

San Diego County 4-H Horse and Pony Project Rules and Regulations

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE 4-H MEMBER, THEIR PARENTS, AND THEIR PROJECT LEADER TO READ AND TO KNOW THE RULES. RULES ARE TO BE ENFORCED BY ALL PARENTS/GUARDIANS, LEADERS, AND EVENT MANAGEMENT AT ALL 4-H HORSE EVENTS.

I. Youth Eligibility

A. MINIMUM AGE: A 4-H rider, handler and/or participant of the 4-H Horse and Pony Project must be at least nine years of age by January 1st of the current 4-H year. Only enrolled 4-H Horse and Pony Project members may ride, handle, or exhibit horses at any 4-H project meeting or event, at any time.

B. DIVISIONS: San Diego County Horse Divisions may be defined as junior, senior, walk/trot/special needs, and green horse.

1. Juniors are between the ages of 9 -13.
2. Seniors are between the ages of 14 -19.
3. Walk/trot members are members new to the project. Members are only permitted to participate at the walk/trot level for two years. This two - year limitation does not apply to special needs members.
4. The Green Horse designation is based on the (inexperienced in a given discipline) horse, not previously shown under saddle in the entered discipline. Horses are only permitted to participate at the Green Horse level for two years.
5. Special Needs Division will be open. It may be combined with walk/trot depending on class size, but will be carded separately.

II. Horse Identification Certificate

A. HORSE IDS: If an enrolled 4-H Horse project member wishes to participate in any 4-H Horse event with a horse, their horse project leader must submit an online Horse ID Certificate through the county office, prior to the member's participation at any horse event. Members must have on file, a separate Horse ID Certificate for each horse and member combination. Horse ID Survey/Certificates must be accompanied by photos showing front and side views for the horse.

B. ELIGIBILITY FOR COUNTY SHOWS: Members may turn in Horse ID Certificates throughout the year as needed. However, in order to be eligible to show and accumulate points in San Diego County 4-H events, members must turn in all Horse ID Certificates to the County office, by January 1st of each 4-H year.

C. ELIGIBILITY FOR FAIRS: In order to be eligible to show at any county fair, members must turn in all Horse ID Certificates to the County office, by January 1st of each 4-H year

D. RETURNING MEMBERS: Returning 4-H Horse Project members who own and use the same horse as in the previous year do not have to submit another Horse Identification Certificate for the same horse. Once the Horse Identification Certificate is turned in, it does not need to be redone unless there are changes to the horse and member combination. A member may have as many horses registered to them as they wish.

III. Horse Ownership/Leasing

A. Horse project members must have owned or leased their project horse for no less than 120 consecutive days AND have a Horse ID on file with the County office for the horse they are exhibiting prior to the competition. Horse Project members may exhibit no more than two registered project horses at any one 4-H horse event at a time, despite being registered with multiple horses. Members who lease horses must have a copy of the lease agreement with them at any 4-H event. Male foals may be shown by 4-H members, but yearling or older stallions are ineligible as 4-H projects. The age of the horse shall be computed on the basis of a calendar year starting on January 1 of the year foaled; it is a weanling during the calendar year in which foaled, and a yearling during the first calendar year following its foaling date, regardless of year foaled.

Horse ID Form: <https://ucanr.edu/survey/survey.cfm?surveynumber=9405>

IV. Helmets

A. 4-H Horse Project members must wear a properly fitting ASTM/SEI approved helmet, tightly fastened at all times. Event management shall inspect helmet upon check in at events.

V. Conduct at 4-H Sponsored Horse Events

A. WALK HORSES: Horses must be kept to a walk, both in hand and riding when moving through a parking, barn, or stall area at any 4-H sponsored horse event.

B. SAFE RIDING: Riding double, riding bareback or riding in a halter is not permitted at any time at a 4-H sponsored horse event. Warm ups are permitted during approved class/times or in the warm -up area prior to the approved class/times only.

C. GATE CALLS: Gate calls should last for roughly two minutes. Riders not entering the arena after the final class call may be excluded from the class. All horses must enter and exit the arena at a walk.

