Marias Fair 4-H Horse Show Rule Book



Horse Show Rules and County Policies

May 2026

2025-2026 Marias Fair Horse Committee

President: Hannah Murray
Vice President: Abby Hall
Secretary: Margie Boumans
Treasurer: Laura Horgus

Committee Members:
Abby Hall
Laura Horgus
Margie Boumans
Tara Hart
Hannah Murray
Megan Wahl

Pondera County
MSU Extension Agent: Grace Rooney

Table of Contents

Marias Fair 4-H Horse Committee Policy....4
4-H Horse - County And Marias Fair Rules And Policies....4
Montana State 4-H Horse Shows....5
Marias Fair Horse Show General Rules For All Classes....5
Safety....7
Dress Code For All Classes....7
Equipment....8
Judging....10
Showmanship Classes....10
Yearling At Halter Showmanship:....11
Western Horsemanship Classes....11
Western Pleasure (Optional Classes)....15
English Horsemanship Classes....15
English Pleasure (Optional Classes)....17
Colt-To- Maturity Project:....17
Colt-To-Maturity Classes:....17
Colt-To-Maturity – Western & English....18
Green Horse – Western And English....21
Bareback Equitation (Optional Classes)....21
Trail – (Optional Class)....22
Yearling-At-Trail: - (Optional Class)....23
Speed Events – (Optional Classes) - Barrel Racing And Pole Bending....23
Working Ranch Horse....24
Driving....24
Packing....24
Handicapped Safety & Handling From The Ground....24
Extension Agent Responsibilities....25

MARIAS FAIR 4-H HORSE COMMITTEE POLICY

The **Marias Fair 4-H Horse Committee must approve all policies and expenditures of funds**.

OBJECTIVES

1. To encourage 4-H members to learn as much as they can about horses while developing their leadership skills, their sense of responsibility, their initiative and their self-reliance.
2. To promote and develop good sportsmanship in all aspects of our program.
3. To recognize the 4-H member's safety comes first and is followed by the safety of the member's horse(s).

PROJECT MATERIALS

1. Marias Fair 4-H Horse Show Rule Book
2. Project materials as listed for the Horse Project(s) in the 4-H Clover.

H. HORSE - County and Marias Fair Rules and Policies

OWNERSHIP:

All Horsemanship and Colt-to Maturity level project animals shown by 4-H members in 4-H classes must be owned by the member or in partnership with his or her immediate family or member must have access to the project horse(s). All project horse(s) must be declared on the Assessment Sheet by June 1st. The horse(s) must be in the continual care of the 4-H member from June 1 through the State 4-H Horse Show. Exceptions may be made by the rules Committee for level 1-3 to encourage interest and participation in the horse program.

Intent:

- ***To give all members a specific timeline in which to maximize their horsemanship skills with their horse(s) and to be in complete control of the horsemanship project animal.***

PROJECT HORSE(S):

Once a horse becomes a project animal, it may not receive professional training unless the member is involved in that training.

Intent:

- ***To allow the member to become knowledgeable in all levels of "Horsemanship," "Green Horse," "Ranch Horse," and "Colt to Maturity" projects by "learning by doing."***
- ***To encourage the member to assume sole responsibility for training the animal.***
- ***To encourage the member to go to trainers for advice when needed, and to encourage trainers to conduct clinics for members.***
- ***To further either horsemanship or training skills, and to discourage the use of trainers actually riding the project horse, except in a case where the trainer deems the safety of the member is threatened.***

A horse carried as a 4-H Horsemanship Levels project may be shown by more than one member of the immediate family in any one year at the County Show, State Fair and State 4-H Horse Show, providing that neither the horse nor the member competes against himself. If there is a conflict in schedules for any reason, the exhibitor will have to determine in which class to participate and scratch the other.

Intent:

- ***To recognize that the best experience is for each member to own and care for his own horse. To further recognize that there are families with more than one child that cannot afford more***

than one horse. To allow immediate family members the opportunity to be included in the county and state horse shows if the family cannot financially justify another horse.

ASSESSMENT:

1. **The 4-H member may show only in the level or project in which he/she is ENROLLED AND ASSESSED.** Verification of passed assessment must be in Extension Office according to county requirements. (To pass assessment and before leader signs off, member must satisfactorily complete ALL level requirements.)
2. In addition to assessment form, a copy of the individual level assessment sheet for each member must be submitted to the office according to county requirements. This assessment form is located in the member's Horse Project Book at the end of the level. Copies of this assessment form are available at the Extension Office.
3. If member is not assessed and records are not current according to county requirements, the 4-H member will be required to show in the previous level and will automatically be enrolled in lower level. If a member is enrolled in Level I and is not assessed, he may NOT show in the current show season. Horse Leaders will conduct assessments in the spring of the year, or the assessment may be conducted by any Horse Committee Leader at any time according to county requirements. Only if the Horse Committee, at a Horse Committee Leaders meeting, elects to host an assessment event(s) AFTER May 1st through July 1st, will the Extension Office allow for advancement of those members who participate in the designated assessment event(s).

   Intent:

   - *This will allow for a controlled change while allowing members an extended period of time to advance.*

MONTANA STATE 4-H HORSE SHOWS

Any member wishing to compete at the Montana State Fair Horse Show, or the Montana State 4-H Horse Show are strongly advised to thoroughly read all rules and regulations for said shows to be fully aware of any rule differences from those of the Marias Fair Horse Show.

MARIAS FAIR HORSE SHOW GENERAL RULES FOR ALL CLASSES

1. The use of any drug affecting the central nervous system (stimulant or depressant) of a horse is strictly prohibited.
2. **No dogs** are allowed where horses are shown or exercised at a horse show. If brought, they must be left at your camper or trailer.
3. A veterinarian's slip must accompany a request to change horses **BEFORE** the start of a horse show. The Show Rules Committee must decide whether or not to allow the change of horses. Changing of horses on the day of the show will not be allowed.
4. Unsportsmanlike conduct or abusive language or actions and/or abuse to any animal on the part of any 4-H exhibitor, family member, or leader will result in penalty forfeiture of any award received and/or elimination from further competition of the 4-H member or those culpable.
5. The Judge and/or Ring Steward will dismiss from the ring any entry that is unruly or not in sufficient control to ensure the safety of handler and other exhibitors.
6. Improper tack at the Horse Show will result in an automatic red or white ribbon at the judge's discretion.
7. No person other than the exhibitors and show officials is allowed in the ring while the show is in progress.

