

New England 4~H Fitting and Showmanship

Presenter: Mary Fay

Fitting Portion

- Condition – still 15 points
- Grooming – now 20 points (used to be 15)
- Trimming, Braiding and Tack – now 10 (used to be 5 for trim and braid and 5 for tack)
- Appearance of Exhibitor – now 5 (used to be 10)

Showmanship Portion

- Pattern Gaits – 10 points
- Pattern Set Up – 10 points
- Pattern Correctness – 10 points
- Use of Quarter System – 10 points
- Overall Impression – 10 points

Condition

- Animal should be usably sound, have sufficient flesh, a smooth coat, and firm muscles.



Grooming

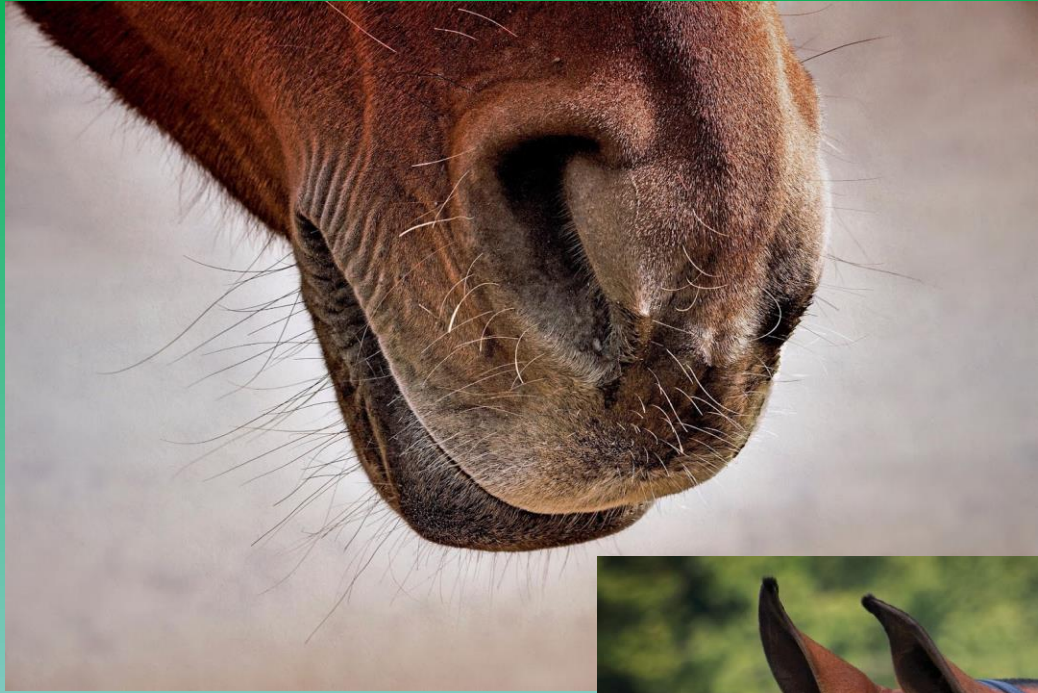
- Coat clean and free of stains. Hair dressing, hoof preparation and powder, if used, should be neat and applied sparingly.
- Mane and tail should be clean and free of tangles and dandruff.
- Hooves should be trimmed and shaped. If shod, shoes must fit and not show undue wear. Clinches should be smooth.





Trimming, Braiding, Banding and Tack

- Bridle path trimmed for breed standard.
- Interior ears and tactile hairs may be clipped, but no penalty if not.
- Braiding or banding, if used, should be neat and suitable for breed or discipline. Miniature and ranch horses should not be braided or banded.
- Weanlings and yearlings and miniature horses to be shown in halter.
- English horses should be shown in a bridle or halter appropriate to their breed or discipline. Only one rein should be used.
- Western horses shown in plain or silver halter, leather or nylon.
- Ranch horses shown in a plain leather or nylon halter or fitted rope halter.
- Driving horses shown in halter or bridle appropriate for their breed.







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Appearance of Exhibitor

- Neat clean clothing appropriate to their discipline.
- Boots with heels, no spurs.
- Small equine exhibitors should wear long sleeves, boots and helmet or headwear.
- Drivers may not wear aprons.
- Gum chewing will be penalized.



