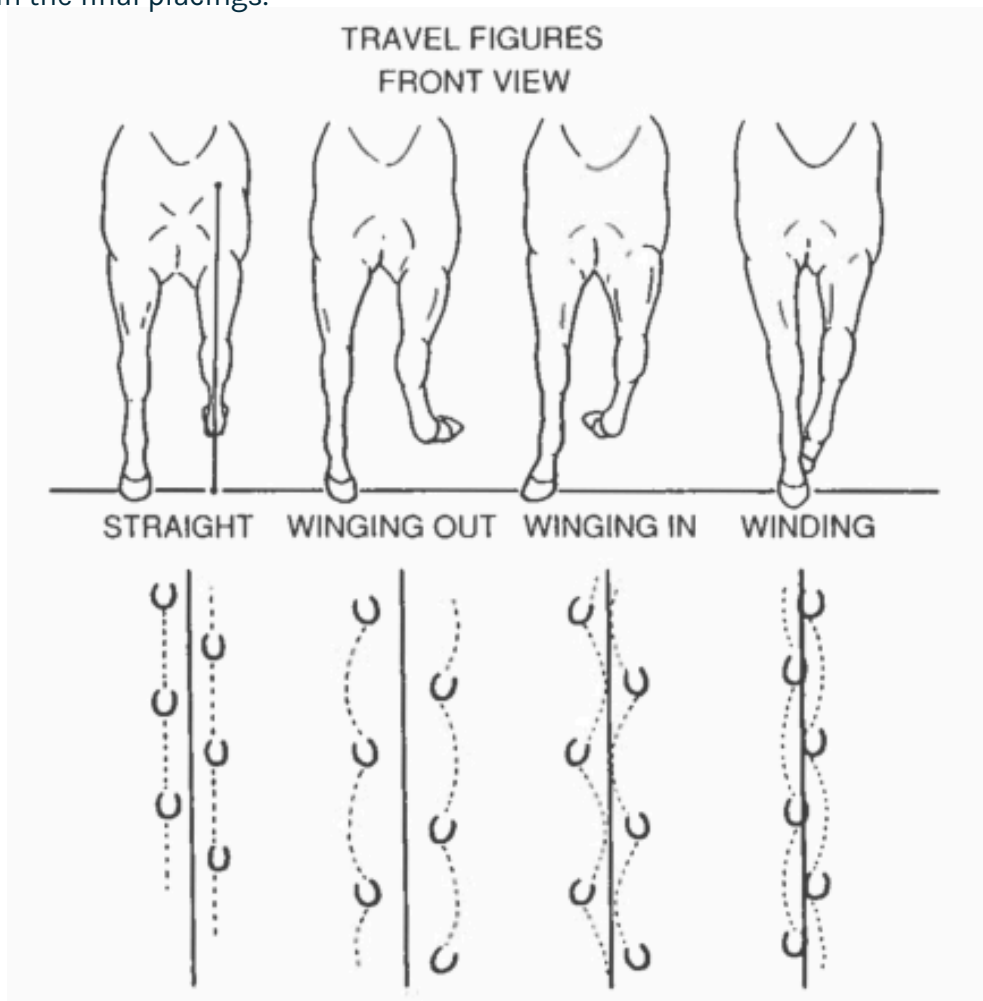


Figure 14- Straightness or deviation of stride

CONFORMATION

➤➤➤ BREED AND SEX CHARACTER

BREED CHARACTER

Breed character is defined as the characteristics of a horse that allow the breed of that individual to be easily recognized. The major factors of balance, structure, muscle, quality and travel used to evaluate conformation are the same for all breeds of horses. However, unique breed characteristics exist and should be considered when judging. Each breed has a set of standards, and horses within a breed should exhibit those breed characteristics. The following are brief descriptions of the characteristics for some popular non-stock type breeds or types of horses.

ARABIAN

Arabian horses (Figure 15) are generally evaluated with great emphasis placed on quality and overall stylishness. The head should be relatively small with a concave (dished) facial profile. The eyes should be large, round and expressive. The muzzle should be small with large, flared nostrils, and the ears should be small, thin and curved inward at the tips. The neck should be well arched with a long throatlatch, and rise high out of the shoulders, which should lay well back into the withers. The croup should be flat with a high tail set and the tail should be carried high and arched. Arabian horses should have long, smooth muscle with less emphasis placed on bulk of muscle. The Arabian should travel in a stylish and slightly animated fashion and stand square in front with the rear feet slightly offset.

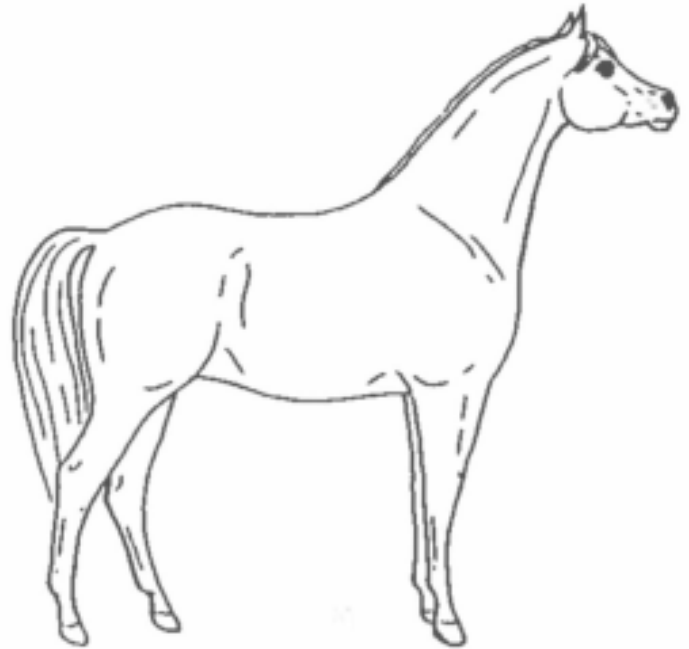


Figure 15- Arabian

HUNTER

Hunter type horses (Figure 16) are generally of Thoroughbred breeding or some type of Warmblood. The hunter will tend to be taller, longer and leaner bodied throughout than the stock horse. Bulk of muscle is not stressed in hunters, however, ample muscling is imperative. Since the hunter's purpose is for jumping over fences, structural correctness and balance are of major importance when judging hunter type horses. The hunter will not have the short, chiseled head, small muzzle or small ears, desired in stock-type horses. Traditionally, the hunter is shown square in front with the rear feet slightly offset.

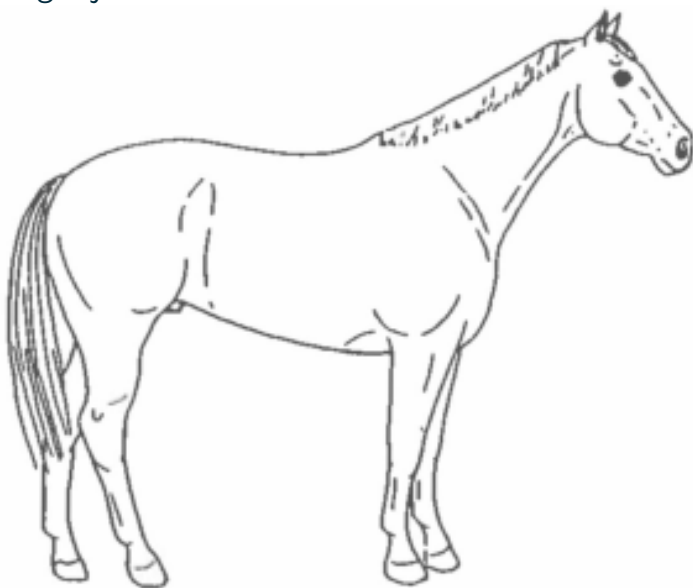


Figure 16- Hunter-type horse

CONFORMATION

SADDLE SEAT OR GAITED TYPE

This type (Figure 17) generally includes breeds such as American Saddlebreds and Tennessee Walking Horses. The head will be somewhat longer than most breeds and the neck will be long, well arched and tied low into the chest. These horses will tend to be taller and lighter muscled than some breeds and will move in a very animated fashion.

The Saddlebreds are the more refined and animated of the gaited type, while Tennessee Walkers are stronger, heavier boned and carry their heads lower than Saddlebreds. Saddle or gaited type horses are shown in the parked or stretched position.

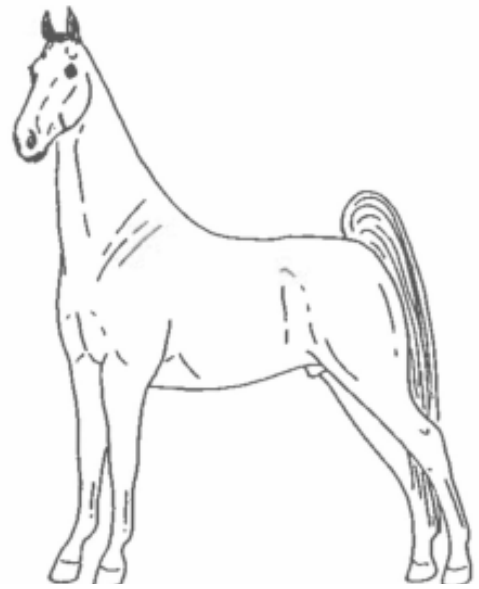


Figure 17- Gaited-type horse

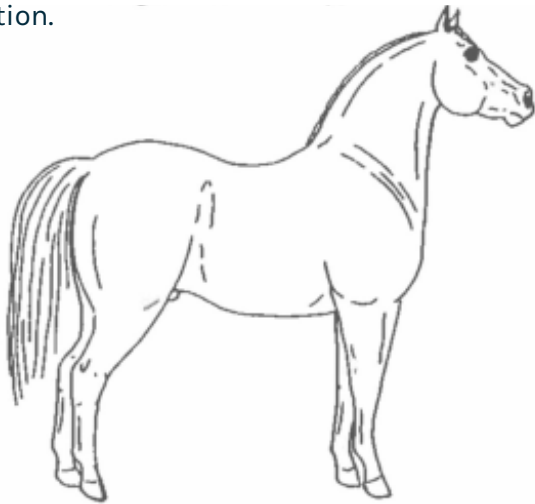


Figure 18- Morgan horse

MORGANS

Morgan horses (Figure 18) may have a straight or slightly dished facial profile, large, wide-set eyes and small ears. The head should be carried high on a powerful, slightly crested neck that ties in deeply at the point of shoulder. Morgans should have very sloping shoulders, a short muscular back and loin, and a slightly rounded croup with a relatively high tail set. The withers should be slightly higher than the hip. Morgans are usually shown in a stretched or parked position.

SEX CHARACTER

Within breeds, horses are classified by gender. A mare is a mature female horse; a filly is a female foal up to three years of age. A stallion is an uncastrated male horse; a colt is a male foal; a gelding is a castrated male.

Sex character is defined as the gender characteristics of a horse that allow the sex of that individual to be easily determined when compared to other sexes. Simply stated, a mare should look like a mare, a gelding should look like a gelding and a stallion should look like a stallion. Sex character is most easily distinguished in the head, neck and muscle pattern of a horse. Stallions should have a high quality, masculine head with prominent jaws and muscle definition across the forehead. They should have a strong, muscular neck that is not excessively cresty or fat. Generally, stallions will have a more muscular neck and shoulders and exhibit more muscle definition throughout than geldings or mares. Geldings should be more masculine than mares but not as masculine as a stallion. Geldings will not exhibit the degree of prominence of the jaws or muscling in the neck as a stallion but should be stout bodied and strong boned.

Mares should have a feminine head and less prominent jaws and muscle definition when compared to stallions. Generally, mares will have a more refined muzzle than stallions or geldings. Mares should have a high quality smooth neck, that is less muscular than that of a stallion. Mares exhibit more smoothness in their muscle pattern while maintaining an adequate quantity of muscle for their size.

CONFORMATION

➤➤➤ BLEMISHES AND UNSOUNDNESSES

Horsemen should be able to recognize blemishes and unsoundness. This skill is important for evaluating a potential purchase or judging a horse show entry. A blemish is generally caused by some type of injury and may be temporary or permanent. Blemishes do not affect the performance ability of a horse. An unsoundness may be caused by faulty conformation, heredity, stress and/or injury. An unsoundness may also be temporary or permanent, but will affect the performance of a horse. Because of this, unsoundness must be considered when judging. (Note: In horse judging contests all horses judged at halter are judged as sound; and therefore, unsoundness does not affect placings.) The following is a brief list of unsoundness and blemishes:

- Cataract- cloudy or opaque appearance of the eye causing poor or lost vision: often referred to as moon blindness or periodic thalmia.
- Poll evil- inflamed condition between the ears- with swelling and possible draining at the poll; usually due to injury.
- Overbite (parrot mouth)- hereditary condition where the lower jaw is shorter than the upper jaw and upper and lower teeth do not touch; considered a major defect particularly in breeding animals.
- Underbite (monkey mouth)- hereditary condition where the upper jaw is shorter than the lower jaw and upper and lower teeth do not touch; considered a major defect particularly in breeding animals.
- Fistulous withers- inflamed condition usually accompanied by drainage at or near the withers; due to injury and bacterial infection.
- Sweeny- atrophy or degeneration of the shoulder muscles due to loss of nerve supply; caused by injury.
- Splint -calcification of the splint bone along the inside of the cannon bone; due to injury or stress; often associated with toed out conformation and winging in during travel.
- Windpuff (windgall)- a fluid filled, soft, puffy swelling in the joints; caused by stress.
- Bowed tendon- inflammation and swelling of the tendon sheaths posterior to the cannon bone; due to over extension of the tendons; may be caused by stress or weak pasterns.
- Bucked shins- inflammation and swelling anterior to the cannon bone due to the tearing of the membrane that covers the bone (periosteum); due to stress; commonly seen in race horses.
- Ring bone- bony enlargements near the coronary band; usually related to stress and/or faulty conformation.
- Side bone- ossification of the lateral cartilages, usually seen in the front feet; excessive concussion (often resulting from steep pastern conformation) contributes to the condition.
- Quittor- an eruption or fistula at the coronary band; due to an injury.
- Navicular disease - degeneration of navicular bone; often associated with excessive concussion or faulty conformation.
- Founder- inflammation of the sensitive lamina of the hoof; indicated by rings in the hoof wall and turning up of the toe region; generally caused by high fever.
- Heaves- difficulty in forcing air out of lungs (exhaling); usually characterized by a jerking of the flanks.
- Roaring (winded)- difficulty breathing (inhaling and exhaling); usually characterized by a roaring noise as the horse breaths.
- Hernia- a bump or swelling (usually near the umbilical region); caused by an opening in the abdominal wall.
- Knocked-down hip- fracture of the hip bone causing lameness; often caused by a strong blow to the hip bone. (i.e. squeezing through a narrow gate). Stifled-dislocation of the patella in the stifle joint causing fixation of the leg in an extended position; faulty conformation may be a predisposing factor, usually caused by injury.