8. If, for any reason, a member is awarded a second run in a speed event, the time for the first run is void.
9. Breaking pattern is considered a major fault but not disqualification in Colt to Maturity, Green Horse or Horsemanship Levels. Breaking pattern is disqualification in Barrels and Poles.
10. The judge's decision is final in all classes.
11. The age of the 4-H member is determined as of October 1st of the current 4-H year. This does not apply to Colt to Maturity Project in which the member may turn 12 within the current 4-H year.
12. The age of the horse is figured by the calendar year starting on January 1st of the year foaled (i.e. A horse foaled any time in 2005 will be termed one year old as of January 1, 2006.).
13. Stallions are not allowed in any horse shows and/or clinics. Yearling stallions are allowed only in yearling showmanship and showmanship.
14. Exhibitors' numbers must be clearly visible to the announcer, judge or ring steward.
15. Spurs cannot be used forward of the cinch.
16. Members must indicate on enrollment form English and Western Horsemanship Levels.
17. A member must compete at the same project level as enrolled in the county and for which he/she has been assessed.
18. A member may ride only one horse per Western and one horse per English Horsemanship Level. Member may drop back only one level in either Western or English. *A maximum of two horses are allowed in the Horsemanship Levels, if showing Western and English.*
19. Cross entries are not allowed on Colt to Maturity or Green Horse project animals with Horsemanship Level projects. Members are eligible to enter Horsemanship Levels with that horse upon completion of the project(s).
20. Members may exhibit only one horse per class.
21. The horse must show in a recognized Western Level Class, English Level Class, Green Horse, Colt- to-Maturity, Driving, Packing, or Ranch Horse class in order to show in an option class. The option classes are Showmanship, Bareback Equitation, Western and English Pleasure, Trail, Barrels, and Poles.
22. Horse used for option classes must be a project horse exhibited at the Marias Fair.
23. **Extra horses** (not entered in the Marias Fair 4-H Horse Show) **are not allowed** on 4-H show grounds (or in 4-H barns). This is for health, safety and liability reasons for members, spectators and the organization.
24. All 4-H members attending a riding clinic are advised to wear an approved helmet.
25. To qualify for the State 4-H Horse Show, you must compete in the Marias Fair 4-H Horse Show.
26. A colt in the fifth year of the C2M may cross enter to Horsemanship Level 7 if member has been assessed out of Horsemanship Level 6.
27. Any **exceptions** must be approved by the Marias Fair 4-H Horse Committee. **Grievances** must be filed in the Extension office within one week of the occurrence. The grievance will be addressed by the Rules Committee at the next Horse Leaders meeting.
    Guidelines for the Committee:
    If an issue arises at the show, and if needed, the show will be stopped. The Marias Fair Horse committee will convene in a neutral area away from the show arena and grandstands to determine a ruling. The issue may be resolved with the 4-H member riding under protest. The judge will be asked to name the "top blue" so that if replacement is necessary, appropriate awards for Grand and Reserve can be made.
28. **Ill horse.** As a courtesy to other horse owners and for the health and welfare of all horses participating, please do not bring an ill horse to single or multiple county events, such as clinics or the Marias Fair Horse Show. Any horse exhibiting a sign of illness may be asked to leave the premises, resulting in non-participation for member and said animal for that event.

29. **Unsound horse.**

Any horse exhibiting performance limitations due to unsoundness will require a written statement from a licensed, equine endorsed veterinarian, explaining that although the unsoundness may alter appearance, it causes no pain and allows humane use of the horse. It must further state that use of said horse does not present a safety concern to the horse, its handler or others. This statement must be presented to the Marias Fair Horse Committee prior to the start of the show, so that judges and show personnel can be duly notified. Any horse exhibiting such conditions without said statement will be awarded a white ribbon and placed last in their class. If lameness or any other issue arises during a class, the exhibitor should approach the ring steward and ask to be excused from the class

SAFETY

For Horse Show and Clinics

- **A certified equestrian helmet with safety harness fastened in place is required for all speed events**.
- For safety reasons, another member may assist with warm-up or training of an unruly horse, upon approval of a 4-H Horse committee leader at the Marias Fair. The 4-H member must be present during any training or discipline.
- Boots must be worn when riding.
- All horses must be ridden with bridles, **NO HALTERS.**
- Riding double is not allowed.
- All horses must enter the arena in a controlled manner. They may be led into the arena, if necessary.
- Run irons on English Saddles.
- Horses should be walked in all areas other than warm-up areas.
- All riders are advised to wear safety helmets at riding clinics and/or open riding.
- No riding is allowed in barn alleys or other non designated areas.

Note: ***Safety Rule Violations May Result in Disqualification.***

DRESS CODE FOR ALL CLASSES

Exhibitors and judges should bear in mind that at all times entries are judged on ability. However, neatness is the first requisite regarding a rider's attire, and the following requirements are based on tradition and general present-day customs. Contestants who do not conform shall be eliminated. In case of inclement weather, the judge may allow rain gear or appropriate adjustments.

Western Dress Code

- Long sleeved, button or snap shirt.
- Western type pants.
- Western boots and western type hat (felt or straw) or riding helmet meeting ASTM (American Society for Testing & Materials) and SEI (Safety Equipment Institute) requirements.
- Chaps, gloves, vests and ties are optional.
- Spurs are optional unless otherwise prohibited.
- Hair that is shoulder length or longer must be contained in a net or braid while showing in the project classes, option classes, or showmanship classes.

- If helmets are required, all participants must wear a helmet.

English – Hunt Seat Dress Code

- Hunt coat (red, pink or scarlet coats are prohibited unless the exhibitor has earned them as a member of a recognized hunt).
- Breeches or jodhpurs.
- English style blouse or shirt.
- Hunt boots or paddock boots.
- Hard hat or helmet meeting ASTM (American Society for Testing & Materials) and SEI (Safety Equipment Institute) standards.
- Stocks, chokers, or ties required.
- Gloves, non-roweled spurs and crop or bat are optional.
- Shoulder length or longer hair must be contained in a net or braid.