Showmanship Portion

- Pattern Gaits – 10 points
- Pattern Set Up/Posing – 10 points
- Pattern Correctness – 10 points
- Use of Quarter System – 10 points
- Overall Impression – 10 points

Pattern Gaits

- Leading on left side, exhibitor should lead at the gait listed in the pattern, and change gaits at the appropriate place.
- Exhibitor should be at mid point of horse's neck, with reins or lead held 4 to 12 inches from the halter or bridle, and the tail of the lead held loosely in the left hand, not tightly coiled, rolled or folded.



Pattern Gaits continued

- Leading, backing and turning is performed on the left side of the horse, and should be accurate, precise, and smooth with reasonable speed. Accuracy and precision should not be sacrificed for speed.
- With the exception of small equines, the exhibitor should not stand directly in front of the horse.

Pattern Gaits continued

- The position of the exhibitor when turning a horse to the right is the same as leading – the horse should move away from the exhibitor.
- When backing, exhibitor faces the rear of the horse with the right hand across the chest and walks forward beside the horse as it moves backward.

Pattern Gaits continued

- Pivots should be done accurately with reasonable speed.
- Horse's head should be carried at an appropriate height for the type or use of the horse.
- Ideal pivot is for the horse to pivot on the right hind leg while stepping across and in front of the right front leg with the left front leg.



Pattern Set Up/Posing

- Exhibitor should know the pattern and bring the horse to the starting point to await the judge's signal to start.
- When posing, exhibitor stands toward the front of the horse facing the horse, and is aware of the judge's position.
- When posing, set the horse up for its type and use. Stock type horses should be shown squared, Saddlebreds and Morgans may be shown stretched, and hunters and Arabians may have one hind leg slightly in front of the other.



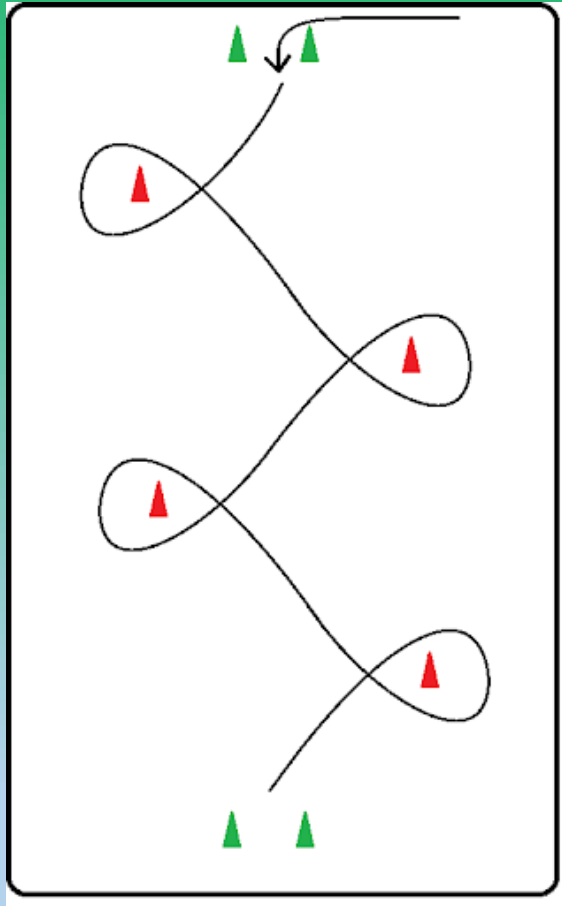
Pattern Set Up/Posing continued

- Horses should stand still. Exhibitors should not touch their horse, unless the judge picks up a foot for inspection. Exhibitor may support the opposite shoulder.
- Judge should always have an unobstructed view of the horse.
- Don't over show your horse.