CONFORMATION

➤➤➤ BLEMISHES AND UNSOUNDNESSES

- Stringhalt - a nerve disorder causing excessive flexion of the rear legs during movement.
- Bog spavin - a soft filling of the natural depression on the inside or front of the hock; due to stress from faulty hock conformation.
- Bone spavin (jack spavin) - a boney enlargement on the inside or in front of the hock; due to faulty conformation and excessive strain.
- Curb - an enlargement, which usually calcifies, of the hock tendon or ligament at cannon hock junction; results from injury or strain or poor hock conformation.
- Osselet - abnormal bony growth at the fetlock joint.
- Blood spavin - an enlarged or varicose vein on the inside of the hock; does not cause lameness.
- Capped hock - swelling at the point of the hock; due to an injury.
- Shoe boil or capped elbow - swelling at the point of the elbow because of an injury.

➤➤➤ MECHANICS OF JUDGING A HALTER CLASS

Judges must objectively evaluate horses on a systematic manner in order to correctly place a class of horses. Correct mechanical procedures are extremely important to a judge's success in working through a class. A judge must briefly evaluate each horse against the ideal standard and then compare each horse to other horses in the class. This section of the manual describes mechanics used in working through a class. Classes with four horses (like judging contests) are used for this discussion. However, the suggestions also apply for judges working larger classes in horse shows in halter classes, horses are evaluated from side, front and rear views; while traveling and at close inspection. Side, front and rear view evaluations of classes should be made from a distance of 25 to 35 feet. This minimizes distortions caused by angles or different view points. In judging contests, 2 to 3 minutes are given for each of the three views, then the horses are traveled at the walk and trot. After travel, horses are often presented for two minutes of close inspection. Judges should make efficient use of time allowed for a class. When judging a class on which oral reasons will be given, some inexperienced judges spend too much time writing out details at each view. A judge should make a quick analysis of each horse, compare the horses, get the class correctly placed, then take more detailed notes of the big points affecting the placing. Writing too much, too quickly often leads to an incorrect placing as relevant points get lost among many irrelevant points. Remember, evaluate each one, compare, place and then take notes!

SIDEVIEW

The first view of the class is the side view. This view reveals more about a horse than other views as the "total" horse is seen. As discussed above, a mistake made by some judges is to spend too much time attempting to make a detailed evaluation of each horse. The judge may know what the parts of each horse looks like, but will not have the "total" horse in mind. Judges should begin at one end of the line and walk, preferably from head to tail (#1 to #4), looking at each horse. This procedure allows a judge to get a feel for what types of horses are in the class. Judges must develop a routine system for evaluating each horse and use that same routine system consistently on each horse in the class. Generally, judges look at the head first and move down the neck and shoulders. Then they move down the front legs and follow up by looking across the heart girth, back, hip and down the hind legs. A routine and consistent evaluation system forces a judge to evaluate the same conformation points on all horses. A few brief notes may be jotted down on only relevant points to lead the judge to a correct placing. After walking the line and evaluating each horse, a judge should have a good idea of the probable class placing. For example, after quick class analysis a judge should see an obviously outstanding horse (the winner), two mediocre horses that are very close (closer inspection will be needed to place them) and an obviously poor individual (bottom horse). Only then should a judge take time to write down a few more brief notes on the class.

CONFORMATION

FRONT AND REAR VIEW

The same mechanical procedure should be followed when observing the front and rear views. Judges should again remember to compare horses one to another while moving up or down the line

TRAVEL

When travel evaluation begins, a judge should already be fairly certain of a probable placing or at least have the horses put in pairs (top pair, etc). Horses are walked and trotted in a straight line or in a square between groups of judges in contests. Differences in the way horses travel will usually confirm placings, and in some cases will help place a close pair. Rarely will travel dictate changing a placing between two horses with major conformation differences.

JUDGING SYSTEM

One system that may be helpful for inexperienced judges is to actually place the class from each view (side, front, rear). At the conclusion of the class, see which horse(s) ranked toward the top from the most views and which horse(s) ranked bottom most of the time. Travel can be used as a tie-breaker in close pairs. For example:

Side:

4-1-3-2

Front:

4-1-2-3

Rear:

1-4-3-2

Travel:

4-1-3-2

Final Placing:

4-1-3-2

This system works well for judging contests with only four horses in a class. Obviously, this system requires too much writing for use in large classes.

CLOSE INSPECTION

When time is given for close inspection, judges should already have the class placed. Close inspection should be used for confirming placings, or observing smaller conformation faults that may not be seen from a distance. Do not second guess yourself during the close inspection period and change your placing. Ninety percent of the time, a judge's first impression is correct. Therefore, it is usually best to stay with your initial placing. By following this system, judges are ready to mark their cards at the conclusion of the class. Utilizing a thorough, routine, systematic evaluation system helps build confidence in determining the correct placing. This gives a judge more confidence as decisions are strengthened by taking a few last minute notes.

PERFORMANCE- RAIL

➤➤➤ INTRODUCTION

Performance classes are designed to test the suitability of horses for certain types of work. There are many different horse show and all classes are placed on most ideal performance. In performance classes, judges evaluate the horses, or the horse rider combinations in some classes, against a set standard for the class. (Note: Classes where showman or rider are evaluated include western horsemanship, hunt seat equitation and gaited equitation.) The class standards are set forth by breed and/or performance associations and all judges must have full knowledge of these standards. Rules, regulations, requirements and judging standards set forth by breed and/or performance associations, change periodically. Usually only minor changes are made; however, occasionally a drastic change or clarification of a standard is made by an association. Due to these annual changes, all class information, particularly specific penalty and credit point assessments, cannot be included in this manual. Rather, this performance section includes general performance criteria. Also included is other needed information on class mechanics, major and minor penalties and faults, disqualifications and commonly used scoring systems. More detailed explanations for judging classes are printed in current breed and/or performance association rulebooks and case books. Detailed information, to be updated as necessary, is included in the Georgia 4-H Horse Judging Guide. Within the Georgia 4-H horse program, certain classes are sanctioned for inclusion in 4-H judging contests. This section includes information on the following sanctioned classes: western pleasure, hunter under saddle, working ranch rail, saddle seat type (trotting) pleasure, gaited (non-trotting) pleasure, hunt seat equitation, western horsemanship, gaited equitation, western riding, reining, ranch riding, hunter hack, and trail.

➤➤➤ WESTERN PLEASURE

The western pleasure horse is shown at the walk, jog and lope in both directions of the arena and is backed at the conclusion of the class. The performance of a western pleasure horse is evaluated by analyzing the horse's performance in four general categories: functional correctness, brokenness, cadence and consistency, and quality of movement and attitude (or mannerisms).

A pleasure horse has free-flowing stride of reasonable length in keeping with its conformation. It should move across the ground with little effort and should have a balanced flowing motion. The quality of movement and consistency of gaits is a major consideration. The pleasure horse should carry its head and neck in a relaxed, natural position with the poll level even with the withers. It should carry his head slightly in front of the vertical giving the appearance of being willfully guided. It should be shown on a reasonable loose rein with light contact. The horse should be responsive yet smooth in the transitions. Maximum credit should be given to the flowing, balanced, willing horse that gives the appearance of being fit and pleasurable to ride.

FUNCTIONAL CORRECTNESS

The easiest category to evaluate is functional correctness because it includes the basic rules, requirements and regulations for the class. These are generally "yes or no" considerations requiring little subjective judgment. A functionally correct western pleasure horse travels at and maintains the prescribed gait (including extensions). The horse also utilizes the correct lead when loping and reverses to the inside of the arena and backs up when asked to back. Complete failure to do any one of these requirements is considered a major fault. Faults occur in varying degrees and the severity of the fault will impact the final placing. For example, a horse missing a lead for one or two strides will not be penalized as severely as a horse missing a lead and remaining in the incorrect lead around the arena. Equipment and rider attire are part of functional correctness.

PERFORMANCE- RAIL

BROKENESS

A western pleasure horse should possess the ability to be broke and quiet making it the second most important quality to look for. A horse that lacks brokeness and is not quiet cannot be effectively evaluated on the other three criteria. A horse that is broke and quiet is one that is free from major and minor refusals to the rider such as bucking, rearing, balking, mouthing the bit, ringing the tail, and pinning the ears. Once it is determined the horse in the pleasure class is broke and quiet, it is time to judge the horse on the way that he/she moves.

CADENCE AND CONSISTENCY

The consistency and quality is extremely important in judging the western pleasure class. A pleasure horse that shows consistency and quality is one who gives the appearance of being a “pleasure” to ride. These horses are expressive, natural, attractive, and appear as though they are enjoying their work. They offer an overall pleasing picture when viewed the rail and simply possess great amounts of eye appeal. The horse that is consistent in his/her quality of movement should be given credit.

Depending on what contest you attend, the contest officials may ask for the traditional jog and lope or they may ask for an extended jog or a lope with a slight increase in forward motion. Either way, the description of the gait should not dictate how you judge the class. An extended jog should be a lengthening of gait and not a quickening of pace. This does not mean that the horses should increase their speed dramatically, it does mean that credit should be given to a horse that moves in a balanced, forward-moving stride with a great degree of lift and flow. Likewise, a horse that is moving in an excessively slow, unbalanced stride should be penalized. Just because a horse is going faster, it does not mean that the horse is moving more correctly or with a higher degree of quality.

Some of the words being used when describing western pleasure horses today are balance, lift, flow and self-carriage.

- Balance in a moving horse is the ability of the animal to keep itself properly oriented or positioned while in motion, thus giving an impression of stability in motion. This also relates to stride length. The best way to visualize this is to draw an imaginary line down the center of the horse. A balanced horse at the jog and lope should take relatively the same length of stride forward of the line as they take behind the line. Quite often, horses will be forced to shorten their stride in an attempt to make them to move at a slower pace. Most of the time (this can be seen especially at the jog) the horse will then begin to move in an unbalanced stride. Sometimes, these horses will be called lame because they are moving longer with a leg on one side of the body than they are with the other. However, a horse cannot be called lame to the degree to excuse that horse from the class or placing unless they are bobbing their head consistently at the jog.
- Lift is a period of suspension or an elevated carriage, and flow is to move smoothly, easily and to be fluid.
- Self-carriage is a term that encompasses balance, lift and flow. Without the components of balance, lift and flow, self-carriage cannot be achieved. Balance and flow cannot be achieved without forward motion and the proper cadence. When a pleasure horse lacks forward motion or cadence, balance is sacrificed and flow is lost. This horse is not comfortable. Remember, a good pleasure horse should appear to be comfortable and a pleasure to ride.

PERFORMANCE- RAIL

CADENCE AND CONSISTENCY CONT'D

The lack of forward motion affects the balance of a horse's movement and interferes with its flow and cadence in its gait. When the balance and flow are interfered with enough, this horse may start bobbing its head and hesitating in its motion. This horse may turn sideways with its hip towards the center of the pen. This type of movement is often referred to as being "over canted." A horse should be penalized when it is excessively canted toward the center of the pen. However, a correctly moving pleasure horse will be slightly canted to the degree that its rear leg closest to the rail should be in a line with its inside front leg. A horse that lacks forward motion may also cock its head slightly away from the direction it's traveling or put its head too low on the forehand. Often, a horse that carries its head too low also appears to be behind the vertical.

QUALITY OF MOVEMENT

There are set standards for the manner in which a western pleasure horse should execute gaits. Gaits are evaluated on speed, cadence and action. The walk should have a distinct four-beat cadence with medium speed. The horse should not slowly creep, nor walk with excessive speed. The jog should be a distinct two-beat gait with the horse traveling slowly but not so slow as to sacrifice collection. The lope should be a distinct three-beat gait with the horse moving slowly in a collected frame. At all three gaits the horse should move without excessive action in the knees and hocks and the feel should land softly on the ground. Size and conformation of the horse should be considered when evaluating speed of gaits. A large horse may appear to move faster than a small horse simply because of a longer stride, therefore covering more ground with each stride.

In addition to gaits, head set and head carriage are also evaluated in quality of movement. "Head set" describes the position of the head relative to a line that is perpendicular to the ground. "Head carriage" is the position of the horse's neck relative to the ground. The horse should maintain a head set that keeps the nose just slightly in front of a perpendicular line from the poll to the ground. Head carriage should be parallel with the ground, keeping the poll level with or slightly above the withers. This ideal head and neck position allows the horse to more easily maintain a collected frame characterized by a rounded back and forward reach underneath the body with the hind legs. While head set and head carriage add to the quality of movement, they should not be considered more important than cadence and collection.

Quality of movement faults include excessive speed; not traveling with the correct cadence (example - an incorrect four-beat lope rather than the natural three-beat lope); lifting the knees and hocks high; traveling in an uncollected frame; carrying the head higher or lower than the desired position relative to the withers; and keeping the face behind or extremely in front of the vertical.

PERFORMANCE- RAIL

ATTITUDE

Attitude is the promptness with which a horse responds to the rider's cues, the response in the head and tail when a cue is given, and the overall willingness of the horse to perform in the prescribed manner. The horse's ears should be alert and attentive, with the mouth remaining quiet and closed. The horse's tail should be carried quietly during the class, but may lift in response to the rider's cues. The western pleasure horse should perform in a responsive, obedient and willing manner, which makes the ride more pleasurable. A western pleasure horse with a good attitude responds promptly and quietly to cues and makes gait transitions smoothly while showing no evidence of changing frame. The horse should travel straight down the rail, looking straight through the bridle. The horse should perform the entire class with a reasonably loose rein or with very light contact.

Attitude faults include pinning the ears, swishing tail when the rider gives a cue. Reluctance in completing gait transitions or unwillingness to back readily are also attitude faults.

The western pleasure class is placed by determining the horse(s) with the greatest combination of functional correctness, brokeness, cadence and consistency, quality of movement and attitude.

FAULTS TO BE SCORED ACCORDING TO SEVERITY

- Excessive speed (any gait)
- Being on the wrong lead
- Breaking gait (including not walking when called for)
- Excessive slowness in any gait, loss of forward momentum (resulting in an animated and/or artificial gait at the lope)
- Failure to take the appropriate gait when called for (during transitions, excessive delay will be penalized)
- Touching horse or saddle with free hand
- Head carried too high
- Head carried too low (tip of ear below the withers)
- Overflexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical
- Excessive nosing out
- Excessive movement of the topline at the lope
- Opening mouth excessively
- Stumbling
- Use of spurs forward of the cinch
- Horse appears sullen, dull, lethargic, emaciated, drawn or overly tired
- Quick, choppy or pony-strided
- Overly canted at the lope (when the outside hind foot is further to the inside of the arena than the inside front foot).

