



***Family-Friendly
Horse Shows***

RULE BOOK

2025 Edition

www.loupvalleyhorseconference.org

LOUP VALLEY 4-H HORSE CONFERENCE DISCLAIMER OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFETY

Neither the Loup Valley 4-H Horse Conference Club (LVHC) nor any show committee or equine facility hosting an LVHC event will be responsible for accidents or injuries. Under Nebraska Law, an equine activity event sponsor or professional shall not be liable for an injury to, or the death of a participant in equine activities resulting from the inherent risks of equine activities, pursuant to Sections 25-21, 249 to 25-21, 253 N.R.S.

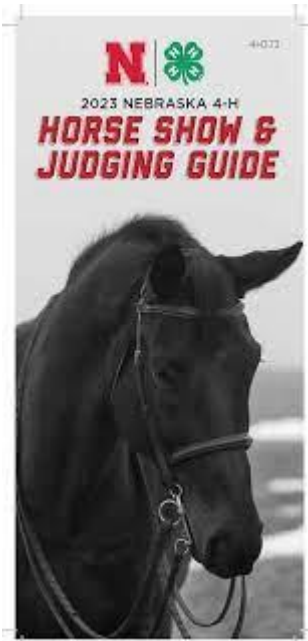


Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University Nebraska –

Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the U.S.

Department of Agriculture. The 4-H Youth Development program abides with the non-discrimination policies of the University of Nebraska – Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.

4th Edition—Updated 4/2025



The Loup Valley 4-H Horse Conference Club rules supplement the current NEBRASKA 4-H HORSE SHOW AND JUDGING GUIDE.

Please refer to this judging guide for a complete list of 4-H Rules.



I pledge my HEAD to clearer thinking
My HEART to greater loyalty,
My HANDS to larger service, and
My HEALTH to better living,
for my club, my community, my country and my world.



GENERAL 4-H SHOW RULES & INFORMATION

- **SHOW START TIME**—All shows start at 9 AM.
 - **SHOW COMMITTEE**—The show committee consists of LVHC 4-H Youth Officers, Leaders, Volunteers, and the individual(s) hosting the show.
 - **SUPERINTENDENTS**—Superintendents will volunteer before the start of the show season and oversee their designated area for the season. They are responsible for finding volunteers to assist if needed. If a Superintendent cannot attend a show, they must ask someone to cover in their absence.
1. **Show Schedule Superintendent -**
 - Line up judges for all shows.
 - Judges must understand LVHC rules, and point system, and the show schedule
 - Line up ring stewards for all shows
 - Line up concessions for all shows
 - Line up announcer for all shows
 - Post all patterns to the FB Page before each show.
 - Post FB information - Show dates, registration form/info, updates, etc.
 - Pay the judge & other bills for each show
 2. **Registration Superintendent -**
 - Line up registration for all shows. 8 AM start time
 - Responsible for registration forms, waivers, verification of ID forms, back numbers, entry fees, and selling tickets

Responsible for the money bag (cash)
Order ribbons
Order Club T-Shirts
Print Patterns/Forms for all shows. Print rule books

3. **Prizes and Awards Superintendent –**

Responsible for ordering ticket prizes and awards for all shows
Putting # of tickets required on each prize
Prize Trailer—responsible for getting the trailer to each show, and ensuring that prizes are handed out
Ordering Overall High Point Awards

4. **Points Superintendent -**

Responsible for point tally and records for/at all shows.
Post weekly results to FB

5. **Trail Class Superintendent -**

Responsible for creating trail patterns for each show that are appropriate for three age divisions and walk-trot
Set up, re-set as needed, and take down during each show, find volunteers to assist

6. **Riding Events Superintendent -**

Set up/take down cones/logs for Western Riding, Reining, Ranch Riding

7. **Speed Events Superintendent -**

Set up/take down electric timer, barrels, poles, keyhole, re-set pattern as needed
Backup timer (judge/helper)

8. Gate Superintendent -

Line up gate help - collect tickets for all shows

Make sure exhibitors are lined up and ready to enter the arena

9. Fundraising—ALL Members

Donations, Sponsorships, Grants

10. Clean Up Crew—ALL Members

Reload the prize trailer with show supplies

Clean up manure & trash in and around the arena

RUNNING OF SHOW—Delegation of responsibility and general management considerations in the “Nebraska 4-H Horse Show and Judging Guide” should be followed.