Bareback Equitation and Showmanship Dress Code

- Western or English attire is allowed.
- Chaps, spurs, crops and bats are prohibited.

EQUIPMENT

SHOWMANSHIP CLASSES

- All horses will be shown with a properly adjusted halter.
- Lead shanks with chains may be used, but the use of the chain over the nose or under the jaw or in any way having contact with the horse is prohibited. Chain length may be adjusted to no less than 4" and no more than 8" from attachment to halter.
- Whips or bridles are not allowed.

WESTERN – LEVEL CLASSES

- Horses must be shown in a stock saddle.
- A tie down, martingale or a mechanical hackamore of any type is prohibited unless otherwise indicated in class description.
- Splint boots, bell boots, and skid boots are optional.
- Horses under 5 years old may be ridden with curb bits, snaffles, or bosals.
- Horses 5 years of age and older must be ridden in a shank bit with one hand.
- Split or Romal reins are permissible, but roping reins are not allowed.

WESTERN GENERAL

Tack and bits must be MSHSA approved. If there is a concern about questionable tack, a member/rider should consult the 4-H project book or ask a horse leader.

Snaffle Bit - Non-Leverage (Western)

A standard snaffle bit is defined as a center-jointed single, rounded, unwrapped smooth mouthpiece of **3/8** inch to **3/4**-inch diameter metal. Non-jointed bar type snaffle bits are not recommended. The rings may be from 2 inches to 4 inches outside diameter of the loose type, egg butt, D-Ring or full cheek snaffle bit. If an optional curb strap is used, it must be attached below the reins. Snaffle bits must be ridden two-handed except when opening and closing gates.

Curb or Shank Bit (Leverage)
A bit that may have a solid or broken mouthpiece has shanks and acts with leverage. All curb bits must be free of mechanical devices and should be considered a standard Western bit. A standard Western bit is defined as having a shank with a maximum length overall of 8 ½ inches. Shanks may be fixed or loose. The mouthpiece will consist of a smooth round metal bar 3/8 inch to ¾ inch in diameter. They may be inlaid, smooth or latex wrapped. Nothing may protrude below the mouthpiece (bar), such as extensions or prongs on solid mouthpieces. The port must be no higher than 3 inches maximum, with rollers and covers acceptable. Broken mouthpieces, half-breeds, and spades are standard.

Slip or gag bits, donut and flat polo mouthpieces and roping bits with both reins connected to a single rein at center of cross bar are prohibited. Reins must be attached to each shank. Curb or shank bits must be ridden one handed. Flat chain(s) or a flat leather chin (curb) strap ½ inch or wider are required with a curb or shank bit of any kind.

Bosal
A braided rawhide or leather bosal may be used in lieu of a snaffle bit, no larger than ¾ inch (three-quarter inch) diameter at the cheek; must be a minimum of a 1-finger space (approximately ¾ inch) between the bosal and nose (absolutely no metal under the jaw or on the noseband in connection with the bosal). The bosal should be properly fitted relative to the horse's size and conformation and be ridden two handed.

ENGLISH GENERAL –
Tack and bits must be MHSHA approved. Entries must be shown hunt or saddle seat. Hunt seat may use all purpose, close contact or dressage saddles. Saddle seat may use flat back or dressage saddles.

Snaffle Bit (English)
Smooth snaffle bit with broken mouthpiece (conventional "O" ring, Full cheek, Kimberwick, Pelham, egg butt, or D-Ring) with ring no larger than 4 inches and no smaller than 2 inches. From cheek to 1 inch in from the cheek must be a minimum of 3/8ths inch diameter with a gradual decrease to the center of the snaffle. Optional loose curb strap (leather or nylon only) must be attached below the reins. Horse must be direct reined (reins held in both hands). Saddle seat may also show in full bridle.

GREEN HORSE CLASSES
Green Horse: This project is for those who have horses that are not fully trained, but don't fit into the colt to maturity project because of age or ability.
To participate in this project, you must be 12 years old or older during the current project year, have completed Horsemanship Introduction and levels 1, 2, and 3; and have completed a standard written test and/or demonstrated an ability to handle the project to the county horse leader or designated person.
Level I and **Level II -** horses will show best with a ring snaffle bit or rawhide noseband hackamore.
Level III - horses may be shown with a ring snaffle bit, rawhide noseband hackamore or short shank curb bit.
Level IV - horses will be shown with a curb bit. English may show with a Pelham or Weymouth bit.
Level I, II, and III - horses may use a German Olympic or running martingale with snaffle bit only.

Tie downs and other martingales are not permitted in any of the Levels.

TRAIL CLASSES
- Horses under 5 years old may be ridden with curb bits, snaffles, or bosals.

SPEED EVENTS

- A certified equestrian helmet must be worn in all speed events.
- Western or English type equipment may be used.
- May use a single rein (roping rein).
- Use of a tie down, martingale, and splint or bell boots are optional.
- Use of a hackamore or other types of bridles is optional; however, the equipment steward may prohibit the use of bits or equipment that may be considered severe.

JUDGING

SHOWMANSHIP CLASSES:

Judging Criteria for Showmanship Classes:

- Showing the horse 50 %
- Appearance of the horse 40 %
- The exhibitor 10 %

Exhibitor: The member must be neat and clean in appearance and appropriately dressed in western attire.

Equipment: All horses must be shown with a properly adjusted halter. Lead shanks with chains may be used but the use of the chain over the nose or under the jaw or in any way having contact with the horse will be prohibited. Whips or bridles will not be allowed.

Appearance of the horse: The hair coat should be clean, well brushed, and free of dust, dandruff, manure stains, and bots (fly eggs). The hair coat should have a natural luster so excessive oils contracted from spray cans and other market products will be counted down. Trimming should accentuate quality about the heads and legs. Breed standards for exhibition should be followed. The hooves should be clean and properly trimmed and shaped. No preference will be shown for hoof dressing or coloring. Tack should be neat, clean, and properly dressed and adjusted. Tack should complement, not detract from the horse.