FAULTS THAT PLACE HORSE BELOW ALL OTHERS

- Use of more than one hand on the reins
- Switching rein hands
- Use of more than one finger between the reins
- Never performing a designated lead or gait

PERFORMANCE- RAIL

➤➤➤ HUNTER UNDER SADDLE

The hunter under saddle horse is shown at the walk, trot and canter in both directions of the arena and is backed at the conclusion of the class. The hunter under saddle horse also is evaluated on functional correctness, brokeness, cadence and consistency, and quality of movement and attitude. Functional correctness is basically the same as for western pleasure horses. However, a few differences do exist in quality of movement and attitude between the two types of horses.

FUNCTIONAL CORRECTNESS

The easiest category to evaluate is functional correctness because it includes the basic rules, requirements and regulations for the class. These are generally "yes or no" considerations requiring little subjective judgment. A functionally correct hunter under saddle horse travels at and maintains the prescribed gait (including extensions). The horse also utilizes the correct lead when cantering and reverses to the inside of the arena and backs up when asked to back. Complete failure to do any one of these requirements is considered a major fault. Faults occur in varying degrees and the severity of the fault will impact the final placing. For example, a horse missing a lead for one or two strides will not be penalized as severely as a horse missing a lead and remaining in the incorrect lead around the arena. Equipment and rider attire are part of functional correctness.

BROKE AND QUIET

Broke and quiet horse are free from major and minor refusals and give the appearance of being quiet and willing to the rider's cues and aids/ once it is determined the horse is broke and quiet the horses are then evaluated on their quality of movement.

CADENCE AND CONSISTENCY

Soft and smooth movers are Hunter Under Saddle horses that move in a cadenced manner and hit the ground light and soft on all four feet when traveling. Horses should move with a large amount of impulsion from behind and travel with long, bold stride.

ATTITUDE

The hunter under saddle horse should have the same relaxed, obedient attitude as the western pleasure horse. However, it will show a little more boldness in the way of going. The hunter under saddle horse is shown with light contact on the bit and no slack in the reins. An attitude fault is excessive boldness characterized by pushing on the bit and being reluctant to respond to the rider. The hunter under saddle class is placed by determining the horse(s) with the greatest combination of functional correctness, quality of movement and attitude. Functional correctness is followed in importance by quality of movement or attitude.

PERFORMANCE- RAIL

QUALITY OF MOVEMENT

Quality and way of going are important when evaluating the Hunter under Saddle Horse. Hunters should show a great deal of quality and style and should fit the part of an English horse. This horse will have a big, long, bold stride and when traveling (especially at the trot) should flatten out at the knee and cover a larger amount of ground. The canter will be longer strided than the lope of the western horse; however, it should be noted that Hunter Under Saddle horses should still be broke and quiet and level over the top line when traveling at all three gaits.

Hunter under saddle horses should be suitable to purpose. Hunters should move with long, low strides reaching forward with ease and smoothness, be able to lengthen stride and cover ground with relaxed, free-flowing movement, while exhibiting correct gaits that are of the proper cadence. The quality of the movement and the consistency of the gaits is a major consideration.

The walk should be forward-working, rhythmical and flat footed. Extremely slow or "jiggy" walks should be penalized.

The trot should have long, low, ground-covering, cadenced and balanced strides. Smoothness is more essential than speed. Extreme speed is to be penalized as well as excessive knee action.

The canter should be smooth, free moving, relaxed and straight on both leads. The stride should be suitable to cover ground following hounds. Over collected, four-beat canter is to be penalized as well as excessive speed. A horse that is over-canted (hip pointed too far to the inside of the arena) should also be penalized.

Horses should be obedient, have a bright expression with alert ears, and should respond willingly to the rider with light leg and hand contact. Horses should be responsive and smooth in transition. When asked to extend the trot or hand gallop, they should move out with the same flowing motion. The poll should be level with, or slightly above, the withers to allow proper impulsion behind. The head position should be slightly in front of, or on, the vertical. This class will be judged on performance, condition and conformation. Maximum credit shall be given to the flowing, balanced, willing horse.

FAULTS TO BE SCORED ACCORDING TO SEVERITY

- Quick, short or vertical strides
- Being on the wrong lead and/or wrong diagonal at the trot
- Breaking gait
- Excessive speed at any gait
- Excessive slowness in any gait
- Loss of forward momentum
- Failure to take the appropriate gait when called for
- Head carried too high
- Head carried too low (such that poll is below the withers)
- Over flexing or straining neck in head carriage so the nose is carried behind the vertical
- Excessive nosing out
- Failure to maintain light contact with horse's mouth
- Stumbling
- if a horse appears sullen, dull, lethargic, emaciated, drawn or overly tired
- Consistently showing too far off the rail

PERFORMANCE- RAIL

WORKING RANCH RAIL

The working ranch rail horse is shown at the walk, extended walk, trot, extended trot, lope, extended lope, and is backed at the end of the class. Horses must work at least one direction at the extended trot and lope. Extended walk is an optional gait that may be called by the officials.

QUALITY OF MOVEMENT

The working ranch rail class measures the ability of the horse to be a pleasure to ride and should reflect the versatility, attitude, and movement of a working horse. The horse should be well-broke, relaxed, quiet, soft and cadenced at all gaits. The movement of the working ranch rail horse should simulate a horse needing to cover long distances, softly and quietly. The overall manners and responsiveness of the horse and the horse's quality of movement are the primary considerations. Maximum credit should be given to the horse that has a natural flowing stride and consistent, ground covering gaits. Transitions should be performed when requested, with smoothness and responsiveness. The ideal working ranch rail horse should have a natural head carriage at each gait. The horse should be ridden on a relatively loose rein with light contact and without requiring undue restraint while being responsive to the rider and making timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner. The horse should be soft in the bridle, yield to contact and shall not be shown on a full drape of rein. Riders are encouraged to use adequate space given the extension of gaits required. This class should show the horse's ability to work at a forward, working pace while under control by the rider. The horse shall be balanced and appear willing and a pleasure to ride in a group situation.

ATTITUDE

The working ranch rail class measures the ability of the horse to be a pleasure to ride and should reflect the versatility, attitude, and movement of a working horse. The horse should be well-broke, relaxed, quiet, soft and cadenced at all gaits. The movement of the working ranch rail horse should simulate a horse needing to cover long distances, softly and quietly. The overall manners and responsiveness of the horse and the horse's quality of movement are the primary considerations. Maximum credit should be given to the horse that has a natural flowing stride and consistent, ground covering gaits. Transitions should be performed when requested, with smoothness and responsiveness. The ideal working ranch rail horse should have a natural head carriage at each gait. The horse should be ridden on a relatively loose rein with light contact and without requiring undue restraint while being responsive to the rider and making timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner. The horse should be soft in the bridle, yield to contact and shall not be shown on a full drape of rein. Riders are encouraged to use adequate space given the extension of gaits required. This class should show the horse's ability to work at a forward, working pace while under control by the rider. The horse shall be balanced and appear willing and a pleasure to ride in a group situation.

FAULTS TO BE SCORED ACCORDING TO SEVERITY

- Too slow (any gait)
- Excessive speed (any gait)
- Over-bridled (nose behind the vertical)
- Head carried too low such that the poll is below the withers
- Out of frame Head carried too high
- Break of gait
- Wrong lead or out of lead
- Failure to take the appropriate gait when called
- Opening mouth excessively
- Draped reins
- Use of spurs forward of the cinch Canted at the lope
- Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, buck, rear, etc.)

PERFORMANCE- RAIL

➤➤➤ SADDLE SEAT TYPE PLEASURE (TROTTING)

The saddle seat type pleasure horses will be shown at a walk, trot, and canter, and on command will reverse and repeat gaits in clockwise direction. Entries will line up on command. All pleasure horses will be asked to back in the center of the arena.

QUALITY OF MOVEMENT

It is imperative that pleasure horses give the distinct appearance of being a pleasure to ride. Judges must penalize any horse with laboring action. Pulling, head tossing, going sideways, and switching tail to be penalized. Manners and suitability as a pleasure mount are paramount. Light contact with horse's mouth must be maintained. All gaits must be performed with willingness and obvious ease, cadence, balance and smoothness. Judging criteria include manners, performance, presence, and quality.

ATTITUDE

Manners and suitability as a pleasure mount are paramount. Entries should not exhibit extreme motion, speed, or resistance of any type. Horses must stand quietly and back readily in the line-up. To be penalized: Pulling, head tossing, laboring action, extreme motion or speed, going sideways, tail switching, and interference from attendant during the line up in driving classes.

➤➤➤ GAITED PLEASURE (NON-TROTTING)

Gaited pleasure horses will be shown on the rail performing all tree gaits both directions of the arena. Gaits that are called for include: Flat walk, slow gait, fast gait. Entries will line up on command. All gaited horses may be asked to back in the center of the arena.

QUALITY OF MOVEMENT

It is imperative that gaited horses give the distinct appearance of being a pleasure to ride. Easy ground covering action is desired. Judges must penalize any horse with laboring action. Pulling, head tossing, going sideways and switching tail to be penalized.

All gaits must be performed with willingness and obvious ease, cadence, balance and smoothness.

Flat Walk: True, square and flat with a cadenced motion, Slow Gait: An easy, ground covering gait (corto, tölt, fox trot, single foot, etc). It should be smooth, cadenced, consistent, and a four beat gait. Fast Gait: A more advanced ground covering gait.

ATTITUDE

Manners and suitability as a pleasure mount are paramount. Light contact with horse's mouth must be maintained. Bumping and pumping of the reins will be penalized. Extreme speed, labored action or pacing will be penalized. Gaited Pleasure Horse should serviceably sound, and a pleasure to ride. Extreme speed, action and pacing will be penalized.

PERFORMANCE- RAIL

➤➤➤ MECHANICS OF JUDGING RAIL CLASSES

In a rail class, horses are worked each direction of the ring at the walk, jog (or trot) and lope (or canter). They are reversed and worked in the opposite direction, then are brought to the middle of the arena for backing. Primary judging emphasis is placed on the gaits, with lesser emphasis on the reverse and/or back unless a horse reverses incorrectly or fails to back. After the horses have worked one direction, a judge should have the performances categorized as above average, average or below average, and have a fairly good idea of the class placing. Work the opposite way of the arena will confirm close placings or may change the placing if a top horse the first way of the arena has a major fault(s).

JUDGING SYSTEM

When judging rail classes, it is extremely important to watch all horses as much as possible during the entire performance. Writing lengthy notes can cause a judge to miss things that happen in the class that will affect the final placing. One system that works well for inexperienced judges in a small class (as in a judging contest with four horses per class) is as follows:

Symbols: Judges can develop a score sheet with columns for each horse and categorize each horse at the walk, jog (or trot), lope (or canter) and back with symbols.

For example, excellent could be ++, good = +, average= 0, below average= - and poor = -. The horse with the most +'s is first, and the horse with the most -'s is last. This is a quick and easy system particularly for young judges.

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

WESTERN HORSEMANSHIP

This class is judged on a rider's ability to ride correctly using the aids required while performing a variety of basic maneuvers. The class includes individual pattern work and rail work. Each rider performs a predetermined pattern posted by the contest official. The pattern includes selected basic maneuvers that demonstrate the rider's horsemanship skills. Legal maneuvers are listed in association rulebooks. Rail work then follows in one or both directions of the arena. In both pattern and rail work, riders are judged on position in the saddle; the position and use of hands, feet, seat and legs; and ability to control and show the horse.

Western Horsemanship Judging Criteria:

Pattern Correctness

Penalties

Rider Position

Pattern Precision/Degree of Difficulty

CORRECT RIDER POSITION

Riders should sit in a comfortable, balanced, relaxed and flexible manner. The body position may vary some according to individual riders and saddles. Generally, the ideal rider position is depicted by drawing a straight line from the rider's ear down through the shoulder and hip with the line touching at the ankle or just behind the heel. The heels should be slightly lower than the toes and there should be a slight bend in the knees. Deviations from this are acceptable as long as the rider executes precise basic maneuvers and does not appear sloppy. Credit is not given for a rider showing a stiff, artificial position in the saddle. The rider's arm should be held in a relaxed manner with the arm holding the reins bent at the elbow, making a straight line through the wrist to the horse's mouth. The same hand should be used to hold the reins throughout the class and one finger is allowed between split reins. Reins should be held such that light contact is maintained with the horse's mouth throughout the performance. The hand holding the reins should be carried just above or in front of the saddle horn.

The horse should perform all maneuvers in the pattern willingly, briskly, and readily with minimal visible or audible cueing.

PATTERN WORK

During pattern work, riders are scored on execution of the pattern and performing a smooth, precise pattern. All maneuvers should be completed easily with little hesitation and minimal cueing from the rider. Turn-arounds should be like a correct reining spin but not necessarily with the speed shown in a reining spin. Stops should be correct and on the haunches, but a sliding stop as in a reining class is not required. Straight lines should be straight and circles should be round. Leads should be taken promptly and smoothly. Riders should show confidence and give the impression of being in complete control at all times. It should be remembered that since a horse's performance is generally a function of its rider's horsemanship skill, precision of pattern is indirectly a reflection of the rider's horsemanship.

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

SCORING SYSTEM

Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. Patterns will be divided into 6 to 10 maneuvers, as specified by the official, and each maneuver will be scored from plus 3 to minus 3 with 1/2 point increments acceptable that will be added or subtracted from 70. Maneuver scores should be determined independent of penalties, and should reflect equal consideration of both performance of the exhibitor's pattern and the horsemanship form and effectiveness of the exhibitor to result in the following scores: -3 extremely poor, -2 very poor, -1 poor, 0 average or correct, +1 good, +2 very good, +3 excellent. Exhibitors overall horsemanship form and effectiveness should also be scored from 0 to 5 with 0 to 2 average, 3 good, 4 very good, 5 excellent. Exhibitors should also be judged on the rail, and their pattern score and/or ranking may be adjusted as appropriate.