- Two or three people should check entries at each show to speed up the process.
- Every show should have a good ring steward.
- After the first show, each show should be able to replace lost exhibitor numbers.
- The Loup Valley 4-H Horse Conference Club youth officers, leaders, and volunteers will assist in setting up rules and regulations for the conference shows and act in an advisory capacity to the individual shows unless other plans are made in advance. The major responsibilities should go to the parents and leaders of the counties in the 10 County Conference Club.
- The gateman and ring steward will have the authority to refuse any contestant to enter the ring

if not in proper attire as listed in the “Nebraska 4-H Horse Show and Judging Guide” (4-H373).

- **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY & PLAN**—The show committee will discuss in advance the possibility of inclement weather forecasted for the day of the show and will develop a plan to follow if the show needs to be moved, rescheduled, or canceled. If the show is moved to another location, the start time will be 9:30 AM. If severe weather approaches during a show, or if the arena surface is deemed questionable and poses a safety risk to exhibitors, the show committee has the right to cancel all remaining classes. Classes canceled due to inclement weather or questionable arena conditions **will not be rescheduled or refunded.**

- **CRITERIA FOR SUSPENSION OF SHOW:**

- When a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen or lightning is within 10 miles of the event, the show will be suspended, and all will be asked to take shelter immediately.
- Wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning strike is witnessed or has moved at least 10 miles away before resuming the show.
- For any subsequent lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count, reset the clock, and another 30-minute count should begin.

If it becomes necessary to change a show location, postpone or cancel a show, information regarding the change will be posted on Facebook and the conference website
www.loupvalleyhorseconference.org

- **RETURN CHECK POLICY**—Returned checks will be charged an additional \$30.00 + the amount of the check. Cash entries thereafter will only be accepted from guilty parties.

- **JUDGES**—All Judges are selected from the UNL 4-H Horse Show Judges list and are required to follow the rules of the current Nebraska 4-H Horse Show & Judging Guide and the LVHC rule book.
 - Judges may not talk with exhibitors until the final placings for the class have been turned into the ring steward unless:
 - i. The judge deems an exhibitor's horse is unsound, unsafe, or out of control and should be dismissed from the show ring,
 - ii. Or, during Showmanship, the judge asks a question as a requirement of the Showmanship pattern, or as a tiebreaker for placings.

- **ELIGIBILITY**—To show in the Loup Valley 4-H Horse Conference Club 4-H Horse shows, each contestant must have completed the following before showing:
 - Be enrolled as a 4-H member in his or her respective Nebraska county by the 4-H enrollment deadline,
 - Be a member in good standing enrolled in the Nebraska 4-H Light Horse Project,

- Pay the LVHC Yearly Membership Fee:
Individual Youth—\$30/year
Family—Two (2) or more youth per family, \$50/year,
 - Pay a \$10.00 office fee per youth per show.
 - Signed an Entry & Liability waiver form.
- **IDENTIFICATION**—All horses MUST be ID'd to compete at LVHC shows. A copy of the Horse ID MUST be presented at the first show attended and will be kept on file by the show office. Conference 4-H members may identify any number of horses for competition. The Nebraska identification deadline and requirements will be followed.
- **EXHIBITOR ENTRIES**—No pre-registration will be required to participate in the Loup Valley 4-H Horse Conference Club shows. The liability waiver form and club membership dues may be completed/paid at the first show attended. Each 4-Her who has met identification and eligibility requirements may participate by reporting to the gate when a class is called and presenting the gate person with a class ticket.
TICKETS are \$7.00 each and may be purchased at the shows.
Tickets can be used at any 4-H conference show for the *current year*.
No refunds will be issued for unused tickets. Lost tickets WILL NOT be replaced or refunded.
- **CLASS ENTRIES**—A single horse MAY be entered and/or ridden in a class or event by more than one person if the horse is properly ID with exhibitors' names and is shown in

different age divisions.

