

New York State 4-H Horse Model Horse Show Rulebook

Introduction: What is a Model Horse Show?

A Model Horse Show is a unique and engaging opportunity for 4-H members to showcase their creativity, horsemanship knowledge, and craftsmanship. Participants present model horses in various classes, capturing moments in the lives of real or imaginary horses. Model horses from brands like Breyer, Peter Stone, or Hartland are displayed in classes that simulate real horse show scenarios, such as conformation/breed classes, fitting and showmanship, trail, pleasure, and more.

Why Participate in a Model Horse Show?

Participating in a Model Horse Show offers numerous benefits:

Educational Experience: The show serves as a fun and educational way to learn about horse show classes, tack, barn safety, breeds, and various aspects of horsemanship.

Creativity and Craftsmanship: Participants get the chance to express their creativity by hand-making tack, accessories, and other elements of their displays. This encourages craftsmanship and attention to detail.

Skill Development: Setting up displays, organizing information, and presenting model horses enhance participants' organizational and communication skills.

Inclusivity: It allows individuals who may not have access to live horses to actively participate in a "horse/pony" project.

What Should a Model Horse Show Look Like?

A successful Model Horse Show should embody the following characteristics:

Realism: Entries should aim for realism, with the model horses, tack, and accessories reflecting the standards of the class being entered.

Creativity: Exhibitors are encouraged to be creative in their displays, including hand-made items, to enhance the overall presentation.

Education: The show should provide an educational experience for participants and spectators alike, promoting an understanding of horse-related concepts.

Inclusivity: The event should be inclusive, allowing 4-H members of all ages and experience levels to participate, learn, and have fun.

Respect for Guidelines: Exhibitors should adhere to the rules and guidelines outlined in this rulebook, ensuring a fair and organized competition.

Rules and Guidelines:

1. Eligibility:

- The show is open to all registered NYS 4-H members.
- Contestants do not need to have a horse project to enter.

2. Classes:

- Classes should follow the same rules and judging criteria as a live horse show.
- Classes may be divided by junior, and senior levels as entries warrant. A separate Cloverbud Division may be offered.

There are two general divisions for model horse shows: Performance and Halter.

Performance Classes: These classes focus on the horse and the task it is performing. Tack is required for performance class showing. A doll is not required but can add realism to the display. All performance class entries should have a 3" x 5" index card with a description and/or pattern describing the entry's performance. If the model horse is at a trot, the card should indicate something like "trotting at the rail while rising". The tack has to be specific to the task.

Common Performance Classes include:

- English Performance (Hunter/Jumper, Dressage, Saddle Seat, etc.)
- Western Performance (Stock work, Rodeo, Reining, Trail, etc.)
- Costume Classes (Native Costume, Novelty Costume, Costume made by exhibitor)

Halter Classes: These classes evaluate how a model represents the actual breed of horse. The divisions and judging criteria are derived from their real-life counterparts. Although known as "Halter", tack or costumes are not required (check your show bill for exceptions).

Common Halter Classes include:

- Stock Breeds at Halter – Quarter Horses, Paints, Appaloosas
- Sport Breeds at Halter – Thoroughbreds, Standardbreds, Warmbloods
- Light Breeds at Halter – Arabs/part Arabs, Morgans, Saddlebreds (3-gaited)
- Spanish/Gaited Breeds at Halter – Andalusian/Lusitano, Tennessee Walkers, Saddlebreds (gaited)
- Draft Breed at Halter – Belgians, Percherons, Clydesdales, Shires
- Pony Breed at Halter – American Pony Breeds, British Pony Breeds, other purebred ponies
- Any Other Breed at Halter – breeds that wouldn't fit into the classes above including mixed breeds

3. Set-Up:

- Classes must be set up by the 4-H member, not parents or leaders.
- Older 4-H members may assist younger 4-H member if help is needed.
- No one may touch anyone else's models after set-up.

5. Judging Criteria:

- Classes will be judged on age, realism, relevance to the class, scale, correct fitting tack for discipline, detail, neatness, and workmanship.
- Exhibitor does not need to be present during judging – judge may ask exhibitors to step back.

7. Performance Display Requirements:

- Displays should be no larger than 18" x 24".
- A separate display is required for each class entered.
- The whole display should be to scale.

8. Description Card:

- Each performance display must include a description of the class written on a 3" x 5" index card.

9. Awards:

- Cloverbud (5-8 years old) entries will receive feedback and a participation ribbon.
- Junior and Senior entries will be judged and receive a placed ribbon 1 - 6

Setting Up a Show

The show organizer starts the show and directs the exhibitors to the tables for setting up their entries for the class. Usually, multiple tables are set up in the show hall and exhibitors set up for the classes in the order they are shown on the class list. During judging of one class on a table, the next class can be set up on the next table. Prior to judging, the judge will let the exhibitors know to check their setup one more time before the start. Once the judge is working the table, no additional adjustments may be made.

For 4-H and youth shows it is common to have skill level or age divisions. Judges at these types of shows often will call the youth to the table after judging and explain their decision and why one exhibit was picked over another. This is a great opportunity to ask questions, listen, and learn.

A general rule at Model Horse shows is that other exhibitor's horses may not be touched. Model Horses are valuable and often mean a lot to the owners.

Mostly Model Horse Shows are about having fun, learning something new, and enjoying the creativity and passion of fellow equine enthusiasts.

Questions?

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