Showing the horse: All exhibitors will be asked to perform a pattern. The pattern will be posted at least one hour before class time. The exhibitor may be asked to perform the following maneuvers in the pattern: walk, trot, back, hindquarter pivots, set up squarely, move forward and backward freely. The showman may be asked to pick up any or all feet of his/her horse and know the parts of their horse. The exhibitor should perform the pattern briskly and in a businesslike manner. All contestants enter the ring at the direction of the judge. Work calmly and quietly and be alert for instructions from the judge or steward. Walk briskly and in a businesslike manner. The horse should be trained to carry their head alertly and appear brilliant and proud. The horse should move in a straight line away from the judge. Failure to lead straight away from or toward the judge is a major fault. Any maneuvers can be performed at cones in different pattern configurations. The horse should set up quickly and move forward or backward without hesitation. The horse should stand square, quiet and yet alert at all times when not performing maneuvers.

The exhibitor must never obstruct the judge's view of the horse. This means the exhibitor must position his body either to the front left or the front right of the horse, using the quarter system. The exhibitor

should lead from the left side of the horse with the lead shank held in the right hand about 4 to 8 inches from the halter. Hold the excess shank, coiled in a figure 8 with the left hand. The horse should move readily and freely with the exhibitor at the near side of the horse's neck and in front of the shoulder. The horse should neither be ahead of the exhibitor nor should he be dragged along. When asked to back your horse in showmanship, you may back with the right or left hand holding the lead shank. At the judge's discretion, the finalists in each class may be called back into the arena for further work.

Exhibitors from Pre-Junior, Junior, and Senior showmanship classes who received either a Purple Rosette or a Purple Flat ribbon will be called back for top showman.

YEARLING AT HALTER SHOWMANSHIP:

Judging Criteria for Yearling at Halter:

- Performance and Manners 50%
- Confirmation and Condition 25%
- Appearance of Horse and Exhibitor 15%
- Project Knowledge 10%

Intent:

- To show handling, willingness, control, and training demonstrated in the showmanship pattern

WESTERN HORSEMANSHIP CLASSES:

Judging Criteria for Western Horsemanship Classes:

- Seat and hands 40%
- Performance of pattern 40%
- Appointments 10%
- Project knowledge 10%

General Requirements: A horse entered in Western Horsemanship, can be shown in only one level per family member. Horses may not be cross-entered in colt-to-maturity or green horse classes.

Horses must be shown in a stock saddle. Tie-downs, martingales and mechanical hackamores of any type are prohibited unless otherwise indicated in the class description. Split or Romal reins are permissible, but roping reins are not allowed. Splint boots, bell boots and skid boots are optional.

Spurs are optional except in bareback where they are not permitted. Spurs should not be used forward of the cinch. In all classes the judge has the option of requesting one or all contestants perform individually.

Horses under four (4) years of age in Horsemanship and Trail Classes may be ridden with curb bits, snaffles, or bosals. Snaffle bits and bosals must be ridden two handed except opening and closing gates. It is mandatory that horses five (5) and over be ridden in a curb bit. Curb or shank bits must be ridden one handed. Flat chain curb straps or flat leather curb straps ½ inch or wider are required with a curb or shank bit of any kind.

To be acceptable bits must meet USEF requirements:

Snaffle Bit: - See 'Snaffle Bit', page 8 - Equipment

Curb Bit: - See 'Curb Bit', page 8 - Equipment

Braided Rawhide or Leather Bosal: - See 'Bosal', page 8 - Equipment

Position:
General: Rider will be judged on seat and hands and performance of horse. Results as shown by the performance of the horse are not to be considered more important than the method used in obtaining them. Breaking of the pattern is considered a major fault.

Basic Position: The rider should be seated so that from the side view a vertical line could be drawn from the center of his head down through his shoulder and seat to the back of his heel. The eyes should be up and shoulders back. The stirrup should be just short enough to allow heels to be lower than the toes. Body always should appear comfortable, relaxed and flexible. Feet should be placed in the stirrups with weight on the ball of the foot. Arms are in a straight line with the body, the one holding the reins bent at the elbow. When a curb bit is used, only one hand is to be used for reining and hands shall not be changed. Hand is to be around reins. When using split reins, one finger between reins is permitted. End of split reins falls on near side.

When using romal reins, no finger between reins is allowed. The hand holding the romal reins should be above the horn and as near to it as possible. Bracing against the horn is penalized. The end of the romal reins should be held in the opposite hand at least 16 inches away from the reining hand. Opposite hand can be placed on the leg, or the arm held in a straight position.

Position in Motion: Rider should sit to jog and not post. At the lope, the rider should be close to the saddle. All movements of horse should be governed by the use of subtle aids and the shifting of rider's weight is not desirable.

Mounting and Dismounting: To mount, take reins in left hand and place hand on withers. Grasp stirrup leather with right hand and insert left foot in stirrup. Toe should be pointed toward girth and mount. To dismount, rider may step down or slide down. The size of the rider must be taken into consideration.

Western Horsemanship Level – 1

Required mounted abilities:

- Demonstrate how to check tack before mounting and explain reasons for checking tack.
- Safely mount and dismount.
- Explain and show proper body position when riding and the correct way to hold the reins.
- Show turns to the left and to the right while your horse is walking and then as it is trotting.
- While mounted, back horse five steps.
- While guiding horse, move from a walk to a trot, in both directions of the arena.
- Demonstrate how to stop your horse from a walk, and then from a trot.
- Ride horse in a figure 8 at a walk. Ride horse in a figure 8 at a trot.

Western Horsemanship Level - 2

Required mounted abilities:

- Explain and demonstrate the proper riding position while sitting on the horse and walking the horse.
- Demonstrate, in both directions of the arena, how to guide your horse from a walk to a trot and lope and back to a trot and then a walk.
- Demonstrate a posting (rising) trot, showing the posting rhythm, both directions of the arena.
- Describe and demonstrate how to correctly cue for a lope on the left lead and then on the right lead.
- Lope a circle to the left and then to the right, without breaking gait (horse may be on either lead). Show a balanced stop from a walk.
- Stop from a jog/trot.
- Stop from a lope (rider may need to trot a couple steps when stopping).
- Back six steps while mounted.
- Turn 90 degrees to the right on the hindquarter. Repeat to the left.
- Turn 90 degrees to the left on the forehand. Repeat to the right.
- Demonstrate how to properly neck rein horse to the left and to the right.

