

# **Sacramento County 4-H Horse Project**

## **Performance Test Study Guide**

*Revised September 2014*



## Table of Contents

<b>Knots (60 Points)</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Grooming (100 Points)</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Foot Inspection (100 Points)</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Showmanship (180 Points)</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Saddling (45 Points)</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Mounting (70 Points)</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Control of Horse (320 Points)</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Dismounting (40 Points)</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Unbridling (25 Points)</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Unsaddling (35 Points)</b> .....	<b>9</b>

## THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE TEST

Please remember there is more than one way to do everything with a horse. As 4-H leaders, we are tasked with teaching each member the 4-H method or response. Other ways are not necessarily wrong or dangerous, the 4-H method or response that we will be teaching is simply what is most acceptable to 4-H and the way 4-H members will be expected to handle themselves and their horses at 4-H meeting, shows and events.

This test is set up in an arena and you will go to different stations to perform different parts of the test. Members of the Horse Performance test group who have been certified to judge that section of your test judge you. Please feel free to ask judges questions prior to starting your testing. They are there to help if you need it. But please come prepared and have all your equipment with you. Leaders and parents if you have question DO NOT ask the judges, go to the Performance Test leader.

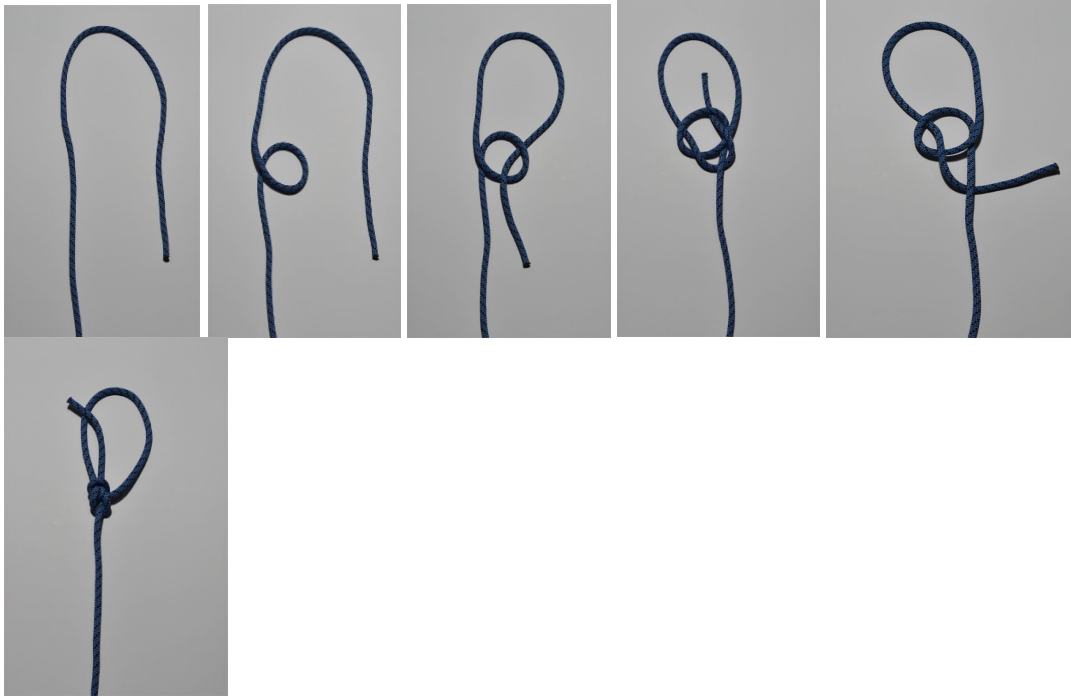
This packet has been made up to help the leaders teach the proper 4-H methods and responses. This packet does not and should not be used to replace good leadership and instruction.

### **Knots (60 Points)**

The 4-H member will be asked to tie three different knots. Each knot has its use and each knot is worth 20 pts. You will be given two tries for each knot with points deducted for each extra attempt. At the end of this packet some picture and instructions have been included for the first two knots. Learning to tie from pictures is not easy. YouTube is helpful or searching the Internet is helpful also. Your leader should be able to show you how to tie each of these three knots, if not please contact the Performance Test resource leader.