Penalties

Maneuver evaluations and penalty applications are to be determined independently. The following penalties will be applied for each occurrence and will be deducted from the final score:

Three (3) points

- Break of gait at the walk or jog up to 2 strides
- Over or under turn from 1/8 to 1/4 turn
- Tick or hit of cone

Five (5) points

- Not performing the specific gait or not stopping within 10 feet (3 meters) of designated location
- Incorrect lead or break of gait at the lope (except when correcting an incorrect lead)
- Break of gait at walk or jog for more than 2 strides
- Loss of stirrup
- Bottom of boot not touching pad of stirrup at all gaits including backup
- Head carried too low and/or clearly behind the vertical while the horse is in motion, showing the appearance of intimidation
- Obviously looking down to check leads

Ten (10) points

- Loss of rein
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise while on pattern or during rail work
- Holding saddle with either hand
- Cueing with the end of the romal
- Blatant disobedience including kicking, pawing, bucking, and rearing
- Spurring in front of the cinch

Disqualifications (should not be placed above other horses) including:

- Abuse of horse or schooling
- Fall by horse or exhibitor
- Illegal equipment or illegal use of hands on reins
- Off pattern, including: knocking over or wrong side of cone or marker; never performing designated gait or lead; over or under turning more than 1/4 turn

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

RAIL WORK

Following the pattern work, all riders are judged on the rail at all three gaits in one or both directions. Rail work provides an opportunity for a judge to more closely evaluate the riders' basic body positions. During the rail work, the performance of all riders is considered; however, a judge should use rail work to evaluate riders that are tied or have very close pattern scores to arrive at a final class placing. Riders with precise, correct patterns and functionally correct horsemanship skills place above excellent riders with poor patterns, or poor riders with excellent patterns. Poor pattern and poor horsemanship skill riders should place at the bottom of class.

➤➤➤ HUNT SEAT EQUITATION

This class is judged on a rider's ability to ride correctly using the aids required while performing a variety of basic maneuvers. The class includes individual pattern work and rail work. Each rider performs a predetermined pattern posted by the contest official. The pattern includes selected basic maneuvers that demonstrate the rider's equitation skills. Legal maneuvers are listed in association rulebooks. Rail work then follows in one or both directions of the arena. In both pattern and rail work, riders are judged on position in the saddle; the position and use of hands, feet, seat and legs; and ability to control and show the horse.

Hunt Seat Equitation Judging Criteria:

Pattern Correctness
 Penalties
 Rider Position
 Pattern Precision/Degree of Difficulty

PATTERN WORK

During pattern work, riders are scored on execution of the pattern and performing a smooth, precise pattern. All maneuvers should be completed easily with little hesitation and minimal cueing from the rider. Pivots should be correct and stops should be correct and on the haunches. Straight lines should be straight and circles should be round. Leads should be taken promptly and smoothly. Riders should show confidence and give the impression of being in complete control at all times. It should be remembered that since a horse's performance is generally a function of its rider's equitation skill, precision of pattern is indirectly a reflection of the rider's equitation.

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

SCORING SYSTEM

Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. Patterns will be divided into 6 to 10 maneuvers, as specified by the judge, and each maneuver will be scored from plus 3 to minus 3 with 1/2 point increments acceptable that will be added or subtracted from 70. Maneuver scores should be determined independent of penalties, and should reflect equal consideration of both performance of the exhibitor's pattern and the horsemanship form and effectiveness of the exhibitor to result in the following scores: -3 extremely poor, -2 very poor, -1 poor, 0 average or correct, +1 good, +2 very good, +3 excellent. Exhibitors overall horsemanship form and effectiveness should also be scored from 0 to 5 with 0 to 2 average, 3 good, 4 very good, 5 excellent. Exhibitors should also be judged on the rail, and their pattern score and/or ranking may be adjusted as appropriate.

Penalties

Maneuver evaluations and penalty applications are to be determined independently. The following penalties will be applied for each occurrence and will be deducted from the final score:

Three (3) points

- Break of gait at the walk or trot up to 2 strides
- Over or under turn from 1/8 to 1/4 turn 270
- Tick or hit of cone
- Missing a diagonal up to 2 strides in the pattern or on the rail

Five (5) points

- Not performing the specific gait or not stopping within 10 feet (3 meters) of designated location
- Incorrect lead or break of gait at the canter (except when correcting an incorrect lead)
- Complete loss of contact between rider's hand and the horse's mouth
- Break of gait at walk or trot for more than 2 strides
- Loss of iron
- Head carried too low and/or clearly behind the vertical while the horse is in motion, showing the appearance of intimidation
- Obviously looking down to check leads or diagonals
- Missing a diagonal for more than 2 strides in the pattern or on the rail

Ten (10) points

- Loss of rein
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise while on pattern or during rail work
- Holding saddle with either hand
- Spurring or use of the crop in front of girth
- Blatant disobedience including kicking, pawing, bucking, and rearing

Disqualifications (should not be placed above other horses)

- Willful abuse of horse or schooling
- Fall by horse or exhibitor
- Illegal use of hands on reins
- Off pattern, including: knocking over or wrong side of cone or marker; never performing designated gait, lead, or diagonal; over or under turning more than 1/4 turn

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

CORRECT RIDER POSITION

The rider's hands should be over and in front of the horse's withers, knuckles thirty degrees inside the vertical, hands slightly apart and making a straight line from the horse's mouth to the rider's elbow. (Method of hold the reins is optional, and bight of reins may fall on either side. However, all reins must be picked up at the same time.) The eyes should be up and the shoulders back. Toes should be at an angle best suited to the rider's conformation; heels down, calf of leg in contact with the horse. Iron should be on the ball of the foot and must not be tied to the girth.

Positions and Correct Gaits

Walk: Should be a 4-beat gait with the rider in a vertical position with a following hand.

Posting Trot: Figure 8 at trot, demonstrating change of diagonals. At left diagonal, rider should be sitting the saddle when left front leg is on the ground; at right diagonal rider should be sitting the saddle when right front leg is on the ground; when circling clockwise at a trot, rider should be on left diagonal; when circling counter-clockwise, rider should be on right diagonal. The rider should close his/her hip angle to allow his/her torso to follow the horizontal motion of the horse. The upper body should be inclined about 20 degrees in front of the vertical. ***Rise and fall with the leg on the wall***

Sitting Trot and Canter: At the sitting trot the upper body is only slightly in front of the vertical. At the canter the body should be positioned slightly more in front of the vertical. As the stride is shortened, the body should be in a slightly more erect position.

Two Point Position: The pelvis should be forward, but relaxed, lifting the rider's weight off the horse's back and transferring the weight through the rider's legs. In this position the two points of contact between horse and rider are the rider's legs. Hands should be forward, up the neck, not resting on the neck.

Hand Gallop: A three-beat, lengthened canter ridden in two-point position. The legs are on the horse's sides while the seat is held out of the saddle. When at the hand gallop, the rider's angulation will vary somewhat as the horse's stride is shortened and lengthened. A good standard at a normal hand gallop should be about 30 degrees in front of the vertical.

RAIL WORK

Following the pattern work, all riders are judged on the rail at all three gaits in one or both directions. Rail work provides an opportunity for a judge to more closely evaluate the riders' basic body positions. During the rail work, the performance of all riders is considered; however, a judge should use rail work to evaluate riders that are tied or have very close pattern scores to arrive at a final class placing. Riders with precise, correct patterns and functionally correct horsemanship skills place above excellent riders with poor patterns, or poor riders with excellent patterns. Poor pattern and poor horsemanship skill riders should place at the bottom of class.

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

➤➤➤ GAITED EQUITATION

This class is judged on a rider's ability to ride correctly using the aids required while performing a variety of basic maneuvers. The class includes individual pattern work and rail work. Each rider performs a predetermined pattern posted by a show judge or contest official. The pattern includes selected basic maneuvers that demonstrate the rider's equitation skills. Legal maneuvers are listed in association rulebooks. Rail work then follows in one or both directions of the arena. In both pattern and rail work, riders are judged on position in the saddle; the position and use of hands, feet, seat and legs; and ability to control and show the horse.

CORRECT RIDER POSITION

Equitation Seat should in no way be exaggerated but be thoroughly efficient and most comfortable for riding the type of horse called for at any gait and for any length of time. Riders should convey the impression of effective and easy control. To show a horse well, they should show themselves to the best advantage. A complete picture of the whole is of major importance. Hands should be held in an easy position, neither perpendicular nor horizontal to the saddle and should show sympathy, adaptability and control. The height the hands are held above the horse's withers is a matter of how and where the horse carries its head. The method of holding the reins is optional however both hands must be used and all reins must be picked up at one time. Bight of rein shall be on the off (right) side. According to tradition, the "on side" is the side on which you mount and therefore, the "off side" is the opposite side. Riders shall be penalized for switching or carrying at any time the bight of the rein to the ("on" side) left side.

To obtain proper position, rider should place themselves comfortably in the saddle and find their center of gravity by sitting with a slight bend at the knees but without use of irons. While in this position adjust leathers to fit. The rider should not be sliding off the back of the saddle nor should there be excessive space in the seat behind the rider's back. Irons should be placed under ball of foot (not toe nor "home") with even pressure on entire width of sole and center of iron. Foot position should be natural (neither extremely in nor out) with heels down.

Positions at Gaits

Walk: slight motion in saddle

Trot: slight elevation in saddle when posting; hips under body not mechanical up-and-down nor swinging forward and backward

Canter: close seat, going with horse, not rocking

Slow Gait: steady in saddle, no slap nor twist; legs straight down, intermittent calf pressure permissible; hands slightly raised, flexible contact, no sawing

Rack: seat smooth in saddle; legs down and slightly back, not thrust forward; hands low in motion with gait, not sawing but placement optional to individual rider and horse

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

PATTERN & RAIL WORK

Horses and riders execute the pattern one at a time. Class placing should be on a 50-50 analysis of the rail work and the patterns. The fall of horse or rider does not necessarily cause elimination, but is penalized at the judge's discretion. After individual patterns, all horses are worked both ways of the ring at any gait requested. Incorrect diagonals and leads shall be penalized. If reverse is called, riders can execute by turning either towards or away from the rail.

SCORING SYSTEM

Each maneuver of the pattern should be given a ranking from excellent to poor. Symbols for maneuvers would be designated by the following symbols:

Excellent maneuver ++

Good +

Average 0

Below average -

Poor --

Rail work gaits would be evaluated utilizing the same scoring system. The horse with the most +'s is first, and the horse with the most -'s is last.

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

WESTERN RIDING

The western riding class tests a horse's ability to execute flying lead changes. Within a class, each horse negotiates the same pattern and is scored on:

- Functional correctness (legal pattern with lead changes in place)
- Quality of movement (cadence and speed, head carriage and head set, body frame, precision of changes)
- Attitude (response to rider)

The horse is judged on quality of gaits, lead changes at the lope, response to the rider, manners and disposition. The horse should perform with reasonable speed, and be sensible, well mannered, free and easy moving. Credit shall be given for and emphasis placed on smoothness, even cadence of gaits (i.e., starting and finishing pattern with the same cadence), and the horse's ability to change leads precisely, easily and simultaneously both hind and front at the center point between markers. In order to have balance, with quality lead changes, the horse's head and neck should be in a relaxed, natural position, with his poll level with or slightly above the level of the withers. He should not carry his head behind the vertical, giving the appearance of intimidation, or be excessively nosed out, giving a resistant appearance. The horse should have a relaxed head carriage showing response to the rider's hands, with a moderate flexion at the poll. Horses may be ridden with light contact or on a reasonably loose rein. The horse should cross the log both at the jog and the lope without breaking gait or radically changing stride.

PATTERN WORK

The horse should negotiate the pattern in a quiet, relaxed manner, neither diving into the leads nor rushing past the markers. Credit is given for smooth, precise, complete changes (both front and rear leads changed simultaneously) executed at the center points between the markers. Gaits within the pattern should be performed the same as for the western pleasure horse. There should be no change of speed nor exaggerated stride length when a horse executes the lead change or crosses the log. The horse should show no obvious signs of duress or anticipation of cues. Use of the tail to acknowledge cues is acceptable, however, excessive wringing or swishing of the tail detracts from the run and should be faulted. The stop should be square and on the haunches, but a sliding stop is not necessary. The horse should back straight and with dispatch.

SCORING

Exhibitors will be scored on a basis of 0-100 with 70 denoting an average performance. Points will be added or subtracted from the maneuvers on the following bases, ranging from plus 1 1/2 to minus 1 1/2:

- 1 1/2 extremely poor
- 1 very poor
- 1/2 poor
- 0 average
- +1/2 good
- +1 very good
- +1 1/2 excellent

Maneuver scores are to be determined independently of penalty points.

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

WESTERN RIDING

PENALTIES

Maneuver evaluations and penalty applications are to be determined independently. The following penalties will be applied to each occurrence and be deducted from the final score:

One-half (1/2) point

- Tick or light touch of log

One (1) point

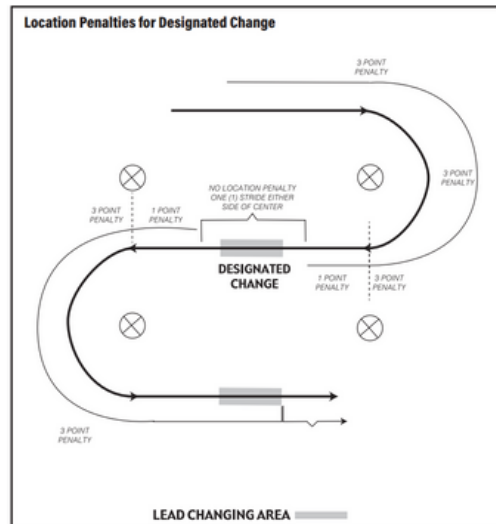
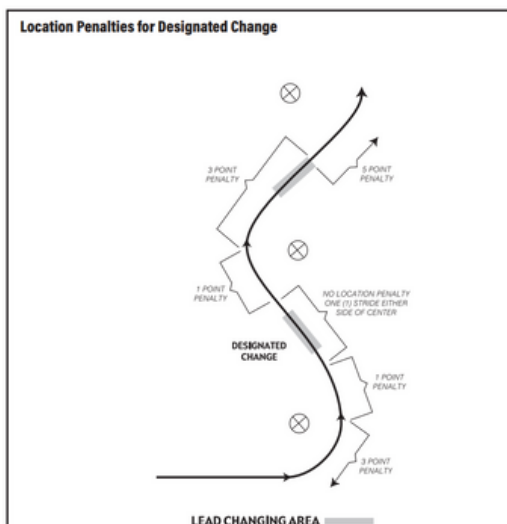
- Hitting or rolling log
- Out of lead more than one stride either side of the center point and between the markers
- Splitting the log (log between the two front or two hind feet) at the lope
- Break of gait at the walk or jog up to two strides
- Non-simultaneous lead change (including front to hind, hind to front, front or hind legs coming together during the change)

Three (3) points

- Not performing the specific gait (jog or lope) or not stopping when called for in the pattern, within 10 feet (3 meters) of the designated area
- Simple change of leads
- Out of lead at or before the marker prior to the designated change area or out of lead at or after the marker after the designated change area
- Additional lead changes anywhere in pattern (except when correcting an extra change or incorrect lead)
- In patterns calling for it, failure to start the lope within 30 feet (9 meters) after crossing the log at the jog
- Break of gait at walk or jog for more than two strides
- Break of gait at the lope

Five (5) points

- Out of lead beyond the next designated change area (note: failures to change, including cross-cantering. Two consecutive failures to change would result in two five point penalties).
- Blatant disobedience including kicking out, biting, bucking and rearing



PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

➤➤➤ REINING

The reining class tests a horse's willingness to be guided and controlled in every movement by the rider. Each horse performs a designated pattern. Reining runs are scored on functional correctness (completing the pattern as written, performing maneuvers in specified order), quality of movement (smoothness, precision and power shown while executing maneuvers) and altitude. The ideal reining horse should be easily guided and controlled with no resistance shown toward the rider. The horse should demonstrate controlled speed with willingness to accelerate, then come back slow, quiet and soft as the rider requests. The reining horse should perform with smoothness, finesse and a willing, pleasant attitude.