Western Horsemanship Level – 3

Required mounted abilities:

- Demonstrate proper riding position at the walk and trot.
- While guiding horse around the arena, demonstrate the difference between a jog and a trot.
- At the jog/trot, ride horse in a straight line, turn left around a marker and return in a straight line, without breaking gait. Repeat maneuver turning right around a marker.
- While guiding horse at a trot in a circle to the left, demonstrate a posting right diagonal. Repeat guiding horse at a trot in a circle to the right, demonstrate a posting left diagonal.
- Demonstrate how to correctly cue horse to lope on the left lead. While maintaining roundness of the circle, lope two circles to the left on the left lead, without breaking gait. Repeat maneuver on right lead.
- Lope a figure 8 pattern showing a drop to trot lead change in the center of the pattern.
- From a trot, demonstrate a balanced stop.
- While mounted, back your horse in a straight line for 10 steps.
- Turn 180 degrees to the left on the hindquarter. Repeat maneuver to the right on the hindquarter.
- Turn 180 degrees to the left on the forehand. Repeat maneuver to the right on the forehand.
- Side pass to the left six steps (or three crossovers). Repeat maneuver with side pass to the right.

Western Horsemanship Level – 4

Required mounted abilities:

Demonstrate proper riding position in a walk, jog and lope.

- While mounted, back horse in a square
- Demonstrate how to extend horse's stride at a walk.
- Demonstrate how to collect horse's stride at a walk.
- Walk to marker A. Lope a straight line to B and stop.
- From a lope, perform a balanced stop.
- While riding a serpentine, change diagonals with the emphasis on recognition of the correct diagonal in the right place.
- Demonstrate loping a left lead. Rollback to the right and lope off in the correct lead.
- Turn 360 degrees to the right on the hindquarter. Turn 360 degrees to the left on the hindquarter.
- Turn 360 degrees to the right on the forehand. Turn 360 degrees to the left on the forehand.

Western Horsemanship Level – 5

Required mounted abilities:

- Demonstrate a drop to jog lead change in a straight line.
- Drop stirrups and ride as instructed on the rail
- While walking a circle, demonstrate horse's hip in, going both directions.
- While walking a circle, demonstrate horse's hip out, going both directions.
- Demonstrate two consecutive 360-degree spins to the left and to the right.
- Demonstrate how to extend horse's stride at a jog.
- Demonstrate how to collect horse's stride at a jog.
- Counter canter a left circle and than a right circle.
- From marker A, demonstrate a lead departure on a straight line from a stop.
- Demonstrate a lead change in a straight line (drop to trot change).

Western Horsemanship Level – 6

Required mounted abilities:

- While mounted, back a balanced 10 ft. circle.
- Demonstrate how to extend your horse's stride at a lope.
- Demonstrate how to collect your horse's stride at a lope.
- Demonstrate four consecutive spins with correctness to the left and to the right.
- With stirrups dropped, lope a left circle, demonstrating a balanced position.
- With stirrups dropped, lope a right circle, demonstrating a balanced position.
- Ride a figure 8 executing a flying lead change to the left and then to the right.

Western Horsemanship Level – 7

Required mounted abilities:

- Flying lead change performed in both directions.
- 4 consecutive spins to the right and left
- Counter canter both directions.
- Rollback each direction.
- Backing
- Demonstrate how to extend horse's stride in the jog and lope.
- Lead departure from a stop.

WESTERN EQUITATION (formerly known as Western Pleasure) (OPTIONAL CLASSES):

The horse must show in a recognized Western, English, Driving, Packing, Ranch, or Green Horse riding class in order to show in an options class.

Judging Criteria for Western Pleasure Classes:

- Performance 60%
- Conformation 30%
- Appointments 10%

Classes are to be judged at a walk, trot, and lope/canter both ways of the ring (except for Level 1- walk/ trot/only) to showcase the rider's equitation and ability at various gates along the rail. One or more contestants may be asked to come back and/or perform individual patterns at the judge's discretion. Riders will be judged on seat, feet, hands, and the ability to control the horse and on the performance of the horse. Proper western attire must be worn. These classes will be entered by your level at the Fair and your enrollment within your County.

ENGLISH HORSEMANSHIP CLASSES:

Judging Criteria for English Horsemanship Classes:

- Seat and hands 40%
- Performance of pattern 40%
- Appointments 10%
- Project knowledge 10%

A horse entered in English Horsemanship can be shown in only one level per family member. Horses may not be cross-entered in English Colt-to-Maturity Project Classes or Green Horse Classes. Entries must be shown hunt or saddle seat. Spurs and crops are optional.

When riding hunt seat, only regulation snaffles, Pelhams, Kimberwicks, and full bridles, all with cavesson nosebands are allowed. In saddle seat classes, entries must be shown in snaffles, Pelhams, or full bridles (curb and snaffle). A regulation snaffle is defined as a smooth snaffle bit with broken mouthpiece (conventional) – (ring, Egg-butt, or D-ring)- with ring not longer than 4" and no smaller than 2". From the cheek to one inch in front the cheek must be a minimum of 3/8" diameter with a gradual decrease to the center of the snaffle. USEF approved bits are also acceptable bits.

Hunter Type Position

General:

Rider should have workmanlike appearance, seat and hands light and supple, conveying the impression of complete control should any emergency arise. Breaking of pattern is considered a major fault.

Hands: Hands should be over and in front of 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 holding reins is optional and bite of reins may fall on either side. However, all reins must be picked up at the same time.

Basic Position: The eyes should be up and shoulders back. Toes should be at an angle best suited to rider's conformation: ankles flexed in, heels down, calf or leg in contact with horse and slightly behind girth. Iron should be on the ball of the foot and must not be tied to girth.

Position in motion: At the walk, sitting trot and canter, body should be a couple degrees in front of the vertical; rising trot, inclined forward; galloping and jumping, same inclination as the rising trot.