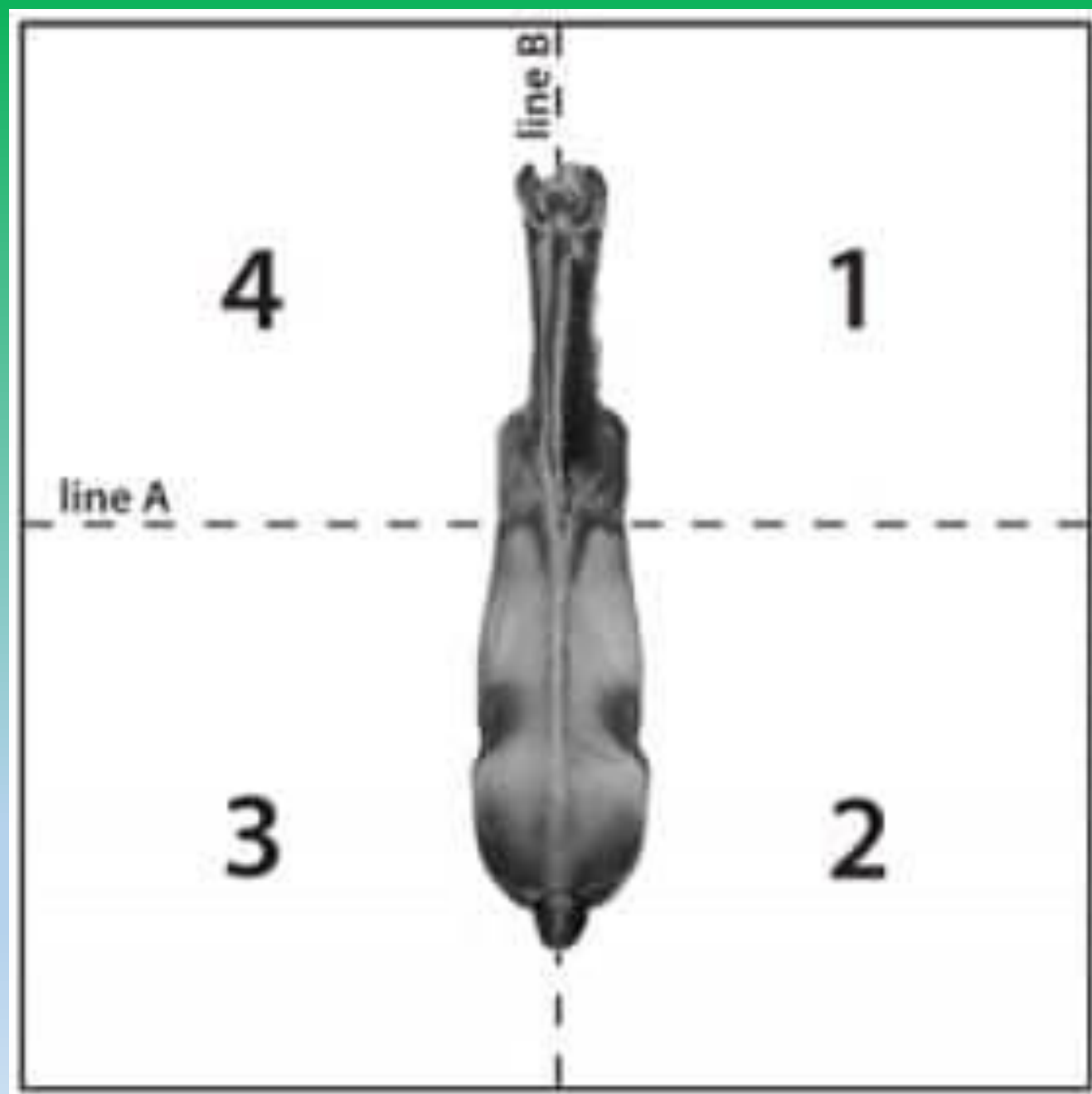
Pattern Correctness

- Follow the posted pattern. Plan ahead where the changes in gait will occur.
- Be on the correct side of the cone.
- When stopping in front of the judge, keep a respectful distance.



Use of the Quarter System

- Exhibitor should move side to side as the judge moves about the horse so that the judge always has an unobstructed view of the horse.
- Exhibitor and judge must always be in adjacent quarters.





Use of Quarter System continued

- Transition of moving between sections 1 and 4 should be smooth and using as few steps as possible.
- Exhibitor should end up in the same position on each side, with toes pointing toward the horse's shoulder.



Overall Impression

- Entire pattern should be smooth, accurate and each piece move effortlessly to the next.
- Exhibitor and horse should give the impression of working together.
- Exhibitor should be attentive and polite, always making their horse look their best.

And although this is a beautiful sight, things don't always go the way we anticipate...





Questions?

Comments?