Judging Criteria

Pattern Correctness

Penalties

Pattern Precision

Degree of Difficulty

PATTERN WORK

All reining patterns contain some combination of eight individual maneuvers. The maneuvers are circles, rundowns, flying lead changes, stops, spins, rollbacks, backing and hesitation.

- Circles should be round, have a common center and be of equal sizes for both right and left circles as designated. An obvious change of circle speed and size should be shown when designated in certain patterns.
- Rundowns should be straight and made at the speed of a large fast circle.
- Lead changes should be smooth and completed with both front and hind legs changing together. Lead changes should not be anticipated or refused. The horse should not speed up prior to, during or after the lead change(s).
- Stops should show both power and finesse. In the stop, the hindquarters should drop and the hind feet stay in the ground throughout the entire straight sliding stop. The horse's front end should remain mobile during the stop. In the stop, a horse should stay soft in the bridle, flex at the poll and not gap the mouth or throw the head.
- Spins should be done with speed and dispatch. The horse should plant the inside hind foot and spin around that foot. The outside front leg should cross over in front of the inside front leg. Both front legs should reach long, allowing the horse to spin fast while staying low to the ground instead of hopping around with the front end.
- Rollback has the horse should engage the hindquarters as if stopping. Just prior to the end of the stop, with hindquarters still in the ground, the horse should turn 180 degrees over the hocks. This true rollback is different from a horse stopping, hesitating, doing half a spin and then leaving at a canter. In the true rollback, a horse should use the hindquarter power to lift and turn the front end around. The horse should remain relatively level and should not elevate excessively in front.
- Backing the horse should back straight, quickly and with enough distance to demonstrate total rider control (generally over slide tracts).

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

➤➤➤ REINING

SCORING

Each contestant will perform a given pattern individually. Scoring for each reining run is on a basis of 0 to infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. There are seven or eight maneuvers per run with each maneuver receiving a maneuver score of:

- 1 ½ Extremely poor performance, completely incorrect maneuver
- 1 Very poor performance, somewhat incorrect
- ½ Poor performance, no degree of difficulty
- 0 Correct with no degree of difficulty
- + ½ Correct, some degree of difficulty
- +1 Very good, correct
- +1 ½ Excellent

The horse will also receive a penalty score along with each maneuver score to be added up separately from the maneuver score. Then the maneuver score will be added or subtracted from 70 (average score), and then the penalties will be subtracted from that new total.

In evaluating each maneuver, a judge should consider the horse's performance based on the following hierarchy of concerns:

On Pattern: The judge must ensure that the maneuver being performed by horse and rider is the correct maneuver as dictated by the pattern.

Correctness: Having ascertained that the horse and rider are performing the maneuver required by the pattern, the judge must then ascertain whether the maneuver is being executed correctly. In this regard, the judge must evaluate the performance of the maneuver against the requirements 68 of the maneuver descriptions. In each group of maneuvers, the judge must ascertain that the horse has been dictated to completely and the basic elements of the maneuver have been fulfilled regardless of the degree of difficulty. In the instance where horse and rider have failed to correctly perform the maneuver, the judge will deduct for a substandard performance. This deduction ranges from - ½ to - 1 ½ for the maneuver

PENALTY POINTS

Penalty points can be assessed at every maneuver, with multiple penalties being possible. Oppositely, a horse may not incur any penalties, in which case the penalty box would remain blank on the score sheet.

One-Half (1/2) point

- Under or overspinning up to 1/8 of a turn
- Jogging out of the rollback or starting a circle at a jog up to 2 strides
- Failure to remain a minimum of 20 feet from the side of the arena when approaching a stop and/or rollback
- Failure to remain a minimum of 10 feet from either side of the center of the arena

One (1) point

- Under or overspinning over 1/8 but under 1/4 of a turn
- Out of lead per quarter circle

Two (2) point

- Break of gait
- Freeze up in spins or rollbacks
- On walk-in patterns, loping prior to reaching the center of the arena and/or failure to stop or walk before executing a lope departure
- On run-in patterns, failure to be in a lope prior to the first marker or break of gait prior to the first marker
- If a horse does not completely pass the specified marker before initiating a stop position.

Five (5) point

- Spurring in front of cinch
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise
- Holding saddle with either hand
- Blatant disobediences including kicking, biting, bucking, rearing and striking
- Horse dropping to its knees or hocks

Penalty score of zero (0)

- Use of more than index or first finger between reins
- Use of two hands (exception in junior, snaffle bit, or hackamore classes designated for two hands) or changing hands
- Use of romal other than as outlined in AQHA rulebook
- Failure to complete pattern as written
- Performing the maneuvers other than in specified order or exceeding greater than one quarter of the circle out of order
- The inclusion of maneuvers not specified, including, but not limited to: Backing more than two (2) strides; Turning more than ninety (90) degrees
- On run in patterns, once beginning a lope, a complete stop prior to reaching the first marker. (Exception: a complete stop in the 1st quarter (1/4) of a circle after a lope departure is not to be considered an inclusion of maneuver; a two (2) point break of gait penalty will apply.)
- Equipment failure that delays completion of pattern; including dropping a rein that contacts the ground while horse is in motion
- Balking or refusal of command where performance is delayed
- Running away or failing to guide where it becomes impossible to discern whether the entry is on pattern
- Jogging in excess of one-half circle or one-half the length of the arena
- Overspins of more than 1/4 turn
- Fall to the ground by horse or rider
- When going to and coming out of a rollback in a pattern requiring a run-around, a rollback that crosses the center line

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

Having ascertained that the horse and rider are on pattern and have performed the maneuver group correctly, a judge must evaluate the degree of difficulty in completing the maneuver. In the instance where the horse has correctly performed the maneuver and has exhibited some degree of difficulty on a scale of + ½ to + 1 ½. Credit for degree of difficulty should be given for using smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness, authority and controlled speed while completing a correct maneuver.

FAULTS

A horse or rider can incur the following faults, however no penalty point is associated with these faults. They are to be judged accordingly and then assessed when assigning a maneuver score.

- Opening mouth excessively
- Over bridled or intimidated
- Nosing out
- Lack of smooth, straight stops, bouncing or sideways stops
- Anticipating signals
- Stumbling
- Backing sideways
- Losing a stirrup
- Unnecessary aid
- Failure to run circles within markers

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

➤➤➤ RANCH RIDING

The ideal ranch rider: As a judge, look for a horse that has an authentic, useful, ranch horse appearance. He will seem very attentive and make each maneuver look easy. DO NOT criticize a horse for carrying his head higher in this class. If you were in a pasture, you would want your horse to be looking up and ahead. The horse should be well-trained, relaxed, quiet, soft and cadenced at all gaits. The ideal ranch horse will travel with forward movement and demonstrate an obvious lengthening of stride at extended gaits. The horse can be ridden with light contact or on a relatively loose rein without requiring undue restraint, but not shown on a full drape of reins. The overall manners and responsiveness of the ranch riding horse to make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner, as well as the quality of the movement are of primary considerations. The ideal ranch riding horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail in each maneuver.

Ranch Riding Judging Criteria

Pattern Correctness
 Penalties
 Brokenness
 Pattern Precision/Degree of Difficulty

PATTERN SCORING

The most important thing the horse and rider will do in this class is... complete the pattern correctly! If the horse adds, omits or performs an obstacle in an incorrect way, an OFF PATTERN should be applied. Note: Continue scoring the run if an off pattern is incurred. However, off pattern runs must be placed below all others who completed the pattern correctly.

Each horse will work individually. Horses will be scored on the basis of 0 to 100, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each maneuver will receive a score that should be added or subtracted from 70 and is subject to a penalty that should be subtracted.

Each maneuver will be scored on the following basis, ranging from plus 1 1/2 to minus 1 1/2.:

-1 ½ extremely poor
 -1 very poor
 -1/2 poor
 0 correct
 +1/2 good
 +1 very good
 +1 1/2 excellent

Maneuver scores are to be determined and assessed independently of penalty points.

Natural ranch horse appearance will also be evaluated ranging from plus 1 ½ to minus 1 ½

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

PENALTIES

The next most important thing to assess in this class are the penalties the horse and rider might incur throughout the pattern.

One (1) point

- Too slow (per gait)
- Over-bridled (per maneuver)
- Out of frame (per maneuver)
- Break of gait at walk or trot for 2 strides or less

Three (3) point

- Break of gait at walk or trot for more than 2 strides
- Break of gait at lope, except when correcting an incorrect lead
- Wrong lead or out of lead
- Draped reins (per maneuver)
- Out of lead or cross-cantering more than two strides when changing leads
- Trotting more than three strides when making a simple lead change
- Severe disturbance of any obstacle

Five (5) point

- Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, buck, rear, etc.) for each refusal

Off Pattern (OP): Placed below horses performing all maneuvers

- Eliminates or adds maneuver
- Incomplete maneuver
- Repeated blatant disobedience
- Use of two hands (except junior shown in a snaffle bit/hackamore) more than one finger between split reins or any fingers between romal reins (except in the two rein)

Zero (0) Score

- Abuse
- Illegal equipment includign hoof black, braided or banded manes, or tail extensions
- Lameness
- Leaving working area before pattern is complete
- Disrespect or misconduct
- Fall of horse/rider

BROKENESS

Horses must appear broke and responsive to their riders in order for you to consider giving them credit in the maneuver boxes. If brokenness is violated, consider taking away credit in the maneuver boxes.

PATTERN PRECISION/DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

Horses who more precisely and quickly complete the obstacles should be given credit in the maneuver score box. These horses will make it look easy!

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

»»» HUNTER HACK

The purpose of hunter hack is to give horses and opportunity to show their expertise over low fences and on the flat. The hunter hack horse should move in the same style as a working hunter. The class will be judged on style over fences, even hunting pace, flat work, manners and way of going. The poll should be level with, or slightly above the withers, to allow proper impulsion behind. The head should not be carried behind the vertical, giving the appearance of intimidation, or be excessively nosed out, giving a resistant appearance

CLASS PROCEDURE

Individual horses are first required to jump two fences, two feet three inches (69 cm) to three feet (91 cm). However, if the jumps are set on a line, they are recommended to be in increments of 12 feet (3.5 meters) but adjusted to no less than two strides. A ground line is recommended for each jump. Riders may be asked to hand gallop, pull up or back and stand quietly following the last fence.

Horses will then be brought in for rail work as a group. Horses are to be shown at a walk, trot and canter both ways of the ring with light contact. The horse must be shown with active, working, and energetic ground covering gates at the walk, trot, and canter. The horse shall exhibit a natural self carriage, correct uphill balance, and the fluid forward movement that is desirable for working hunter.

Placing for the class shall be determined by allowing a minimum of 70 percent for individual fence work and a maximum of 30 percent for work on the flat

FAULTS

Faults over fences will be scored as in the working hunter class. Horses eliminated in the over-fence portion of the class shall be disqualified.

Faults to be scored accordingly, but not necessarily cause disqualification during the rail work, include:

- Being on wrong lead and/or wrong diagonal at the trot
- Excessive speed (any gait)
- Excessive slowness (any gait)
- Breaking gait
- Failure to take gait when called
- Head carried too low or too high
- Nosing out or flexing behind the vertical
- Opening mouth excessively
- Stumbling

Faults which will be cause for disqualification

- Head carried too low and/or clearly behind the vertical excessively and consistently while the horse is in motion, or otherwise showing the appearance of intimidation.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Disqualifications are serious errors committed by a horse that result in elimination. A horse is disqualified for an incomplete pattern, incorrect order of maneuvers, knocking over markers, passing on the wrong side of the marker(s) or missing the log.

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

»»» TRAIL

This class will be judged on the performance of the horse over obstacles, with emphasis on manners, response to the rider and quality of movement. Credit will be given to horses negotiating the obstacles with style and some degree of speed, positive expression, and minimal visible or audible cueing, providing correctness is not sacrificed. Horses should receive credit for showing attentiveness to the obstacles and the capability of picking their own way through the course when obstacles warrant it, and willingly responding to the rider's cues on more difficult obstacles. Horses shall be penalized for any unnecessary delay while approaching or negotiating the obstacles. Horses with artificial appearance over obstacles should be penalized. The course must require each horse to show the three gaits (walk, jog, lope) somewhere between obstacles as a part of its work, and quality of movement and cadence should be considered as part of the maneuver score. While on the line of travel between obstacles, the horse shall be balanced, carrying his head and neck in a relaxed, natural position, with the poll level with or slightly above the withers. The head should not be carried behind the vertical, giving the appearance of intimidation, or be excessively nosed out, giving a resistant appearance.

The ideal trail horse is one who approaches and completes each obstacle without hesitation. Will be attentive to each task and willing to rider's cues. Will seem graceful and coordinated.

Trail Judging Criteria

Pattern Correctness

Penalties

Brokeness

Pattern Precision/Degree of Difficulty

PATTERN CORRECTNESS

The most important thing the horse and rider will do in this class is to complete the pattern correctly. If the horse adds, omits or performs an obstacle in an incorrect way, a penalty score of ZERO should be applied.

SCORING

Scoring will be on the basis of 0-infinity, with 70 denoting an average performance. Each obstacle will receive an obstacle score that should be added or subtracted from 70 and is subject to a penalty that should be subtracted.

Each obstacle will be scored on the following basis, ranging from plus 1 1/2 to minus 1 1/2:

-1 1/2 extremely poor

-1 very poor

-1/2 poor

0 correct

+1/2 good

+1 very good

+1 1/2 excellent.

Obstacle scores are to be determined and assessed independently of penalty points.