- ✓ Bowline – Used to tie around the horse’s neck
- ✓ Slipknot – Used to secure the horse to the trailer or hitching post.
- ✓ Slipknot bowline - This knot can be used for either tying around the horse’s neck or securing him to the trailer or hitching post. The difference in this knot is that if the horse pulls back it does not tighten up as much as the slipknot so it is easier to get untied quickly. The only difference in tying this knot from the regular bowline is that instead of pulling the end all the thru on the last step you leave it as a loop.

### Tying the Bowline Knot



1. Put rope over the horse's neck or a pole
2. Make a loop in the standing end
3. Pass running end through the loop
4. End passes around (behind) standing end
5. Running end goes back through loop
6. Dress and set the knot, leave plenty of tail

### Tying the quick release knot:

Wrap the lead rope two or three times around the ring or beam of the hitching post. This will prevent the knot from becoming too tight.

Make a small loop in the loose end of the rope. Hold the loose end in your right hand and the snap end of the rope in your left hand.

Pass the loose end around the attached lead rope, double it, and put the doubled end through the loop. (To remember how to make the knot, think about how the rabbit comes out of the hole, goes around the tree, and then goes back down the hole again.) Pull the knot snug.

Pull the loose end if you need to release the horse quickly, but he cannot pull the knot loose. The Basic Horse Safety Manual this is the book to use for the true/false section of the performance test.

## Grooming (100 Points)

Grooming means not only cleaning your horse but also improving his health. He will look better, feel better and as a result act and perform better. Vigorous grooming massages the underlying body muscles and improves fitness. It cleans the hair and it stimulates the pores to produce natural oils that bring a shine to your horse's coat.

Grooming also gives you a chance to go over the entire body of your horse. In doing so, you can discover parasite eggs, lice, mange or skin disorders or injuries. Keep all equipment clean.

**To begin:** Make sure judge is ready and tells you to begin. Maintain control of the horse. Your post will hold your horse. (If you were at home- know where you could safely tie your horse).

Groom Bucket contents: Include rubber curry comb, soft brush, stiff brush, mane/tail brush, two sponges and a finishing cloth, sponge one should be marked with an X for the sponge that will be used for the sheath, udder and anus and the unmarked for the eyes, ears nose and mouth. Always start grooming from the left and remember to talk to your horse.

Hold the currycomb in the right hand and the stiff brush in the left hand. Beginning on the left side of the neck near the horse's ear, rub the currycomb in circular motions down the neck and follow with the stiff brush. Continue over the shoulders, back, belly (side and under), hip and legs above the knee and hocks. Never use the currycomb below the knee or hock as it could rupture the small surface veins in the legs. Clean the currycomb by tapping it against the heel of your boot. Clean your stiff brush every few strokes with the Curry Comb.

Use the soft brush to brush the face and behind the ears and on the lower leg-below the knee.

Use the mane/tail brush to brush thru the mane, forelock and tail. Make sure to place a hand on the rump and speak to your horse if you must go to the opposite side to brush the mane. Remember when brushing the horse's tail, to stand to the side and pull the tail around to you. Start at the bottom of the tail and mane and work your way up to reduce the amount of hair that is pulled out and to work thru the tangles.

### Using the Sponges

Use the unmarked sponge to wipe the face. It is recommended to wash and clean the sponges prior to each use- and to arrive to the performance test with sponges moist, not dripping wet or dry. Stroke the eyes with a front to back motion, and the ears with an upward motion. Clean the nostrils and the lips also. Do not actually make contact with the sponge if the sponge is not moistened before the test. If you did not remember to get the sponge damp, just explain to the judge what you would be doing with the sponge, rather than actually doing it with a dry sponge, for example "I am wiping the horse's eye then his ear's, then his mouth then the nostril." Always use sponge in this order, as you never want

to transfer any germs from the nose to the mouth or eye. You are done with the unmarked sponge.

Use the marked sponge to wipe the sheath or udder and followed by the anus (if mare wipe the vulva then the anus). Hold the sponge with the X side up in your hand. Use the X side to wipe the sheath or udder. Turn the sponge over and stand to the side of the horse's bottom. Using your free hand, lift the tail and wipe the anus with the unmarked side. You are done with the marked sponge. It is highly recommended to wash sponges thoroughly. If this sponge is also not damp, just explain what you would do.