D. ARENA ETIQUETTE: If your horse kicks or you have doubts about your horse kicking, members must tie a red ribbon to the tail to warn others not to get too close. Failure to follow this rule may be grounds for disqualification from the event, at the discretion of the event management. Riders should be reminded about this rule, and advised to keep two horse lengths (or the largest possible distance) between his or herself and the next horse.

E. PASSING ETIQUETTE: When passing another horse and rider, always pass on the inside. When passing riders from the opposite direction, always travel left shoulder to left shoulder. Give beginning riders plenty of room. Allow ample space between horses. A fast moving horse could spook a green horse or beginner rider. Be considerate. The above passing etiquette should be a guideline, & may not always work for every situation.

F. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT: Any rude or unsportsmanlike behavior may result in the person being excused from the show ring, the event and/or event grounds at the discretion of the show management. Such continued behavior will be referred to the San Diego County Leaders' Council for further disciplinary action. This can include being barred from any further 4-H event or program. No refunds will be given in this instance.

G. SAFETY AND CONTROL: At any 4-H sponsored horse event, any rider not having his or her mount under sufficient control may be dismissed from that event/class. Any horse or person whose behavior poses a danger to other horses or people can be excused from the show ring, the event and/or the event grounds at the discretion of the show management.

H. GYMKHANA JUDGE ETIQUETTE: Riders must wait to be acknowledged by the timing judge before they may begin their gymkhana event, and must wait to leave the arena until their time as been confirmed "good." Failure to maintain and/or gain control of the horse prior to and after their run may disqualify the rider from that class. This will be done at the discretion of the judge and safety advisors present at the show.

I. GYMKHANA: All Gymkhana exhibitors must enter the arena prior to the start of the first gymkhana class for tack inspection. Additionally, the Gate Steward, or Safety Advisor must check each rider's girth and saddle pad prior to the rider entering the arena for each gymkhana class.

J. ADULT SUPERVISION: At any 4-H horse event or project meeting, the ratio of leaders/adults to horse project members shall be no less than one leader/adult to every three mounted riders. Inexperienced riders should never ride without supervision.

K. MEMBER' PROJECT: At any 4-H sponsored horse competition, horse project members are responsible for their own tacking and grooming. Horse project members who are not physically capable of tacking up their horse are encouraged to enlist the help of another, older 4-H Horse Project member. Leaders/parents may only assist to ensure the safety of the rider or horse. Failure to follow this rule may cause the Horse Project member in question to be disqualified from a portion of or the entire event. This is done at the discretion of the show management.

L. COACHING: No adult may physically school or warm -up a horse at any 4-H horse event. The horse project member or a more advanced horse project member must do all the schooling/warm -up with adult coaching if needed. Excessive and/or unruly coaching (which may be hurtful, loud, un -needed, or inappropriate) may lead to disqualification. Failure to comply may result in the individual (who coached excessively) in question to be dismissed from the ring or grounds. Adjudication is at the discretion of the show management and the show judge.

M. LEADER'S SIGNATURE: Only recognized horse project leaders can and must sign all entry forms for their project members. By signing the form, the project leader is stating that the member has been working with and caring for their registered project horse for the required time period and has the skills to safely compete with or exhibit their horse at any 4-H horse event. A leader may refuse to sign an entry form for any project member for any horse event if the leader feels that the member is not yet ready to exhibit that horse safely at a 4-H horse event.

N. PARENT SIGNATURE: Parents and members must also sign all entry forms. A completed up to date medical release form must be with the 4-H project leader or group leader when the member is participating/exhibiting at any 4-H sponsored event, especially if the parents or legal guardians are not present at the event.

O. UNFIT HORSE: At any 4-H sponsored horse event, the judge or event management may disqualify any horse showing signs of visible lameness, injury, or illness. Horses should be fit and in good health in order to compete. A veterinarian's certificate may be requested to prove good health and the ability to perform at the event/competition.

P. DRUGS: It is not permissible for a member to administer any drug or medication that could affect the performance or disposition of the horse resulting in

an unfair advantage in the show ring. Questions concerning this issue should be brought before Horse Advisory or the show management. A veterinarian's certificate may be required to prove the need for the drug or medication. Members should have in their possession a medical history including any drug administered to their horse at all 4-H sponsored events.