The next most important thing to assess in this class are the penalties the horse and rider might incur throughout the pattern.

One-half (1/2) point

- Each tick or contact of a log, pole, cone, plant, or any component of an obstacle

One (1) point

- Each hit, bite, or stepping on a log, cone, plant or any component of the obstacle
- Incorrect or break of gait at walk or jog for two strides or less
- Both front or hind feet in a single-strided slot or space at a walk or jog skipping over or failing to step into required space
- Split pole in lope-over
- Incorrect number of strides, if specified

Three (3) points

- Incorrect or break of gait at walk or jog for more than two strides
- Out of lead or break of gait at lope (except when correcting an incorrect lead)
- Knocking down an elevated pole, cone, barrel, plant, obstacle, or severely disturbing an obstacle
- Falling or jumping off or out of a bridge or a water box with one foot once the horse has got onto or into that obstacle
- Stepping outside of the confines of an obstacle with designated boundaries (i.e. back through, 360 degree box, side pass) with one foot once the horse has entered the obstacle.
- Missing or evading a pole that is a part of a series of an obstacle with one foot

Five (5) points

- Dropping slicker or object required to be carried on course
- First or second cumulative refusal, balk, or evading an obstacle by shying or backing
- Letting go of gate or dropping rope gate
- Use of either hand to instill fear or praise
- Falling or jumping off or out of a bridge or a water box with more than one foot once the horse has got onto or into that obstacle
- Stepping outside of the confines of an obstacle with designated boundaries (i.e. back through, 360 degree box, side pass) with more than one foot once the horse has entered the obstacle.
- Missing or evading a pole that is a part of a series of an obstacle with more than one foot
- Blatant disobedience (including kicking out, bucking, rearing, striking)
- Holding saddle with either hand

Disqualified – 0 Score

- Use of two hands (except in snaffle bit or hackamore classes designated for two hands) or changing hands on reins; except for junior horses shown with hackamore or snaffle bit, only one hand may be used on the reins, except that it is permissible to change hands to work an obstacle, or to straighten reins when stopped.
- Use of romal other than as intended
- Performing the obstacle incorrectly or other than in specified order
- No attempt to perform an obstacle
- Equipment failure that delays completion of pattern
- Excessively or repeatedly touching the horse on the neck to lower the head
- Entering or exiting an obstacle from the incorrect side or direction
- Working obstacle the incorrect direction; including overturns of more than 1/4 turn
- Riding outside designated boundary marker of the arena or course area
- Third cumulative refusal, balk, or evading an obstacle by shying or backing
- Failure to ever demonstrate correct lead and/or gait as designated
- Failure to follow the correct line of travel between obstacles
- Excessive schooling, pulling, turning, stepping or backing anywhere on course
- Failure to open and shut gate or failure to complete gate

PERFORMANCE- PATTERN

BROKENESS

Horses must appear broke and responsive to their riders in order for you to consider giving them credit in the maneuver boxes. If brokenness is violated, consider taking away credit in the maneuver boxes.

PATTERN PRECISION/DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

Horses who more precisely and quickly complete the obstacles should be given credit in the maneuver score box. These horses will make it look easy!

ORAL REASONS

»»» PHILOSOPHY FOR GIVING REASONS

Primary emphasis in horse judging programs is placed on students learning to objectively evaluate horses. However, equal importance should be placed on learning to defend judgments rendered in the process of placing a class. Both placing a class and then defending that placing teaches judges to be totally objective, honest and fair in the evaluation process. When oral reasons are presented, youth judges are encouraged to render defensible and objective judgments based on facts, not personal opinions. Other purposes for youth giving oral reasons include developing organizational and memory skills, learning to speak clearly and improving self confidence. To prepare and present a good set of reasons, judges must know the criteria utilized by officials scoring oral reasons.

»»» SCORING CRITERIA

The following criteria is taken from the Oral Reasons Scoring Guidelines developed by the National Horse Judging Team Coaches Association.

ACCURACY

Truth is the primary consideration in scoring reasons. Credit is given for accurate statements whether the horses are placed correctly or not. Omission of something important to the placing is a fault in the reasons, however, inaccurate or untrue statements are considered greater faults.

ORGANIZATION

While styles may vary between individual and coaching methods, all reasons should be well organized and systematic. The basic approach is the comparison of the animals in the class in three pairs- the top pair, the middle pair and the bottom pair. In addition, there should be an opening statement or introduction and a closing statement included in a complete set of reasons. Generally, each pair should include reasons for placing one horse over the other. Then an explanation should be given on why the bottom horse in the pair was superior to the top horse in that pair. Criticism in a descriptive manner is acceptable of the last place horse as long as the bottom pair was not a close placing.



ORAL REASONS

RELEVANCY

Reasons should be composed of comparison points that were significant in the placing of the pair. Irrelevant or unimportant reasons for the placing are discouraged, especially when the relevant reasons are omitted. Reason officials are alert for the so-called "canned" reasons that sound good but do not fit the particular pair or class.

TERMINOLOGY

Some emphasis should be placed on use of terms commonly used to discuss horses or performances. However, slang terms (goose rump, apple butted, calf knees, green broke, etc.) should be avoided. Terms should be used in a comparative manner such that reasons explain why one horse is superior to another. Terms should not merely describe what one horse looks like. Most terms can be used comparatively by placing an "er" ending after the word (wider, longer, slower, etc.) or by precluding the word by "more" (more sloping, more refined, more collected, etc.). Terms such as "good" or "better" should be avoided as they are vague and leave some question as to exactly what is meant.

PRESENTATION

Reasons should be presented in a relaxed, conversational manner that reflects poise and confidence. Neither loud and boisterous or shy and timid presentations will receive the highest scores. The presentation should not contain lengthy pauses and must be delivered within two minutes. Oral reasons should be grammatically correct.

»»» SUGGESTIONS FOR PRESENTING EXCELLENT ORAL REASONS

Developing competency in presenting oral reasons requires a person to become skilled in the following areas.

1. A knowledge of the ideal standard for the class.
2. A consistent observation system that leads to an accurate placing.
3. A notetaking system (organized, systematic, shorthand abbreviations) to improve recall of relevant points
4. A reason writing system (organization and terminology) to get the relevant points in a systematic order.
5. A presentation (public speaking) style that reflects knowledge, poise and confidence.

Knowledge of the ideal for conformation and performance classes is covered elsewhere within these sections of the manual. Observation systems are covered under Mechanics of Evaluating Horses at Halter and Mechanics of Evaluating Rail Classes. Below are some specific suggestions on notetaking systems, reason writing systems and presentation.

ORAL REASONS

➤➤➤ NOTE TAKING SYSTEMS

The foundation for a good set of reasons is the mental picture of the class provided by a good set of notes. Notetaking systems vary among individuals, however, there are common points seen in all good systems as follows:


1. Record class number and class name.
2. Record one memory aid or distinguishing characteristic of the horses and/or riders to help you remember each entrant in the class (i.e. color, marking, attire, etc.)
3. Record specific relevant evaluation points related to balance, muscling, structure, quality and travel in halter classes or functional correctness, quality of movement and attitude in performance classes.
4. Use abbreviation or shorthand system that can easily and accurately be interpreted after the class has been judged.
5. Record the final placing.

Time spent writing is time taken away from class analysis. A brief notetaking system should be developed that requires less writing and more memory.

NOTETAKING SYSTEM EXAMPLES

Limited notetaking- One system is to evaluate the entire class with limited notetaking, place the class and turn in your card. Then with the class fresh on your mind, complete your notes including all relevant points on all horses. Organized reasons can be prepared later when time permits.

Abbreviations or illustrations- Another good system is to develop a series of abbreviations or illustrations (partial slick figures) that describe the relevant points regarding each horse in the class. These notes can be recorded quickly and will help judges remember the entire class while arriving at a final placing.

Class: _____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____		Introduction: _____ Placing: _____ <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>												

ORAL REASONS

Class: <u>Stock Type Geldings</u>		Placing: <u>1-2-3-4</u>		
1	ID Notes & Individual Notes	Introduction:		
		Top Pair	Grant	Fault
2	ID Notes & Individual Notes	1 / 2	2 / 1	2
		Middle Pair	Grant	Fault
3	ID Notes & Individual Notes	2 / 3	3 / 2	3
		Bottom Pair	Grant	Fault
4	ID Notes & Individual Notes	3 / 4	4 / 3	4

ORAL REASONS

»» ORGANIZATION OF REASONS

Reasons are divided into three parts (introduction or opening statement, pair analysis and closing statement). Many judges use a reason organization form to assist them with organizing their thoughts.

INTRODUCTION

The introduction, or opening statement, is of major importance because it makes the first impression on the reasons official. Introductions are of two types, basic and class analysis. The basic opening statement will include only the class name and placing. Class analysis opening statements (only used by experienced judges) include broad, general statements to describe the class. Class analysis will make an excellent impression on the reasons judge, if the class analysis is accurate. Class analysis opening statements should only be made when the judge is very sure that analysis is accurate.

Basic opening statement: "Sir (or ma'am), I placed this class of Aged Paint mares 1-3-4-2." Class analysis statement: "Sir (or ma'am), I placed this class of Aged Paint mares 1-3-4-2, finding a definite top quality mare in 1 who showed the highest combination of femineity, balance and structural correctness of any mare in the class."

PAIR ANALYSIS

The three pair paragraphs (top, middle and bottom) within the body of a set of reasons are all organized in the same manner. Each paragraph is composed of a pair placing and a series of sentences which compare and contrast the two horses in that pair. Pair placing examples are:

- "In the top pair, I placed 1 over 3 because 1 was ..."
- "In regard to the top pair, I placed 1 over 3 because ..."
- "In the top pair, I easily placed 1 over 3 because ..."

After zeroing in on the pair placing, each pair paragraph will be made up of several sentences analyzing that pair. Transition words between the sentences ("furthermore," "in addition," "also") will make the reasons sound more conversational, rather than like a list of analytical points.

After giving the arguments for placing 1 over 3, any grants (points where 3 is superior to 1) should be given. In close placings, there will be almost as many points where 3 was superior to 1 as where 1 was superior to 3. By giving grants, reasons presenters let reasons official know that they saw the differences between the horses and gave due credit to 3 where 3 was superior to 1 but placed more emphasis on those points where 1 was superior to 3. With the conclusion of the grant sentences, the pair analysis is completed.

The top three placing horses are usually not criticized as this lends a negative tone to the reasons. Instead, turn negative points about the horses into a grant for the other horse in the pair. For example: Instead of faulting 3 for having a short neck, say that 1 had a longer neck than 3. This tells the reasons official you saw the shorter neck on 3 while maintaining a positive tone to the pair analysis.

ORAL REASONS

An example paragraph for a top pair might read as follows:

"In the top pair, I placed 1 over 3 because 1 was more feminine and refined in the head and neck, was longer and cleaner in the neck and the neck tied more smoothly into a more sloping shoulder. In addition, 1 was deeper in the heart girth, shorter in the back in relation to a longer underline, and was longer in the hip. Furthermore, 1 stood on a straighter column of bones when viewed both from the front and rear. I do grant however that 3 was broader through the chest when viewed from the front and was wider through the center of the stifle when viewed from the rear."

Discussion of the middle and bottom pair will follow the same format as the top pair. Remember to include arguments and grants on each pair. Occasionally there will not be an obvious grant. If there are no grants do not make one up! Simply move on to the next pair without granting.

Faulting or criticizing the last place horse is acceptable and further emphasizes the reasons for that horse being placed on the bottom of the class. If the fourth place horse was an easy bottom, then there will be few to no grants over the third place horse. So, there would not be much discussion of the fourth place horse. By criticizing the last place horse, a judge lets the reasons judge know that they really saw the horse. Faulting of the bottom horse is the only place in a set of reasons where descriptive terms may be used.

An example criticism of the bottom horse may be as follows:

"I grant that 2 traveled with more snap and flexion than did 4, however I placed 2 last for being coarse in the head and neck and for being the most unbalanced and structurally incorrect individual in the class."

CLOSING STATEMENT

The closing statement simply restates the name of the class and the placing. The closing statement should be made with as much conviction as the opening statement in order to conclude in a convincing manner and let the reason official know you believe in this placing.

A closing statement may read as follows:

"For these reasons, I placed this class of Aged Paint mares 1-3 4-2."

»»» TERMINOLOGY

Use of a variety of accurate, precise, easy to understand terms is essential to a good set of reasons. Youth will feel more comfortable giving reasons when their list of terminology for various classes increases.

Also, it is important for youth to avoid being repetitive in their reasons. Therefore, knowing several ways to say the same thing will be helpful. In addition, youth should clarify any broad, general statements in their reasons. For example, if they say a horse was more functionally correct they need to explain why.

Following is a set of halter and performance terms. Some transition words to use in reasons are also included. Youth should continually work at developing and using appropriate terminology for these classes and other classes that will be used in judging contests.

ORAL REASONS

TRANSITION STATEMENTS

- Furthermore
 - Even so
 - Nevertheless
 - However
 - And
 - Moving to
 - Therefore
 - I admit
- I grant
 - I realize
 - In addition
 - Also
 - I concede
 - I recognize
 - I appreciate
 - I respect
- I am aware
 - It was obvious
 - It was apparent
 - Clearly
 - Obviously
 - There is no doubt
 - Now sure,
 - I will say

The following table will provide you with terminology to assist in transitioning through pairs.

Opening for Pairs	Continuing Terms for Pairs	Grants	Criticism	Closing
Beginning Opening Moving to Continuing with Coming to Concerning the In analyzing In discussing Closing with Culminating with Concluding with Even so	Further Furthermore In addition Additionally Moreover Beyond this Coupled by Complimented by Also	Granted I grant I realize None the less I appreciate that Undoubtedly I recognize that I did recognize I concede I contrast Now sure I will say I acknowledge However I readily admit	I criticize I fault However Nevertheless Unfortunately	Thus Therefore In closing Culminating with Reaching a final placing

ORAL REASONS

➤➤ PRESENTATION

Presenting oral reasons requires more than simply committing written reasons to memory. Judge's should strive to improve recall skills and develop the ability to visualize. It is important to accurately describe a class while talking to a reason's official instead of just stating points written on a card. Reasons should be presented in an easy to follow manner. Confidence should be reflected in the defense of a placing in the reasons room. Proficiency in presenting oral reasons requires extensive practice at judging workouts and at home.

Beginning judges should start with simple, short reasons that are accurate, relevant and organized. Use only basic terminology. With experience, judges can expand their use of terminology. With time, public speaking skills improve and reasons become easier and fun to give.

➤➤ CONFORMATION TERMINOLOGY

Reasons are divided into three parts (introduction or opening statement, pair analysis and closing statement). Many judges use a reason organization form to assist them with organizing their thoughts.