Hold finishing cloth in your hand. Beginning with the face, rub cloth down face (eyes, ears, mouth, face area and then the nostril, over the neck, body, under belly, and down the legs of the horse. This helps to remove any fine dust and lays down the hair. You are done with the finishing cloth.

You will only be required to groom the left side of your horse for the test. However, you will need to step around your horse to show how you know how to move safely around your horse. Remember to place a hand on the rump, talk loud so your horse hears you, and stay close (touching with your body or almost touching) and step around the horse to the right side. Remember to do the same thing when you return to the left side. If your horse's mane is on the right side, you will need to correctly move behind the horse during this step.

### **Foot Inspection (100 Points)**

#### **Know Commissures, Frog, Cleft of Frog, Forearm, Hock, Knee and Fetlock**

Make sure judge is ready and tells you to begin. Begin with the left front foot. Speak to horse before touching. Face the rear; place your hand or shoulder on the horse's shoulder. Run your hand down the back of the cannon bone, press or lean against the horse's shoulder to have him shift weight, and then using your thumb and finger squeeze the tendon just above the fetlock and lift the foot. Support the foot on your left knee. Clean the hoof from heel to toe while remembering to clean the cleft (indent behind the frog) and the commissures (deep "V" grooves on either side of the frog). When done, set the foot down gently.

Move to left rear foot. Speak to horse before touching. Face the rear, place you hand or shoulder on the horse's hip. Run your hand down the back of the cannon bone, press or lean against the horse's hip to have him shift weight and then using your thumb and finger squeeze the tendon just above the fetlock and lift the foot. Support the foot on your left knee. Clean the hoof from heel to toe while remembering to clean the cleft (indent behind the frog) and the commissures (deep "V" grooves on either side of the frog). When done, set the foot down gently.

### **Showmanship (180 Points)**

#### **Know Poll, Wither, Dock, Muzzle, Back and Shoulder:**

Showmanship attire is the attire for the entire day. Do not forget to wear helmet for riding.

- ✓ Western – White collared long sleeved shirt; black, blue, or white jeans; boots; belt with buckle; 4-H tie or scarf; 4-H hat or white/off whit straw hat. Pants are to be worn outside of boots.
- ✓ English – White long sleeved shirt with rat catcher; breeches; boots; belt with buckle (if breeches do not have belt loop belt does not have to be worn); 4-h tie or scarf; if showing showmanship in halter (only allowed at performance test) the 4-H hat can be worn, but if showing in bridle the helmet is to be worn.

Horse and 4-H members will be judged on cleanliness. If horse is normally clipped then it should be clipped. If you do not clip your horse normally due to breed or showing regulations then horse does not need to be clipped. Hoof polish can be used if 4-H member wishes but is not mandatory. Boots should be cleaned and polished. Hair should be up and neat. 4-H member will be judged on ability to move and lead horse, pose the horse (squaring), control of the horse, and keeping the horse alert with a good attitude. 4-H member will need to know how to hold lead rope and when to move when presenting horse to judge for inspection. Also parts of the horse will be asked in this section of the test.

**The Showmanship Pattern will be the following:**

Make sure judge is ready and tells you to begin. Start at first cone with cone on your left walk down to second cone and stop with cone on your left. Turn and trot back to first cone stop (cone on your right) set up for inspection. After inspection back 4 steps. Wait for judge to dismiss you.

During inspection make sure you know when to move to the opposite side of your horse and how to move properly this is judged. 4-H uses quarters so when the judge walks past the point of shoulder you should move and when the judge cross behind or in front of the horse's centerline you should move. If you have questions please ask your leader if they cannot help you the please contact the performance test leader and they will help answer your questions.

**Saddling (45 Points)**

**Know the Cantle and Pommel**

Maintain Control of horse. Your Post should hold your horse for this part of the test. Make sure judge is ready and tells you to begin. Shake the saddle pad and run a hand over it and the horses back before placing pad on the horse. Place the pad high on the withers, as it will be moved down later with the saddle. Run hand over wool of saddle to check for/remove debris. Put cinch over seat and right stirrup on horn. (English would make sure stirrups are run up). Place the saddle GENTLY on the pad, slide both back into the correct position (this lays the hair down under the saddle). Walk behind the horse, while speaking and talking to him, put the cinch and the stirrup down and then return to the left side. Place the left stirrup on horn. Fasten cinch loosely, take horse from your Post and walk horse in a circle (pushing horse away from you) tighten the cinch, walk again if necessary and finish tightening of cinch. Put stirrup down (English would run down

stirrups).