- **EXHIBITIONS**—Exhibitors may show an exhibition in any SPEED/PATTERN class but must present a ticket at the gate. Exhibitors must declare that their ride is an exhibition before entering the gate. Exhibitions will run after all timed/scored entries have run.
- **LIABILITY WAIVER**—A Liability waiver form must be signed by the parent/legal guardian and relieves the show management of any liability in case of an accident to the 4-H member and or his/her horse. This form must be turned in with paid yearly membership dues to ensure the receipt of assigned exhibitor numbers.
- **4-H SHOWS/EXHIBITORS ONLY**—Only 4-H Youth currently enrolled in the Nebraska 4-H Horse Program and who are at least eight (8) years old are allowed on horseback during any Loup Valley 4-H Horse Conference 4-H show. Clover Kids, non-4-H'ers, and anyone 19 or over are NOT ALLOWED on horseback during the show.
- **EXHIBITOR DRESS:**
Dress will be per the standards in the current “Nebraska 4-H Horse Show and Judging Guide.” 4-H armbands are required at all shows. Chaps are NOT allowed in Pleasure and Horsemanship. However, chaps may be worn in Ranch Riding and Reining. **LVHC T-shirts** may be worn for SPEED EVENTS ONLY.

Exhibitor numbers are furnished at the first show attended and will be used throughout the season, including the OPEN Scholarship Show. Numbers are to be attached to prohibit flapping.

- **AWARDS**—LVHC members who have met all yearly eligibility requirements and secured a minimum of \$100.00 in sponsorships are eligible for show awards and high-point awards in their respective age brackets. No substitutions or award changes will be allowed.
 - **YEAR-END AWARDS**
 - i. CHAMPION and RESERVE CHAMPION
Overall High-Point Awards
3 age divisions—Senior, Intermediate, Junior.
 - ii. CHAMPION—Saddle—winners may request seat size and style of saddle up to \$1,000.00. Any dollar amount above the \$1,000.00 limit is paid by the award recipient.
 - iii. RESERVE CHAMPION—Belt Buckle
 - iv. SHOWMANSHIP BUCKLE 3 age divisions—Senior, Intermediate, Junior
 - v. SPEED BUCKLE 3 age divisions—Senior, Intermediate, Junior
 - vi. SUPER HORSE AWARD—Horses must meet additional requirements, see SUPER HORSE AWARD for qualifications.

- **INDIVIDUAL SHOWS AWARDS**

- i. **CHAMPION Overall High-Point Award**
buckles will be awarded at each LVHC show—Senior, Intermediate, Junior.

- **NOTE**—the point system will award points for Overall High-Point awards for all classes **EXCEPT Halter and Open Walk-Jog**. The point system will also be used for the Super Horse Award. Winners are determined by the total number of points earned at all 4-H shows. The OPEN Scholarship show points do not count toward the 4-H shows year-end totals.



- **Ribbons** are awarded on a blend of the Danish System, Purple, Blue, Red, and White, and the American System, 1st Purple, 1st Blue.
- ♦ **The Danish System** is a method to evaluate a participant's project relative to the standards developed for that class or contest. This system is not used to evaluate participants against other participants or other items. The Danish system highlights areas of success and topics that may need improvement to encourage youth to challenge themselves, set goals, and receive constructive criticism. The participant's hard work is recognized as each participant learns to improve their skills. Each exhibit is

given a ribbon, which indicates how well it meets the ideal standards. There may be more than one ribbon of each color in each class.