BASIC

Side View

- Smaller throat latch
- Longer neck
- Leaner down the top of the neck
- Higher lying into the shoulder
- More prominent at the withers
- More sloping in the shoulder
- Deeper in the heart girth
- Lower at the knees
- Straighter through the knees
- Shorter cannon bones
- More sloping pasterns
- Shorter in the back
- Longer underline in relation to top line
- Longer in the croup
- More level in the croup
- Longer in the hips
- Lower in hocks
- Straighter through the hocks

Rear View

- Wider through the center of the stifle
- Stifle ties deeper into gaskin
- Larger and more bulging gaskin
- More inside gaskin
- Gaskins tie deeper into the hocks
- Straighter down the hocks
- Stands on a broader base
- Straighter in the toes

Front View

- Broader between the eyes
- Larger eyes
- Shorter in the face
- More refined about the muzzle
- Wider through the floor of the chest
- More muscling through the pectoral region
- More forearm muscling
- Longer forearm muscling
- Forearm ties lower into the knee
- Straighter through the knee
- A more symmetrical knee
- Straighter at the toe

Travel

- Straighter
- Wider
- Truer
- More correct
- Less lateral movement
- Longer strided
- More snap and flexion
- Less lateral deviation

ORAL REASONS

ADDITIONAL

General

- More correctly balanced
- More balanced
- Taller
- More athletic appearing
- Larger
- Larger boned
- Cleaner boned
- Higher quality
- More refined
- More feminine
- More masculine
- More heavily muscled
- More structurally correct
- Stood on more substance
- Greater depth of body
- Greater depth and length
- Higher combination of...

Balance

- More nearly proportional
- More nearly level topline
- Shorter topline in relation to underline

Muscle

- More powerfully muscled throughout
- Heavier muscled throughout
- Longer
- Deeper tying
- Smoother tying
- More definition
- Longer, lower tying muscle pattern throughout
- Greater volume of muscling

Bone structure

- Larger flatter bones
- Straighter column of bones
- Cleaner boned
- Straighter and more symmetric in the knees

Throat latch

- Cleaner
- Neater
- Thinner
- Longer

Head

- Higher quality
- More refined
- More chiseled appearance
- Breedier
- Smaller about the muzzle
- Shorter in the face
- Larger eyes
- More prominent jaw
- Smaller ear
- More feminine
- More tapering muzzle
- More finely (neatly) chiseled

Neck

- Cleaner
- Neater
- Thinner
- Tied higher and smoother into withers
- Higher lying

Withers

- Sharper

Shoulder

- Greater length
- Longer more sloping
- Longer more desirable slope
- More correct angle in the shoulder
- Deeper
- More angle
- More powerfully muscled

Chest

- Deeper in the chest
- More heavily muscled
- More defined
- More bulging
- Greater separation, delineation
- More powerfully developed
- More prominently V'd
- More powerfully muscled

Forearm

- More bulging
- Ties in deeper and smoother to the knee
- Greater circumference

Front leg

- Shorter, flatter cannon bones
- Straighter down the knees
- Cleaner, showed fewer blemishes

Pasterns

- Stronger
- Longer more sloping
- Greater length
- More desirable slope
- More correct angle to

Feet

- Larger, more rounded

Heart Girth

- Greater circumference in the heart girth
- Greater depth of heart
- Deeper

Back

- Shorter and stronger in the back
- Shorter and stronger in the top line

Loin

- Stronger over the loins
- More muscular over the loins

Croup

- Longer
- More level

Hip

- Deeper through the hip
- Wider through the hip
- Greater length through the hip
- More muscular

Stifle

- Wider through the center
- Wider through the stifle
- More defined
- Deeper lying into the gaskin
- Greater width and depth
- Longer
- Greater length across the stifle when viewed from the side

ORAL REASONS

Additional cont'd

Gaskin

- Greater circumference
- More powerful

Hind Leg

- Straighter down the hock viewed from the side or rear
- Straighter and more symmetric in the hocks

Additional cont'd

- Straighter in the toes when viewed from the rear
- Stood wider between hocks when viewed from the rear

CONFORMATION FAULTS

Balance Faults

- Shallow middled, light quartered
- Shallow through the heart girth
- Lacked the capacity and depth of...
- Narrow in the chest and shallow in the heart girth
- Shallow hearted
- Long and weak over the top line
- Steep shoulder and croup
- Short, straight shoulder
- Too straight in the shoulders
- Mutton withered
- Thick (mutton) withers
- Low-backed, weak loin, high hips
- Weak though the back and loin
- Has a long, weak back in relation to the underline
- Shallow hiped

Structural Faults

- Structurally incorrect, being...
- Stands crooked and structurally unsound
- Shorter, straighter pasterns
- Short, steep pasterns
- Longer, weaker in the pasterns
- Post legged
- Stands close at the hocks, appearing to be cow-hocked
- Sickie-hocked stallion, mare, etc
- Crooked through the front legs with the cannon bone coming out of the side of the knees

Structural Faults cont'd

- Long, weak cannons with splints and wind puffs through the fetlocks and hocks
- Back at knees, appearing to be calf-kneed
- Stands over at the knees, appearing to be buck-kneed
- Splay footed
- Flat footed
- Stands on a hoof too small for the size
- Cracked, brittle hooves
- Hoof narrow at the heel
- Contracted at the heel
- Stands on bone too fine for her massive size
- Round, coarse bones
- Too fine a bone
- Too light a bone
- Puffy about the knees and hocks
- Stocked up behind
- Stocked up in all fours
- Joints are puffy and swollen
- Coarse in underpinnings
- Lacks definition of tendons
- Club footed
- Mule footed

Quality Faults

- Rough-made mare, lacking femininity
- Coarser made, lightest muscled and most narrow based
- Lacking style and presence of...
- Least attractive
- Longer, coarser, plainer headed
- Coarse head
- Less refined in the bone structure

Quality Faults cont'd

- Long ears
- Long face
- Narrow between the eyes
- Duller, smaller eye
- Large, coarse muzzle
- Thick throat latch
- Heavier, thicker through the throat latch
- Too thick at the base of the neck
- Low neck attachment
- Crest over the neck
- Neck joined in extremely low into steeper shoulders
- Small, unattractive head
- Looks dull and sulky out of the eye
- Lower-quality hair coat
- Possesses a rough hair coat
- Lacks style, symmetry, and animation
- Low headed, plain, lacking eye appeal

Muscle Faults

- Narrowest-based horse, lacking adequate muscling
- Narrow chested, close-traveling horse
- Lacks volume and dimension through the hip, gaskin, and stifle
- Flat chested
- Narrowest designed
- Flat through the V muscling and exhibits short, bunchy muscling from end to end
- Shows equal width between the top of hip and through the stifle when viewed from the rear
- Short in the underline
- Long coupled
- Tapers when viewed from the rear
- Lighter made

ORAL REASONS

»»» PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

WESTERN PLEASURE

General

- Looked straighter through the bridle
- Maintained a more correct head set
- Maintained a more correct head carriage
- Softer at the trot
- More consistent at the trot
- Steadier at the trot
- More collected at the lope
- More consistent at the lope
- More functionally correct in the leads
- Backed straighter
- Worked with less restraint from rider
- Smoother in gait transitions
- Quieter in the mouth
- More responsive to the rider's cues
- Moved with more drive off the hindquarters
- Worked more squarely down rail
- Traveled deeper into the corners
- Traveled with more cadence

Attitude

- More responsive
- More willing
- Calmer
- More relaxed
- Quieter, steadier
- More alert
- Fresher
- Works on a looser rein
- More consistent
- More solid (seasoned, broke)
- More disciplined
- More attentive (expressive)
- Required less obvious cues from the rider
- Responded with lighter, more subtle cues
- Kinder
- Softer in the mouth
- Worked on looser rein throughout the class (or a higher percent of the class)
- More responsive to pressure
- Worked with less resistance to the rider
- Appeared easier to show

Functional correctness

- Better fulfilled the requirements of the class
- Maintained gaits without anticipation of cues
- Traveled straighter down the rail (a higher percent of class)
- More efficient in utilizing both leads
- Traveled in the prescribed gait

Head set

- Showed more flexion at the poll
- More nearly perpendicular to the ground

Head carriage

- Steadier head carriage
- Traveled with neck more nearly parallel to the ground

Back

- Honored the bridle more
- Less gapping of the mouth
- Quieter in the mouth with less resistance to the bit
- Softer mouth
- More freely, promptly, voluntarily
- Backed with less aid and cueing from the rider
- Backed with less effort (less resistance to rider)

Gait transitions

- Prompter, efficient in upward/downward transitions
- More responsive (cues from the rider)
- More fluid
- Worked with less aid and cueing from the rider

ORAL REASONS

»»» PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

HUNTER UNDER SADDLE

General

- Looked straighter through the bridle
- Maintained a more correct head set
- Maintained a more correct head carriage
- Softer at the trot
- More consistent at the trot
- Steadier at the trot
- More collected at the canter
- More consistent at the canter
- More functionally correct in the leads
- Backed straighter
- Worked with less restraint from rider
- Smoother in gait transitions

General cont'd

- Quieter in the mouth
- More responsive to the rider's cues
- Moved with more drive off the hind quarters
- Worked more squarely down the rail
- Traveled with more cadence
- More suitability to purpose
- Typier and was more suitable for the purpose of a ranch horse
- Longer stride - less animation
- Freer moving at the trot
- More extended at the trot
- Traveled in a lower frame
- Traveled closer to ground
- Traveled in a rounder frame

Attitude

Same as western pleasure plus:

- Bolder
- Honored the bit more
- More tolerant (responsive) to bit pressure

RANCH RAIL

General

- Consistent headset and frame
- Positive facial expression (forward ears)
- Consistent pace
- Relaxed with the bit - Traveled with a more authentic ranch horse appearance
- Showed with a more workman-like expression
- Traveled straighter through the bridle
- Remained more focused on the task at hand
- Was more consistent in headset and frame
- Was a more willing performer
- More willing to his rider's aids and cues

General cont'd

- Quick back up
- Quick, square stops
- Seamless transitions
- Showed a greater extension of the trot
- Showed a greater extension of the lope
- Showed a more forward paced walk

Attitude

Same as western pleasure

ORAL REASONS

➤➤➤ PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

SADDLE SEAT OR GAITED PLEASURE

General

- Looked straighter through the bridle
- Maintained a more correct head set
- Maintained a more correct head carriage
- Softer at the trot
- More consistent at the trot
- Steadier at the trot
- More collected at the canter
- More consistent at the canter
- More functionally correct in the leads
- Backed straighter
- Worked with less restraint from rider
- Smoother in gait transitions

General cont'd

- Quieter in the mouth
- More responsive to the rider's cues
- Moved with more drive off the hind quarters
- Worked more squarely down the rail
- Traveled with more cadence
- More suitability to purpose
- Longer stride - less animation
- Freer moving at the trot
- More extended at the trot
- Traveled in a lower frame
- Traveled closer to ground
- Traveled in a rounder frame

Attitude

Same as western pleasure plus:

- Bolder
- Honored the bit more
- More tolerant (responsive) to bit pressure

ORAL REASONS

»»» PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

HORSEMANSHIP & EQUITATION

Comparison Terms

- He was more correct in his pattern being quicker about picking up his leads and quieter about his cues.
- She was more correct in her pattern showing more shape to her circle and more correct placement of her final stop.
- She was more accurate in the placement of her second stop placing her in more proper position for her departure into her left lead.
- She was more precise in her turn around avoiding contact with the second marker.
- He was more stylish about his first departure at the jog.
- He was faster in his turn around spinning over his hocks with more flare and setting himself up more properly for his departure into his circle to the right.
- She was more correct in the placement of her simple change at marker two.
- He was more precise in his flying lead change from his circle to the left and into his circle to the right.
- He was more correct in maintaining the proper gait when loping down the strait away to the final marker.
- He was more correct in maintaining the proper lead when performing his circle to the left.
- She was more accurate in the placement of her circle being more nearly between the second and third marker.
- He was more correct in pushing his horse forward in the downward transition to the jog after the third marker.
- He was straighter in his lope from the first to second marker.
- 2 had the advantage of accuracy and precision throughout the pattern especially evident in his lope line from the third to the fourth marker.
- She was more correct in picking up and maintaining the proper diagonal in her trot circle to the right.
- He was more correct in changing diagonals after his circle to the left and prior to his straight line trot to the third marker.

Key terms for pattern work:

Correct
 Quicker
 Quieter
 Accurate
 Precise
 Stylish
 Faster
 Straighter

ORAL REASONS

»»» PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

Position

- He dropped a straighter line from his shoulder, through his hip, and to the back of his heel.
- He was quieter about his upper body when loping left on the rail.
- She was taller with her upper body and remained quieter about her hands especially when transitioning from the jog to the lope.
- He was more correct in the placement of his eyes especially when changing diagonals out of his circle.
- She had a stronger and quieter leg when loping down the straight line.
- He was quieter about his hands when changing leads out of his figure eight.
- She sat deeper in her saddle giving her a quieter appearance at all gaits and a strong seat overall.
- He was more correct in looking up and around his corners consequently being taller and straighter about the placement of his shoulders.
- She used fewer and more subtle cues in changing leads when loping out of her circle to the left and approaching the straight line to the third marker.
- She was more correct in the placement of her eyes when performing her turn around and lope off.
- He was quieter about his hands in his flying lead change at the center marker.
- She was a more stylish rider who sat deeper and stronger in her saddle and was the quietest through her pattern.
- He was the most correct in the placement of his hands.
- She had a stronger leg evident by her being able to keep her heels down throughout all gaits.
- He sat deeper in his saddle and drove his heels down in the stirrups to have the most correct heel position of any other rider in the class.
- She was more correct in looking around her circle especially when changing diagonals.
- He was quieter with his free arm and was more correct about his upper body position.
- She was quicker and more stylish in picking up all diagonals.
- She presented the most desirable picture of horse and rider working in unison; she was a more effective rider, who showed her horse to its fullest potential.
- Executed her aids with more discretion, which complemented the overall appearance of control and harmony of horse and rider working together.
- Gave a more complete picture of horse and rider working in unison.
- Maintained a picture of confidence and control.
- Sat taller in the saddle, riding with more style and confidence.
- Showed a more elegant and correct posture.
- Maintained a smoother and more controlled ride throughout the class.
- Was a stronger, more capable, more confident rider.
- Carried her head up, was more alert, attentive and confident.
- Sat taller and more erect in the saddle, holding her head higher, while looking straighter through the horse's ears.
- Sat deeper in the saddle with her weight more evenly distributed.
- Was quieter and deeper seated.
- Steadier at the canter, sitting deeper in the saddle.
- More rhythmic and effortless in her position and steadier in her seat at the canter.
- Was squarer in the shoulders, yet more relaxed in her back, which allowed her to more easily absorb the concussion of the horse's motion.