Mounting and dismounting: To mount, take up reins in left hand and place hand on withers. Grasp stirrup leather with right hand and insert left foot in stirrup, toe in girth and mount. To dismount, rider may either step down or slide down. The size of the rider must be taken into consideration.

Saddle Seat Position

General: Judges should note that the required 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. When riding saddle seat in the Horsemanship Classes, riders should convey the impression of effective and easy control. To show a horse well, he should show himself to the best advantage. Breaking a pattern is considered a major fault.

Hands: 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 his 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. The bite of the reins should fall on the right side.

Basic Position: The eyes should be up and shoulders back. To obtain the proper position, the rider should place himself comfortably in the saddle and find his center of gravity by sitting with a slight bend at the knees but without the use of irons. While at this position, adjust leathers to fit. Irons should be placed under ball of foot with even pressure on entire width of sole and center of iron. Foot position should be natural.

Position in motion:
Walk: Slight motion in saddle.
Trot: Slight elevation in saddle rising, hips under body, not mechanical up-and-down nor swinging forward and backward.
Canter: Close seat, going with horse.

Mounting and dismounting: To mount, take up reins in left hand and place hand on withers. Grasp stirrup leather with right hand and insert left foot in stirrup, toe in girth and mount. To dismount, rider may either step down or slide down. The size of rider must be taken into consideration.
For required mounted abilities, for each English Horsemanship Class, please refer to the corresponding Western Horsemanship Class.

ENGLISH PLEASURE (OPTIONAL CLASSES):

Judging Criteria for English Pleasure Classes:

- Performance 60%
- Conformation 30%
- Appointments 10%
  Maximum credit will be given to the flowing, balanced and willing horse.

The horse must show in a recognized Western, English, Driving, Packing, Ranch or Green Horse riding class in order to show in an options class.

Horse to be shown at a walk, trot, and canter (except Level I walk/trot only) both directions in the ring. Horses are to be reversed to the inside, away from the rail. Horses should back easily and stand quietly. Horses may be asked to transition to a canter from a flat-footed walk or trot, at the judge's discretion. Judge is encouraged to call for individual work for finalists. Age of exhibitor must be taken into consideration when determining difficulty of pattern/test. Due to difficulty of properly fitting tack, riders shall not be asked to change horses.

COLT-TO- MATURITY PROJECT:

The Colt-to-Maturity yearling project requirements will consist of the following:

- Exhibitor must be a minimum of 12 years old during the project year and must have completed Horsemanship Level 3**.**
- Exhibitor may only show one horse

Refer to Bulletin 353, "Training Horses-Yearling to Five Year Olds".

COLT-TO-MATURITY CLASSES:

Colt-to-Maturity: This project is for those who own or have available a colt or filly to care for and train. This is a five-year progressive project beginning with a yearling. The project is designed to help you select a foal and train it to maturity. Member must be 11 years old or older during the project year, completed Horsemanship Introduction and levels 1, 2, and 3; have completed a standard written test

and/or demonstrated his ability to handle the project to the county horse leader or designated person. Stallions are allowed only in the yearling phase. To change yearlings, members need a letter documenting why, proper registration papers and forms; this information must be received by the Extension Office by June 1st of the current 4-H year.

Colt- to-Maturity project animals may not be trained by a professional trainer.

Level I – filly-colt **Level II** – 2-year-old **Level III** – 3-year-old
Level IV – 4-year-old **Level V** – 5-year-old

General: The use of running martingale or German Olympic martingale is permissible with snaffle bits only, but not mandatory (it is suggested that any time a martingale is used with a snaffle bit, martingale stops should be used. Other martingales, tie downs, and bits are not permitted). See above for English requirements.

- **Two- and Three-Year-Olds** must show with a D-Ring, full cheek, egg butt, or "O" ring snaffle bit or a Bosal. Three-year-olds may be shown with a curb or shank bit. If a curb or shank bit is used, the horse must be neck reined with one hand. The use of running martingales or German Olympic martingale is permissible with snaffle bits only, but not mandatory. Other martingales, tie downs, and bits are not permissible.
- **Four- Year-Olds** may show with a snaffle bit, a bosal, a curb or a shank bit. If a curb or shank bit is used, the horse must be neck reined with one hand. No additional credit will be given for neck reining.
- **Five- Year-Olds** must show with a curb bit using one hand to neck rein. Skid boots are optional for sliding stop.

Colt-to-Maturity – Western & English

Judging Criteria for Colt to Maturity – Western & English

- Performance and manners of horse 55%
- Equitation 25%
- Appearance 10%
- Project Knowledge 10%

Walk:

- **Good**: ground covering, flat footed, good attitude, brisk (English)
- **Minor faults**: slow, disinterested, not attentive
- **Major faults:** nervous, jigging, not walking

Jog: (Western)

- **Good:** easy riding, good motion, consistent, steady
- **Minor faults:** too slow, too fast
- **Major faults:** not performing a two-beat jog, failing to jog both front and back, hard or rough riding, constant breaking

Trot: (English)

- **Good: b**alanced, free moving, consistent, steady
- **Minor faults:** too slow, too fast
- **Major faults:** not performing a trot, failing to trot both front and back, hard or rough riding, constant breaking

Lope: (Western) (cannot extend)

- **Good:** easy riding, good motion, consistent, steady
- **Minor faults:** too slow, too fast
- **Major faults:** wrong lead, pulling, jogging behind, hard or rough riding, not under control

Canter: (English)

- **Good:** smooth, unhurried, consistent, steady
- **Minor faults:** too slow, too fast
- **Major faults:** wrong lead, pulling, trotting behind, hard or rough riding, not riding under control

Extended Jog: (Western)

- **Good:** easy riding, good motion, smooth, consistent
- **Minor faults:** inconsistent speed
- **Major faults:** breaking gaits, pulling, hard or rough riding, and no increase in stride

Extended trot/Canter: (English)

- **Good:** strong, ground covering, smooth, consistent
- **Minor faults:** inconsistent speed
- **Major faults:** breaking gaits, pulling, hard or rough riding, uncontrolled, no increase in stride

Back:

- **Good:** proper flexion, readily responsive, back in straight line
- **Minor faults:** hesitant, not back straight
- **Major faults:** throwing head, gaping, pulling, not backing, rearing

General:

- **Good:** smooth, steady, easy riding, proper flexion and balance, good attitude
- **Minor faults:** over or under flexion, sour ears, switching tail, inconsistent speed, out of balance, poll to high or too low to throw horse out of balance, improper or incomplete appointments
- **Major faults:** throwing head, bad mouth, constantly bumping the bit, gaping, evidence of altered tail carriage, obvious schooling, or breaking of pattern.