- ◆ **The American Ribbon System** is a method to evaluate an exhibitor's project by recognizing comparative differences within a class or contest and rewarding those that are of higher quality or talent. Exhibitors can set goals and feel like they have the ability to achieve a higher level of achievement within a class, rather than being within a group that all get rewarded the same reward within the set standard. Over time, comparative systems have morphed into rewarding mostly purple and blue ribbons rather than using the whole comparative system in livestock shows. The American Ribbon System recognizes more separation, promotes healthy competition, teaches youth to set goals, and rewards them for that effort.
- The 1st purple exhibitor in each class and each age division will be awarded a ticket good for a tack prize. If there isn't a 1st purple winner, the prize ticket will be awarded to the 1st blue. Tickets may be cashed in at any time during the current show season and may be combined with multiple tickets to claim larger prizes. Tack prizes may differ at each Loup Valley 4-H Horse Conference Club Horse Show. Purple Tickets are good for the current show season only and may not be carried over from year to year.

The point system is as follows:

1 st Purple—	6 points
All Other Purples—	5 points
1 st Blue—	4 points
All Other Blues—	3 points
All Reds—	1 point
All Whites—	0 points

SUPER HORSE AWARD—The Super Horse Award showcases a horse’s versatility. LVHC members who have met all eligibility requirements may nominate their horses.

- Horses must be nominated by filling out an official nomination form prior to the first show in which they compete.
- Exhibitors must show nominated horses in six (6) of the following classes at 4-H conference shows during the current show season.
 - **Classes *1 – 4 are required** and must be shown at each show attended to qualify for the award.
 - **Classes 5 & 6 are electives**, and an exhibitor may pick any two of the classes listed. Except for Showmanship, an exhibitor is not required to show the same six (6) classes at each show. For example, they may choose to show Western Pleasure at one show and English Pleasure at another. Choose one class from each of the following:
 1. *Showmanship
 2. *Pleasure Class—Choose from Western, Ranch, or Hunter Under Saddle

3. *Horsemanship or Equation
 4. *Performance Class—Choose from Reining, Ranch Riding, Western Riding
 5. Performance Class—Choose from Reining, Ranch Riding, Western Riding, Trail, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole
 6. Performance Class—Choose from Reining, Ranch Riding, Western Riding, Trail, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole)
- **A Super Horse ticket is required at the entry gate for class points earned to count toward the award.**
 - The horse with the highest accumulated points at the end of the current show season will be declared the Super Horse of the Year. In the event of a tie, multiple awards may be given.
 - All Super Horse points earned also count toward all overall high-point, showmanship, halter, and speed awards.

SCHOLARSHIP REQUIREMENTS

- An applicant must be a resident of Nebraska and enrolled in the Nebraska 4-H Horse project.
- Applicants must have participated in at least **five (5)** Loup Valley 4-H Conference Horse Shows in their last **two (2)** 4-H eligible years. If they do not receive a scholarship as a Senior in high school, they may apply during their freshman year of college, as long as they have NOT turned 19 on or before January 1 of the current year. NOTE: The Loup Valley 4-H Horse Conference Open Scholarship Show WILL count toward the total show count for the Loup Valley 4-H Horse Scholarship.

- A local committee will be formed to determine the eligibility of the applicants before scholarship applications are given out.
- Application deadline is April 1st of each year with winners announced on or around May 1st.
- Application forms may be found on the Loup Valley 4-H Horse Conference website.
www.loupvalleyhorseconference.org and must be mailed to the scholarship contact address listed on the form.
- Scholarship recipients are required to provide proof of college enrollment with a transcript of current grades to the LVHC Senior Board before funds are paid out.