Q. INJURY TO HORSE: In the event of injury to a horse at a 4-H horse event, a group of two registered 4-H Horse Project leaders, event management, and the judge (if a judged event), is required to evaluate the horse to determine if the horse should be allowed to return to the competition. The involved horse project member, their parents, the owner of the horse and their Horse Project leader may provide their input, however, at the conclusion of the evaluation, the decision of the event management or the judge (if a judged event) shall be final. In the event the horse project member is no longer allowed to finish the event, they will be immediately refunded the remaining entry fees or they can substitute another project horse for which they have a Horse ID Certificate on file.

R. SHOW ATTIRE: Clothing shall be neat and clean and either Western or English show clothes, but not a mix of both. Shirts must be tucked in. Collared, long sleeve or short -sleeved shirts are acceptable, but no tank tops, t -shirts, or tops in violation of the 4-H dress code. Sleeveless shirts are allowed only if a Western jacket or English coat are worn over the top of them. Long sleeves must be worn rolled down and fastened when participating in any 4-H sponsored horse competition. Vests, jackets, and chaps are optional. This rule must be followed at all shows, including gymkhana events. All boots must have at least a one inch heel and a smooth sole. Patterned soles are permitted if the pattern is one inch or less deep. "Waffle" soles are specifically prohibited, i.e. "Fat Baby" type of soles.

S. SAFE TACK: Rider's tack should be checked before the first class of the day and before each class. Cinches and bridles (specifically proper fitting of bits and headstalls) should be checked frequently. Riders and adults should be respectful toward the show management at all times (please refer to the Parent/Adult and Youth Behavior Guidelines for more information).

T. APPROPRIATE TACK: Show management reserves the right to determine any tack to be humane and used properly in any discipline. This means that any show manager may excuse a rider from the ring or grounds if deemed necessary.

1. Western rail or trail classes: A shanked bit must be used on horses six years or older regardless of their training and may be disqualified in any Western class at the discretion of the judge. Green horses are exempt from this rule. Gag bits are not

permissible on any horse. The use of a bosal will be considered on a case by case basis. Members should be advised that when showing at some regional & county fairs, these rules may not apply.

A suitable Western style saddle is appropriate. The reins may be split or romel. Protective boots/wraps are not permitted in western classes, with the exception of reining classes. Refer to USEF Western rules and regulations for bit and tack specifics, www.USEF.org. Breastplates are optional. Training aids such as martingales, draw reins, hackamores, boots and bandages are all prohibited.

2. English: Regulation snaffles, Pelhams, Kimberwicks, and double bridles, all with cavesson nose bands, are recommended. Gag bits are prohibited. For additional bit and tack specifics, refer to www.USEF.org under Hunter rules for more information.

Protective boots (including bell boots) are permitted in competitive jumping classes and in Hunter equitation over fences.

3. Gymkhana: If excessive or abusive use of aids is observed, or if any aids are used in front of the cinch, show management reserves the right to disqualify the rider. There will be no exceptions. Gag bits are not permitted in gymkhana. There will be no rubber -banding of boots into stirrups. Feet cannot be tied into stirrups in any way. Tie downs are permitted in gymkhana classes only. Over -unders, quirts, and crops are permitted in gymkhana. Spurs are permitted if mildly used behind the cinch. Protective boots are permissible, shin guards are permitted for riders. If riders are running gymkhana courses with English tack or on a green horse, martingales are allowed.

U. NO STALLIONS: Stallions are not permitted to be ridden, handled, or present at any 4-H sponsored horse event.

V. DOGS: Dogs must be kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet in length at all times. In addition, dogs must be kept at least 1 - feet away from any/all horses or the rail of any arena at all times while at a 4-H sponsored horse event. It is preferred that dogs be left at home. The event management has the authority to ask any one at a 4-H sponsored event to remove a dog that is disruptive or scaring horses.

W. TIED HORSES: Tied horses must be watched and watered at all times. This will be strictly enforced.