Two-Year-Old Under Saddle – Western & English

For equipment, see the Equipment section of this book.

Open only to two-year-old fillies and geldings. Horses will be judged at walk, jog, and lope (trot and canter, in English) both directions on the rail. English riders must post the trot and extended trot, Western riders must sit the jog and extended jog. Change of gait will be progressive. Horses will be direct reined only (rein in each hand). The use of running martingales or German Olympic martingales is permissible, but not mandatory. Other martingales, tie downs and bits are not permissible. It is suggested that any time a martingale is used with a snaffle bit, martingale stops should be used.

Other tasks the contestant may be asked to perform are:

- Halt (not sliding stop) from walk
- Dismount and mount
- Back while mounted
- Perform individual task

Three-Year-Old Under Saddle – Western & English

Open only to three-year-old mares and geldings. You may use the same bit as the two-year-old horses. Horses can be indirect reined (neck reined) with a curb bit using one hand on the reins (Western) or direct reined with a snaffle bit using two hands on reins. Either method is acceptable; no additional credit will be given for neck reining. In English, horses will be shown in a D or O ring snaffle bit. Spurs cannot be used forward of the cinch. For other equipment information, refer to the equipment section of this book. Horses will be judged on performance of the required pattern and may be judged at the walk, jog, and lope (trot and canter in English) on the rail both directions and lengthen and reduce each gait as directed by the judge. Western riders must sit the jog and extended jog. English riders must post the trot and extended trot. Pattern will be posted at the arena prior to class time.

Four-Year-Old Under Saddle – Western & English

Open to four-year-old mares and geldings. For Western riders, if a contestant desires to use a curb bit, one hand must be used. Horses may be neck reined or direct reined when using a snaffle bit. Either method is acceptable, and no additional credit will be given for neck reining. For English riders, horses will be shown in a D or O ring snaffle bit or Kimberwick. Use of German Olympic Martingale or running martingale may be used when using a ring snaffle only, but it is not mandatory. For other equipment information, see the Equipment section of this book. Horses will be judged on performance of the required pattern and may be judged at the walk, jog, and lope (trot and canter in English) on the rail in both directions and lengthen and reduce each gait as directed by the judge. Western riders must sit the jog and the extended jog. English riders must post the trot and extended trot. Pattern will be posted at the arena prior to class time.

Five-Year-Old Under Saddle – Western & English

Open to five-year-old mares and geldings. For Western riders, horses will be neck reined and be shown in a curb bit only, using one hand. Skid boots are optional. For English, horses will be shown in a Pelham, Weymouth, or Kimberwick bit or English snaffle. For other equipment information, refer to the Equipment section of this book. Horses will be judged on performance of the required pattern and may be judged at the walk, jog, and lope (trot and canter in English) on the rail in both directions and lengthen and reduce each gait as directed by the judge. Western riders must sit the jog and the extended jog. English riders must post the trot and extended trot.

Please note: The State 4-h Horse Show competition combines the C2M and Green Horse classes that are the same age. If you are entered in the Green Horse Project, you will enter the State Show based on your horse's age.

GREEN HORSE – WESTERN AND ENGLISH

Exhibitor must be a minimum of 12 years old during the project year and must have completed Horsemanship Level 3.

Horse must be enrolled in the Green Horse project. No stallions allowed in this project. Members must enroll in the level of the Green Horse project that fits the project horse at the time of enrollment. This is to be determined by the county horse committee or horse leader(s). Horses of any age may be used in this project. The member may take as their project horse one of riding age that is unbroken or green broke (started but not finished) which they wish to train.

Project horses must be shown with a saddle. Spurs are permissible, but not encouraged. Spurs should not be used forward of the cinch. Horses shown in Levels I and II should be direct reined (rein held in each hand). No additional credit will be given for neck reining. Horse in Level III may be direct reined, or neck reined with the snaffle, hackamore or curb. The horses will be evaluated on the quality of their performance without regard for the method or reining used. Horses will be judged on performance of the required pattern and may be judged at the walk, jog, and lope on the rail both directions, and lengthen and reduce each gait as directed by the judge. For further information on project guidelines, refer to Publication 5256, "4-H Green Horse Project Manual."

BAREBACK EQUITATION (OPTIONAL CLASSES):

The horse must show in a recognized Western, English, Driving, Packing, Ranch or Green Horse riding class in order to show in an options class.

Classes to be judged at a walk, trot, and lope/canter both ways of the ring (except for Level I walk/trot only). One or all contestants may be asked to back and/or perform individual pattern at the discretion of the judge.

Riders will be judged on seat, feet, hands, and the ability to control the horse. NO CHAPS and NO SPURS are allowed. Members 14 and over may be asked to dismount and mount. English and Western attire may be worn. These classes will be entered by your level at the Fair and your enrollment at your county.

TRAIL – (OPTIONAL CLASS):

The horse must show in a recognized Western, English, Driving, Packing, Ranch or Green Horse riding class in order to show in an options class.

The Trail Classes may be judged separately from the other classes by another judge. There will be separate patterns for each age division. Exhibitors will go through their Trail Class course according to the posted schedule when they have a break in other classes.

Members <u>can only participate once.</u> Western or English tack may be used. Trail classes will be judge on performance of the horse in maneuvering the obstacles. The horse should work with a reasonably loose rein without undue restraint. **Horses five and older must be ridden one handed in a curb bit unless ridden English.**

Four or more obstacles will be used, of which three will be mandatory and others selected from an approved list. The distance between obstacles shall be at the discretion of the judge. Pre-junior patterns may be simplified.

In all classes of trail, there will be 3 obvious refusals allowed, after which the member will be asked to move to the next obstacle. There will be no time limit.