CLASSES

- **CLASSES**—Classes will be divided according to the age of 4-H members, age of horse, and/or size of horse in the following divisions. All ages are as of January 1st of the current 4-H year.
 - **Senior** 15 years old and not turned 19 as of Jan. 1st.
 - **Intermediate** 12—14 years of age as of Jan. 1st.
 - **Junior** 8 – 11 years old as of Jan. 1st.

The show committee reserves the right to combine age groups of any class if there are three (3) or fewer exhibitors in a class, but

exhibitors will be judged and awarded according to their respective age brackets.

- **HUNTER UNDER SADDLE**—Three age divisions.
- **HUNT SEAT EQUITATION**—Three age divisions.
- **HALTER CLASSES:**

In case of five or fewer entries in a halter class division, ribbons shall be awarded at the discretion of the judge. Each class shall have all the member age groups together.
- **Mares**—one division
- **Geldings**—one division
- **SHOWMANSHIP CLASSES**—Participant show order will be Senior, Intermediate, and Junior divisions
- **PERFORMANCE CLASSES**—Participant show order will be Seniors, Intermediates, and Junior divisions.
- **2 & 3-YEAR-OLD SNAFFLE BIT**—Horse may not be used in any other Pleasure class. Per Nebraska 4-H Horse Show rules, 2-year-olds that have been entered in the Nebraska State 4-H Horse Exposition may NOT be shown before Memorial Day. In the event an LVHC Show is held before Memorial Day, this class will not be held.

- **WESTERN PLEASURE** (Senior, Intermediate, and Junior divisions)
- **RANCH PLEASURE** (Senior, Intermediate, and Junior divisions)
- **WALK-JOG CLASSES**—Junior Division ONLY, ages 8 - 11. Western Pleasure, Hunter Under Saddle, Horsemanship, Hunt Seat Equitation, Trail, Barrels, Poles, Keyhole. ***A member can only enter the Walk-Jog division if it is his/her first or second year of riding.*** A member who is entered in Walk-Jog may ride a horse owned by a family member who is entered in other classes but, a **Walk-Jog Exhibitor may only ride in designated Walk-Jog classes.** Participants in Walk-Jog classes will be eligible for class prizes but will not receive points for the overall awards presented at the end of the year.
- **PONY PLEASURE** (no age limit, horses may not be used in any other Pleasure class) 14.2 hands & under as per state rules. Ponies may be measured before entering the arena.
- **WESTERN HORSEMANSHIP** (Senior, Intermediate, and Junior divisions)
- **TRAIL CLASS** (Senior, Intermediate, and Junior divisions)
The Trail Class will be held at each of the conference

shows. If a participant enters the walk-jog division, they must complete a walk-jog trail pattern. An exhibitor is given three (3) attempts to complete an obstacle, and if unable to do so, must move on to the next obstacle. The Trail superintendent will be responsible for designing the trail course.

- **WESTERN RIDING:** (Senior, Intermediate, and Junior divisions)
Junior competitors are not required to have passed a level; Intermediate and Senior competitors must have passed Level 2.
- **RANCH RIDING:** (Senior, Intermediate, and Junior divisions)
Junior competitors are not required to have passed a level; Intermediate and Senior competitors must have passed Level 2.
- **REINING:** (Senior, Intermediate, and Junior divisions)
Junior competitors are not required to have passed a level; Intermediate and Senior competitors must have passed Level 2. Measurements between cones for reining classes will be approximately 50 yards.

TIMED EVENTS—

- **POLES:** Senior, Intermediate, and Junior divisions
- **Walk-Jog Poles—**Non-timed, non-pointed class.

- **BARRELS:** Senior, Intermediate, and Junior divisions
- **Walk-Jog Barrels**—Non-timed, non-pointed class.

PENALTIES: Poles and Barrels only

Hats—Hats are optional in timed events, but must stay on after crossing the starting line. A two (2) second penalty will be assessed if a hat is lost.

Touching a pole with a hand shall cause disqualification. A two (2) second penalty will be assessed for each pole that is tipped over.

