



2021-2022 Delaware 4-H Horse Judging Contest Leaders Guide

For special accommodations in accessing this event please notify the extension office two weeks prior to the event.

Introduction:

The Delaware 4-H Horse Judging contest is held annually during the Delaware State Fair in conjunction with the Delaware FFA Horse Judging Career Development event contest. The contest consists of judging and placing several classes and giving at least one set of oral reasons. The contest is organized by officials from the Delaware 4-H and FFA Programs with assistance from volunteer members of the State 4-H Horse Advisory Committee and others.

Purpose:

Judging contests are utilized by the Delaware 4-H program to develop critical thinking skills such as comparing and contrasting, decision making, and oral communication as well as to enhance project knowledge.

Eligibility of Participants:

Participants must be current Delaware 4-H members. Each county is allowed 10 participants for a total of 30 contestants statewide. If a county does not fill all ten of its slots, then those unused slots become available for other counties to use. Individual counties determine the selection process to fill these slots. Attending county judging practices is usually a good way to ensure a young person's participation. Information on practice sessions is included in newsletters and direct mailings to organizational leaders, horse project group leaders and youth who have registered as having a horse project. These practices are open to anyone who wishes to attend. Project groups are welcomed and encouraged to do their own training as well. Each county is required to hold some sort of qualifying event to be able to participate in a judging contest at the state level. Please check with your county agent if you would like more information on the county qualifying event.

Contest Format:

The State 4-H Horse Judging contest is held in the Quillen Arena. Participants are

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expected to report at least 10 minutes prior to the start of the contest in order to receive their judging cards and to hear any additional instructions. At this time participants will be notified of the classes to be judged and any reasons classes will be identified to them in advance. Youth may not be permitted to participate in the contest if they are late. They also need to bring with them a clipboard, plain paper for taking oral reasons notes, and a pen or pencil. No additional material is permitted and may result in disqualification. All participants compete against each other regardless of age or experience. *Participants may not use any type of electronic device (cell phone, pager, pda, etc.) during the contest and will be disqualified if they are caught doing so.*

The contest consists of judging three or four halter classes, one or two performance under saddle classes, and giving one set of oral reasons. The halter classes are positioned within the Quillen Arena and participants are divided such that one group is judging each class. Participants have approximately 15 minutes to judge the class and take any notes necessary to give their oral reasons. Horse handlers give the youth side, front and rear views, and then walk and trot the horses one at a time. Near the conclusion of the class, participants are allowed in for a "close inspection".

Once time is called, 4-H members must hand in their placing card to officials before they rotate on to the next class. It is important that they note their class placing on their notes sheet for the oral reasons class because once the placing card is handed in, they may not have it back. Participants are expected to give one set of oral reasons on the designated class at the conclusion of the judging classes. A short break for preparation time is allowed.

Oral reasons are ideally delivered within two minutes without the use of notes. They are judged on criteria such as terminology, organization, accuracy, relevancy and presentation. A participant will score higher if they can deliver their oral reasons without the use of notes. Sometimes after the delivery of oral reasons, the judge will ask the participant a few specific questions to see how well they understood or observed the class.

Examples of Potential Classes:

Common breeds judged during the halter portion of the contest have included (but are not limited to) Arabians, Quarter Horses, Paint Horses, Appaloosa Horses, Haflingers, Conformation Hunter Type Horses, Miniature Horses, Morgan Horses, Shetland Ponies, Standardbred Horses, Stock Horses, Stock Ponies, Trottingbred Ponies and Welsh Ponies. At least one of the performance classes will be a "pleasure type" class and every attempt will be made to alternate from English to Western disciplines each year. Common performance classes include but are not limited to English Pleasure (Saddle Seat), Hunter Under Saddle (Hunt Seat), Hunt Seat Equitation, Hunter Hack, Park Horse Pleasure, Ranch Pleasure, Ranch Riding, Western Horsemanship and Western Pleasure. An additional Performance Class may also be judged in a more specialized focus. These can include (but are not limited to) Pleasure Driving, Trail, Trail in Hand, Reining, Western Riding, Hunter Hack and Working Western. The guidelines utilized in

the placing of judging classes include USEF, USTA, ARHA, AQHA, ECRRA and respective breed association rules.

Available Resources:

There are several resources available for use by 4-H Leaders, parents and members to help prepare for the horse judging contest. The Washington State Horse Judging manual is available at online and gives specifics on how to judge and place classes. It also gives instructions on the proper format, terms and delivery of oral reasons. Each county also has access to an equine learning laboratory kit. This kit can be signed out to borrow for meetings and trainings. In the kit you will find lots of activities that support learning and preparing for the State 4-H Horse Judging contest.

Also consider consulting breed association websites as many times they offer quality information on breed standards and performance classes for free. Some breed associations to consider are:

- AQHA Handbook/Rulebook- <https://www.aqha.com/aqha-rulebook>
- USEF Rule Book- <https://www.usef.org/compete/resources-forms/rules-regulations/rulebook>
- Washington State University 4-H Horse Judging Manual
<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2082/2019/10/pnw05754-HHorseJudgingManual.pdf>
- AQHA Horse Judging Manual- <https://www.aqha.com/news-and-publications/e-books/free-ebooks/competitive-horse-judging-manual1?inheritRedirect=true>
- 4-H Horse Judging Resources Penn State <https://extension.psu.edu/programs/4-h/projects/horses/rules-references-and-resources/horse-quiz-bowl-rules-and-references>
- 4-H Horse Judging Resources University of Maryland
<https://extension.umd.edu/4-h/youth-horse-judging-references>
- 4-H Horse Judging Resources NC State
<https://equinehusbandry.ces.ncsu.edu/equinehusbandry-educational-materials/horse-judging-resource-material/>
- University of Nebraska Horse Judging Resources including narrated Power points and how to evaluate specific classes <https://animalscience.unl.edu/horse-judging-information>

- 4-H Horse Judging Resource Videos-Georgia
<https://georgia4h.org/programs/focus-areas/agriculture-stem/agriculture/livestock-and-animal-projects/judging-teams/horse/>
- Arabian Horse Association <https://www.arabianhorses.org/youth/resources/>
- American Shetland Pony Club/American Miniature Horse Registry
<http://www.shetlandminiature.com>
- American Morgan Horse Association-
http://www.morganhorse.com/upload/photos/859Youth_Judging_Guide.pdf
- American Paint Horse Association- <http://www.apha.com/breed>
- Horse selection and evaluation learning products offered through My Horse University
<https://www.myhorseuniversity.com/selection-evaluation>
- eXtension articles on horse judging and evaluation
<https://horses.extension.org/category/horse-judging/>
<https://horses.extension.org/judging-horses-conformation-classes/>
- Resources for 4-H Horse Judging by Mississippi State University Extension
<http://extension.msstate.edu/msu-online-horse-judging-educational-page>
- East Coast Ranch Riding Association (ECRRA) Rulebook
<https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-26510479/documents/5e4038eadbb203p6fKrS/EC%20Rule%20Book%202020.pdf>
- Resources for Reining
 - https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/how_do_you_judge_reining
 - <http://co4h.colostate.edu/resources/horse/scorecards/Reining.pdf>