While horse is in motion, rider's hands shall be clear of horse to avoid cuing. Horses are to be penalized by an unnecessary delay while approaching obstacle. Judges are encouraged to advance on to the next obstacle any horse taking excessive time at an obstacle.

<u>Mandatory Obstacles</u>

- Opening, passing through and closing gate. Use a gate which will not endanger horse or rider; gate constructed with a minimum of 50 inches from the top of gate to ground and a minimum width of 4 feet.
- Ride over a wooden bridge. Bridge should be of sturdy construction with a minimum width of 36 in. and with non-slip ramp approach.
- Back through poles pattern. "L" shaped course at least 30 inches in width or back a triangle pattern through three oil drums, etc.

<u>Optional Obstacles for Trail Classes</u>

- Ride over at least four (4) logs.
- Water hazard
- Walk over single pole (obstacles not more than 18 inches high).
- Carry object from one part of arena to another. Only objects which reasonably might be carried on a trail ride may be used.
- Put on and remove slicker.
- Dismount and lead horse over obstacles not more than 18 inches high.
- Remove and replace material from mailbox.
- Side pass
- Obstacle consisting of four logs or rails each 5 to 6 ft. long, laid in a square. Each contestant will enter the square by stepping over log or rail at designated side. When all four feet are inside the square, rider will execute a 360˚ turn (right or left), pause and depart by stepping over the log or rail immediately opposite the side of entry.

- Ground tying (dismount, walk about 10 to 15 feet and return and mount; also to be judged on dismounting and mounting).
- **NO** bales of hay or straw will be used in a trail class because of danger of catching feet or shoes in string or wire.
- **NO** tires will be used in a trail class because of danger of catching feet in tires.

YEARLING-AT-TRAIL: - (OPTIONAL CLASS)

Judging Criteria for Yearling-Trail:

- Conditioning and conformation 20%
- Handling/Course Completion 80%

4-H member must be enrolled and meet the Colt-to-Maturity requirements. This class is designed for yearling fillies and colts registered in the Colt-to-Maturity project and shown at the fair. The exhibitors will lead their yearling through the posted course similar in difficulty to that of the 10 and under trail class with the exception that no loping will be required, just a walk, trot, back and possibly a side pass. As with other trail classes where horses are ridden, there will be 6 or more obstacles used, 3 of which are mandatory, and the remainder will be from the optional list. Again, like the trail classes for riding, the yearling will be judged on their willingness and performance in negotiating the obstacles.

Required abilities:

- This class will be judged on the performance of the horse at halter, in maneuvering through the obstacles.
- A trail course may be set to include; 4 trot-overs, bridge, gate, mailbox, back through.
- Obstacles will not be raised (trot-overs and bridge)

SPEED EVENTS – (OPTIONAL CLASSES) - Barrel Racing and Pole Bending

General Rules:

The horse used must be shown in a recognized Western, English, Driving, Packing, Ranch or Green Horse riding class. Contestants will not be allowed to practice on the official pattern before or between performances.

No two (2) contestants may ride the same horse in the same class and no contestant may compete with more than one (1) horse in the same event. The announcer will call each contestant to the arena. If the contestant fails to enter the arena by the third call, the contestant forfeits his/her run. The contestant must enter the arena in a controlled manner (no running) and may be led in by another person. The arena gate must be closed immediately after entering the arena and kept closed until the pattern is completed and the horse is under control. After entering the ring, the contestant has a reasonable amount of time (to be determined by judge or time officials) to begin run. Judge's or time officials' decision is final. A flagger must be at starting line. Electric timer *and/or* at least two watches will be used for timing the event. The official time will be time indicated by the electric timer or average of watches used by official timers. In case of electronic timer malfunction and/or watch malfunction, a rerun will be awarded. The horse's nose will be flagged as it passes the starting line. All barrels must be twenty (20) yards or further apart.

BARREL RACING

Horses must be 4-H project horses, non-project horses will be disqualified.

Contestant may start to either right or left barrel first but must make one right turn and two left turns, or one left turn and two right turns.

- **5 seconds** will be added for every barrel knocked over.
- Red ribbons will be given to contestants that break the pattern.
- Blue ribbons will be given to the contestants that do the pattern correctly.
- Top awards will be from the fastest times from the blue-ribbon winners.

POLE BENDING

Horses must be 4-H project horses, non-project horses will be disqualified.

Each contestant shall have a line of 6 poles. Contestant races to pole on turning line, makes a left or right turn, bends through and back, weaving through poles, then races back across finish line.

- **5 seconds** per pole will be added for up to three poles knocked over.
- Red ribbons will be given to riders who break pattern and/or knock over more than three poles.

Blue ribbons will be given to riders who do the pattern correctly.
Top awards will be given to the fastest times of blue-ribbon winners.

WORKING RANCH HORSE

Refer to Marias Fair Working Ranch Horse Rule Book.

DRIVING

Use guidelines outlined in Montana 4-H Horse Driving Manual at appropriate level.

PACKING

Use guidelines outlined in Montana 4-H Horse Packing Manual at appropriate level.

HANDICAPPED SAFETY & HANDLING FROM THE GROUND

This class will be offered to individuals who are physically or mentally challenged. These members may have leaders or other members assist them.

Reminder: All 4-H members who receive awards, plaques or scholarships need to write Thank You notes to the sponsors. We are very grateful to our sponsors for their support of the 4-H Horse Program. Many express their appreciation to us when they receive a thank you from participating 4-H members. The sponsor's name/address is usually labeled on the back of the award. If you need sponsor information, please call the Extension Office.

EXTENSION AGENT RESPONSIBILITIES

a. Facilitator to Horse Leaders and ex-officio member of rules committee.
b. Responsible for receiving complaints or policy exceptions from members and referring to the proper committee, following up on ruling and referring back to member in a timely manner.
c. Submit show results to the newspaper(s).
d. Responsible for getting all State Horse Show information to Horse Leaders Committee.
e. Notify membership of awards available.
f. Notify leaders of special meetings or workshops
g. Special awards and orders will be made through the Extension Office.

MARIAS FAIR 4-H HORSE SHOW RULE BOOK