Touching a barrel with a hand shall cause disqualification. A two (2) second penalty will be assessed for each barrel that is tipped over.

Someone leading a contestant's horse past the gate will result in a two (2) second penalty.

- **KEYHOLE** Senior, Intermediate, and Junior divisions.
- **Walk-Jog Keyhole**--Non-timed, non-pointed class.
 1. The length of the course shall be one hundred (100) feet from the starting line to the last five (5) gallon buckets.
 2. Bucket placement is four (4) feet wide by ten (10) feet long, measured from the inside edge of the buckets. The buckets are to be five (5) gallon plastic, preferably white, or all the same color. All handles shall be removed from buckets.

3. The judge must be at the buckets and stand in the ten (10) o'clock or two (2) o'clock area of the pattern- the twelve (12) o'clock area is forbidden- standing no closer than fifteen (15) feet or farther away than thirty (30) feet from the buckets to judge the class.

4. The contestant is to ride through the ten (10) foot lane, making either a left or right turn after passing THROUGH both sets of buckets and returning through the bucket lane.

5. Timing will start as soon as the horse's nose crosses the starting line going into the course and cease when the horse's nose crosses the finish line





OPEN SCHOLARSHIP SHOW RULES

- **Exhibitor age** is as of January 1 of the current year.
- **Entry tickets** are \$7/ticket. Tickets purchased at the 4-H conference shows may be used at the OPEN Scholarship show. Office fees are \$10/exhibitor.
- **A horse** may be shown in the same event by more than one person, but **ONLY** in different age groups. A horse cannot be shown in the same class by more than one (1) person in the same age group.
- **No Exhibitor** may show two (2) horses in the same class unless the second horse is shown as an EXHIBITION. All timed-event and pattern class exhibitions will be run **AFTER** the event's judged competition.
- **Western events**—All exhibitors shall wear appropriate Western attire, including long-sleeved shirts, Western hats, and cowboy boots or hard-soled shoes. Boots with waffle-type tread greater than or equal to 1/8" are not allowed in riding classes.
- **English events**—All exhibitors shall wear appropriate English attire.

- **Timed events**—types of shirts and use of hats are optional.
- **Class rules**—the current Nebraska 4-H Horse Show & Judging Guide rule book is the official source for rules governing legal/illegal tack, and classes regarding scoring, penalty points, etc.

Exception: 2- & 3-Year-Old Snaffle Bit **eligibility rules do not apply**, and the horse may be cross-entered into other performance classes such as Horsemanship, Ranch Riding, Reining, etc., if the rider deems the horse safe to do so.

- **Walk-Jog/Walk-Trot 8 – 11 Classes**— Ages 8-11 exhibitors only. Exhibitors **MAY NOT** cross-enter in any other class not designated as Walk-Jog/Walk-Trot 8 – 11 or OPEN Walk-Jog/Walk-Trot, which includes the following: Walk-Jog Western Pleasure, Walk-Jog Horsemanship, Walk-Jog Trail, OPEN Walk-Jog, and Walk-Trot Hunter Under Saddle.
- **OPEN Walk Jog Class**—All exhibitors, regardless of age, may enter and will show in one class unless the number of exhibitors necessitates multiple heats. If multiple heats are necessary, the top six (6) exhibitors from each heat will return for finals.
- **Combined Age Groups**—The show committee reserves the right to combine age groups of any class if there

are fewer than three (3) participants. However, exhibitors will be judged and awarded according to their respective age brackets.

- **Points** awarded for High-Point awards are ***awarded to the Exhibitor***. The Exhibitor may ride multiple horses throughout the show. In the event of a tie between two (2) or more exhibitors, a performance class where all exhibitors were entered will be used as a tiebreaker, with the exhibitor who received the highest score in that class being deemed the High-point winner for the age division.

1 st Place	6 points
2 nd Place	5 points
3 rd Place	4 points
4 th Place	3 points
5 th Place	2 points
6 th Place	1 point