ORAL REASONS

»»» PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

Position cont'd

- Was squarer with her shoulders and more correctly arched in her lower back
- Maintained a more correct, straighter line from her shoulder through her hip to her heel
- Had kinder, more sympathetic hands and was relaxed in her arms, which more easily allowed her to follow the movement of the horse's head at the walk and canter
- Lighter, more effective hands, which encouraged her horse to have a more elegant head set with more flexion at the poll
- More stable and educated hands
- Maintained a horizontal line from bit to elbow
- Smoother and more effective execution of the aids, showing more adaptability, sympathy and control
- Had a more secure leg that maintained closer contact with the sides of the horse, which allowed her to be more discreet in her aids
- Stronger, more effective leg with more angulation to the heel
- A more solid heel
- Carried more weight in her heel
- More correct rotation of the leg, which allowed the toes to be pointed straight ahead
- Maintained more contact with her upper leg, showing more angulation to her heels, with the toes pointed forward
- Easier and more fluid posting at the trot
- More effortless and rhythmic posting at the trot
- More functionally correct, maintaining correct diagonals at the trot and correct leads at the canter
- Was quieter with her hands and lower leg at the posting trot
- Was smoother at the posting trot
- Maintained a smoother and more controlled ride throughout the class
- Posted more correctly with the motion of her horse
- Stayed with her horse and sat the transitions more smoothly

Key words for position:

Straighter

Quieter

Taller

Correct

Stronger

Deeper

Stylish

ORAL REASONS

»»» PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

WESTERN RIDING

General

- Showed more willingness and precision in executing the prescribed pattern
- Was simply more fundamentally correct throughout the pattern
- Rider had a greater degree of handle on the horse, thus requiring less excessive reining and leg cues
- Was more stylish in the pattern
- Was a more natural, athletic horse, being a brighter, cleaner mover, holding a steadier rhythm and cadence
- The pattern was more accurate and was run with more effort and control from horse and rider
- Was a more suitable western rider, being more broke, accepting the rider's control without resistance
- Smoothly achieved control
- Accepted the rider's contact, staying lighter and more supple through his neck and jaw
- Flowed through the pattern
- More accurate in his pattern
- Showed more finesse and control
- More relaxed throughout the pattern

Lead Changes

- Holds the body correctly while keeping a more steady pace
- Crisper and more direct lead changes
- More prompt and exact lead changes
- Exhibited smoother, simultaneous lead changes with less anticipation and hesitation
- Was more proficient in the lead changes
- Exhibited more natural, effortless lead changers
- Changing leads with greater dispatch

Back

- Backed more readily over the tracks
- Flexed the poll, relaxed the jaw and backed in a straighter fashion

Manners

- Was more responsive to the slightest cue
- Worked more efficiently and with a more cooperative attitude
- Was a more willing worker, performing in a more positive manner
- More readily yielded to the rider's cues and aids
- Moved on a looser rein with less restraint on the part of the rider
- Performed with greater willingness
- Was quieter about the mouth and tail
- Was a more willing worker and was under more control by the rider
- Was quieter and calmer
- Performed the duties in a more workmanlike manner, showing more response and obedience to the rider
- Showed more response to the rider
- Had less mouthing of the bit
- Was a more suitable western rider, as 2 was more broke
- Performed duties on a looser rein

ORAL REASONS

»»» PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

REINING

General

- Exhibited the most agility and control
- Ran the fastest pattern with more control and authority
- Showed more willingness and precision in executing the prescribed pattern
- For the most part, 3 accomplished more of the pattern
- Simply got more done
- Was simply more fundamentally correct throughout the pattern
- Ran a more difficult and demanding pattern, and yet showed a more positive expression
- Exhibited more athletic ability and handle throughout the pattern
- Rider had a greater degree of handle on the horse, thus requiring less excessive reining and leg cues
- Was more stylish in the pattern, which was a more definite, well-blended combination of fast and hard, soft and slow
- 4's pattern was quicker and more correct, and 4 was obviously the top horse in the class
- Placed at the top of the class because 3 exhibited a more complete picture of control, smoothness and speed
- Was a more natural, athletic horse, being a brighter, cleaner mover, holding a steadier rhythm and cadence
- The pattern was more accurate and was run with more effort and control from horse and rider
- Was a more suitable reiner, being more broke, accepting the rider's control without resistance
- Smoothly achieved control
- Accepted the rider's contact, staying lighter and more supple through his neck and jaw
- Flowed through the pattern
- More accurate in his pattern
- Illustrated and/or showed a more aggressive manner
- More exciting and pleasing form
- Showed more finesse and control
- More relaxed throughout the pattern

Stops & Runs

- More controlled ideal stops
- Fell deeper into the ground
- Dropped deeper into the ground
- Dropped the hocks deeper into the ground
- Stopped with the haunches deeper in the ground
- 4's stops were deeper and more completely shut down
- 2's stops were more stylish, being deeper with a longer slide
- Deeper, straighter slides
- Performed a more correct sliding stop
- Had longer slides
- Stopped in a more relaxed manner
- Was more confident in the stops
- Was a smoother, longer-stopping horse
- Exhibited a more controlled and relaxed sliding stop
- Stopped squarer
- Worked off the haunches and maintained movement in the front end, allowing 2 to have a more relaxed stop

ORAL REASONS

»»» PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

REINING

Stops & Runs cont'd

- Dropped the hindquarters deeper into the ground, while keeping the front legs relaxed, allowing 4 to execute a more correct sliding stop
- Slid further in the stops with the hindquarters more squarely beneath and the head more tucked as 4 stayed relaxed with the front legs
- 2's stops were executed with 2 being more over the haunches and more relaxed through the mouth, poll, neck and loin
- Was a smoother-stopping horse that stayed more relaxed and supple down the spine, thus allowing 4 to also slide further
- Moved into the stop with greater authority and confidence, sinking deeper, curving the spine and crawling up front, thus sliding further and smoother
- Used the ground more, stopping deeper and staying in the stop longer
- Was softer, prettier-moving mare, with stops that were deep and long
- Was more correct and responsive in the stops, which were longer, harder and deeper
- Eased down into the dirt, holding both hocks steady in longer slides while moving up front
- Stopped with the haunches deeper in the ground, walking further up front
- Drove out harder in the runs, stopped smoother and slid further
- Moved more freely into the rollback, driving out harder over the hocks
- Ran with greater speed and dispatch from end to end, rolling back cleaner over the hocks
- Ran harder with less hesitation into the stops
- Ran with more authority and aggressiveness into the stops
- Ran harder with less anticipation in the straight-aways
- Came out of the rollbacks with more speed

Circles & Lead Changes

- Showed more size and speed variation to the circles
- Ran harder and faster circles
- Ran with more control and confidence in the circles
- Circles were performed more in the center of the arena
- Performed the circles in a more correct and precise manner
- Held the nose to the inside of the circle
- Running rounder circles
- Rated the circles more uniformly
- Drops back more obediently into the slow circles, holding the body correctly while keeping a more steady pace
- Circles with a more correct arc through the body
- Performed the circles in a quieter and calmer manner
- Ran flatter and smoother circles
- Laid down flatter, smoother circles
- Showed a more released arc through the body, setting the nose more to the inside of each circle
- Was more balanced in the circles, staying lighter and more responsive between the reins with the neck, shoulder and hip more correctly arced
- Circled with the head, shoulder and hip more desirably arced in the direction of the circles
- Showed more variation of size and speed of circles
- Showed greater control of the arena and ground, by staying more within the markers while displaying smoother and more balanced circles
- Had a more correct degree of flex through the neck and shoulder
- Was softer in the bridle, following a lighter rein in the more precisely executed circles

ORAL REASONS

»»» PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

REINING

Circles & Lead Changes cont'd

- Ran the eights with more speed and was more fluid in the lead changes
- The size of the figure eights were limited, showing 3 to be a more handy and maneuverable athlete
- Greater contrast in the speed and size of the figure eights
- Was more balanced in the figure eights, opening the stride without hesitation in the fast circles, while slowing down more promptly into more evenly shaped small circles
- The figure eights were more symmetrical
- Higher continuity of speed and size as 2 traveled through the circles
- Flowed through the circles
- Size, speed and smoothness of circles
- More alignment and guide to the circles
- Kept the nose tipped to the inside of the circles
- Crisper and more direct lead changes
- More prompt and exact lead changes
- Exhibited smoother, simultaneous lead changes with less anticipation and hesitation
- Was more proficient in the lead changes, stops and turns
- Exhibited more natural, effortless lead changers
- Changing leads with greater dispatch

Spins, Rollbacks & Pivots

- Turned faster in the spins with the front loose and low
- Kept a lower center of gravity in faster spins
- Faster spins while remaining flat and holding a more stationary pivot foot
- Held the body straighter in the spins, keeping the pivot foot in place while staying looser and lower in front as 1 reached around
- Each of the spins were faster than the preceding one
- Stayed down more, being leveler in the spins, crossing over cleaner with more reach, while maintaining faster speed
- Faster, flatter spins with the pivot foot firm to the ground
- Showed more desirable spins, turning more ideally over the haunches, while maintaining a lower center of gravity
- Flatter, more consistent spins
- Smoother, flatter spins
- Stayed down lower in more brilliant spins
- Faster spins
- Put in snappier spins
- Had more flexion to the hocks, maintaining a lower center of gravity while spinning
- More correct and agile spins in terms of planting the pivot foot, shifting weight more to the haunches, making the forehand maneuverable, exhibiting cleaner, faster spins
- Showed more snap to the spins
- Ran harder from rollback to rollback
- Rolled back more over the haunches
- Performed the rollbacks in a more correct and willing manner
- Performed more correct rollbacks, being more over the haunches
- Performed a more correct 180-degree rollback

ORAL REASONS

»»» PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

REINING

Spins, Rollbacks & Pivots cont'd

- Rolled over the hocks more correctly, with a more stationary pivot foot
- Rolled back cleaner over the hocks
- Rolled back harder over the hocks
- Kept the hocks underneath in each rollback, pushing off with greater power and drive
- As 2 executed the rollback, 2 showed more control, aggression and a higher degree of difficulty
- Showed sharper, quicker pivots
- Showed more snap and finesse to the pivots
- Performed the pivots with more confidence and ease
- Showed more brilliance in the pivots
- Showed a crisper and more controlled pivot
- Showed a smoother pivot, crossing over cleaner and faster with the front legs

Back

- Was a faster and cleaner backing horse, with each foot falling equi-distance of the last
- Backed more readily over the tracks
- Faster, straighter back and settled more readily
- Lowered his head, tucked his nose and backed straighter and squarely over the hocks
- Backed faster and with more ease
- Flexed the poll, relaxed the jaw and backed in a straighter fashion
- Was a faster, straighter backing horse
- Was more willing to settle after backing (or spinning)

Manners

- Was more responsive to the slightest cue
- Settled easier
- Worked more efficiently and with a more cooperative attitude
- Was a more willing worker, performing in a more positive manner
- More readily yielded to the rider's cues and aids
- Moved on a looser rein with less restraint on the part of the rider
- Performed with greater willingness
- Was quieter about the mouth and tail
- Was a more willing worker and was under more control by the rider
- Was quieter and calmer
- Performed the duties in a more workmanlike manner, showing more response and obedience to the rider
- Stood calmer after backing
- Showed more response to the rider
- Had less mouthing of the bit
- Was a more suitable reiner, as 2 was more broke
- Performed duties on a looser rein

ORAL REASONS

PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

RANCH RIDING

Brokenness

- Consistent headset and frame
- Positive facial expression (forward ears)
- Consistent pace
- Relaxed with the bit
- Traveled with a more authentic ranch horse appearance
- Showed with a more workman-like expression
- Traveled straighter through the bridle
- Remained more focused on the task at hand
- Was more consistent in headset and frame
- Was a more willing performer
- More willing to his rider's aids and cues

Pattern Precision/Degree of Difficulty

- Quick and efficient turnaround
- Quick and level through lead change
- Quick and smooth back up
- Quick, square stops
- Seamless transitions
- Showed a greater extension of the trot
- Showed a greater extension of the lope
- Showed a more forward paced walk
- Was more attentive when picking his way through the logs

HUNTER HACK

General

- Looked straighter through the bridle
- Maintained a more correct head carriage
- Softer at the trot
- More consistent at the trot
- Steadier at the trot
- More collected at the canter
- More consistent at the canter
- More functionally correct in the leads
- Backed straighter
- Worked with less restraint from rider
- Smoother in gait transitions
- Quieter in the mouth
- More responsive to the rider's cues
- Moved with more drive off the hindquarters
- Traveled with more cadence

Over Fences

- Quality shape over the fences
- Consistent pace between fences
- Even strides to fence and on the rail

Attitude

- More responsive
- More willing
- Calmer
- More relaxed
- Quieter, steadier
- More alert
- More consistent
- More solid (seasoned, broke)
- More disciplined
- More attentive (expressive)
- Required less obvious cues from the rider
- Responded with lighter, more subtle cues
- Kinder
- Softer in the mouth
- Worked on looser rein throughout the class (or a higher percent of the class)
- More responsive to pressure
- Worked with less resistance to the rider
- Appeared easier to show

Functional correctness

- Better fulfilled the requirements of the class
- Maintained gaits without anticipation of cues
- Travelled in the prescribed gait

Back

- Honored the bridle more
- Less gapping of the mouth
- Quieter in the mouth with less resistance to the bit
- More freely, promptly, voluntarily

Gait transitions

- Prompter, efficient in upward/downward transitions
- More responsive (cues from the rider)
- More fluid
- Worked with less aid and cuing from the rider

ORAL REASONS

➤➤➤ PERFORMANCE TERMINOLOGY

TRAIL

Brokeness

- Ridden on a greater drape of rein
- Consistent headset and frame
- Positive facial expression (forward ears)
- Consistent pace
- Quieter at the bit
- Travels straighter through the bridle
- More responsive to his rider's aids and cues
- Stood quieter at the mailbox or when picking up slicker

Pattern Precision/Degree of Difficulty

- Efficient and quick turnaround
- Crossing each pole at the same location in a pinwheel
- Quick back-through
- Quick, square stops
- Seamless transitions
- Tight lines of travel in serpentine
- Took a more challenging line of travel
- Was more attentive when picking his way through the walkovers
- Traveled over the poles more consistently
- Worked the gate efficiently

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 United State Equestrian Rulebook usef.org
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