### **Bridling (XX Points)**

While bridling, you must maintain control, but a helper CANNOT hold the horse for you. First, place the lead rope round your horse's neck to secure him. Then, slip off halter and place it around your horse's neck. Put the lead rope in your left elbow as you continue to the next step. Holding the crown of your bridle in your right hand, place it between your horse's ears. Put the reins over your right shoulder. Hold the bit in your left hand and open your horse's mouth with your thumb. Allow horse to pick up the bit. Once horse has picked up the bit, slip crown over far ear, then the near ear. Fasten the throat-latch and check the curb strap/chain. Remove halter from neck and hand to helper.

### **Mounting (70 Points)**

Helmet inspection will happen at this station. It is important that your horse stand still while you are mounting you will be penalized if it moves around.

Make sure judge is ready and tells you to begin. Always keep hold of at least one rein. Walk up to judge and stop and settle the horse. Check the cinch. Face the rear of the horse. Hold the reins and place one hand on the neck and mane. Grasp stirrup with right hand and turn towards you and put your foot in the stirrup. Grab the horn or pommel and swing leg over then GENTLY sit your body in the saddle. If you cannot get your right foot in the stirrup DO NOT lean over and turn it. Ask the judge to please help you get your foot in the stirrup

### **Control of Horse (320 Points)**

Make sure judge is ready and tells you to begin. In this part of the test you will be judged on your control your horse. This is judged on control not on show. This section of the test is also judge by two judges, they will both agree on scores given. You will be given time to warm up your horse in both a warm up area and a small amount of time in the area where testing will be done. Please make sure you are ready to test and all done warming up if you need more time let judges know before they start judging, once judging has started it will not be stopped. You will be asked to do the following; Walk on the rail. Jog/trot on the rail and to jog/trot a small circle. Walk again. Lope/canter on the rail. Stop and settle horse from a lope/canter. Reverse direction and do it all again. You will also be asked to back your horse. When you start your test you should already be on your horse. When you finish your test you may ride over to the dismounting station if it is available if it is not please dismount and wait your turn. You will not be judged on mounting or dismounting at the Control of Horse station.

### **Dismounting (40 Points)**

Make sure judge is ready and tells you to begin. Always keep hold of at least one rein. Stop and settle the horse. Hold the reins and place one hand on the neck and mane. Ease boot out of right stirrup. Shift weight to left stirrup, Swing right leg across rump. Place right



hand on seat, lean against saddle to support weight while dropping left stirrup. Slide down saddle on right hip facing the front of the horse. Remove reins over horse's head. Always keep a hold of at least one rein, make sure you don't pull on the horse mouth.

### **Unbridling (25 Points)**

Remove reins from your horse's neck and place over your right shoulder. Fasten your halter around your horse's neck and hold the lead rope in your left elbow. Unhook the throat-latch. Hold the crown in your right hand. Remove the near ear, then the far ear. Remove the bit gently, being sure not to hit the horse's teeth. Place the lead rope around your horse's neck and return halter to horse's head.

### **Unsaddling (35 Points)**

Maintain control of the horse. Your post will hold your horse. You need to know how you would secure your horse at home. Examples are cross ties, or a straight tie with a quick release knot. Place the left stirrup on the horn. If riding English run up both stirrups and leave run up for rest of this station. Unfasten the cinch and refasten the latigo strap. If they have back cinch un- fasten it before front cinch. Walk behind the horse (while speaking to and touching him) to put the cinch over the seat and the right stirrup over the horn and return to left side (English would unfasten both sides of cinch and lay it over the seat), Slide your hands under the front and back of the pad and remove the pad and saddle together. Place saddle on horn on ground and put the pad sweaty side up, on top of the saddle. Put the stirrups inside the underside area of the saddle. (If a fence or saddle rack is there to put saddle on please use it, make sure to take stirrup of horn and put pad upside down on saddle).

### **Straight Load Trailering**

So here is what you should know: as it states in the manual when loading in a straight load you should fasten the butt chain before tying the horse well the same will go for a slant load trailer but instead of a chain you have a panel. Please shut the panel then tie your horse.