

Showmanship - The Quarter System

This system of showmanship is easy to remember.

- When the judge is viewing the front half of the horse, the exhibitor should be on the opposite side.
- When the judge is viewing the rear half, the exhibitor should be on the same side.
- Divide the horse into four. A, B, C and D

Diagram #1

When the judge is viewing the front of the horse in section A or B, the exhibitor should be on the opposite side. This gives the judge a clear view of the horse:

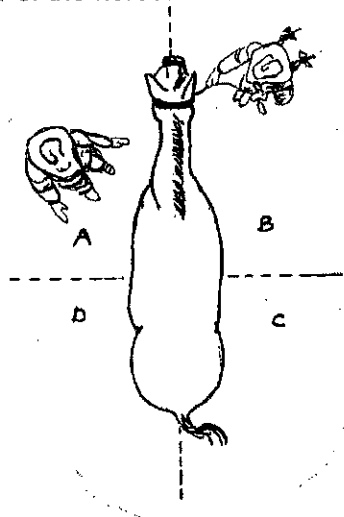


Diagram #2

The judge is now viewing the rear of the horse, section D. The exhibitor moves to the same side as the judge.

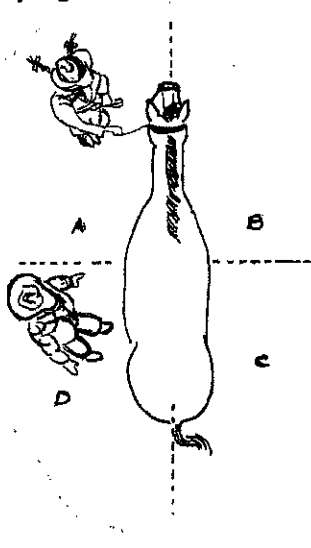


Diagram #3

While the judge is viewing the horse from the direct rear, the exhibitor maintains his position.

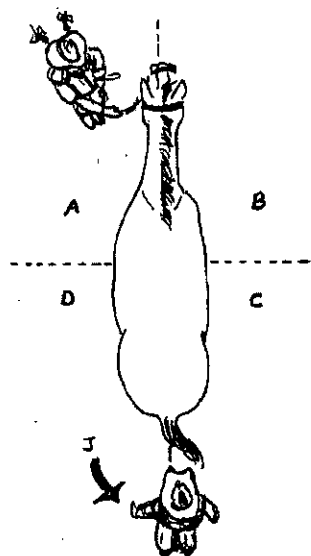


Diagram #4

When the judge moves into section C, crossing over the imaginary line directly behind the horse, the exhibitor moves to the same side of the horse as the judge.

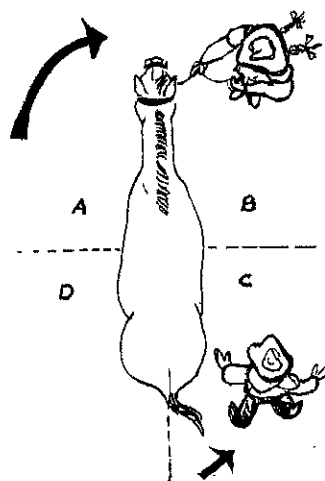


Diagram #5

Until the judge crosses over the imaginary line, the exhibitor remains on the same side of the horse as the judge.

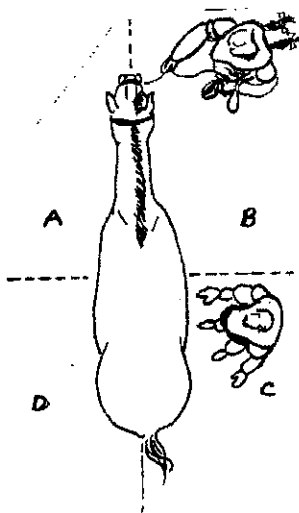
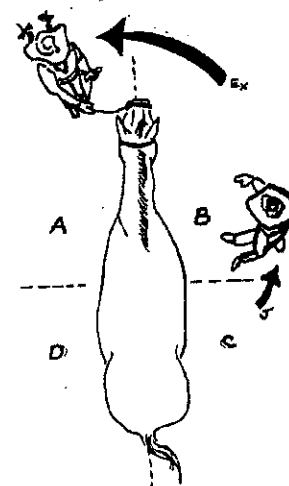


Diagram #6

As the judge moves into section B, the exhibitor moves to the opposite side to avoid obstructing the view of the judge.



Sample Horse Showmanship Questions

1. What is the breed of your horse?
2. What is its age?
3. Did you purchase it or raise it?
4. What are you feeding it and how much?
5. Where is the "danger zone" on your horse?
7. What are the 3 gaits used in the western horsemanship class?
8. Explain a right lead.
10. What is buck-kneed?
11. Where are the chestnuts located on your horse?
12. What is the cantle?
14. What is a canter?
15. How many inches are there to a "hand"?
16. How many frogs does your horse have?

GROOMING AND GROOMING TOOLS

Grooming cleans the animal, conditions the hair and the skin, improves the look of your horse and prevents disease.

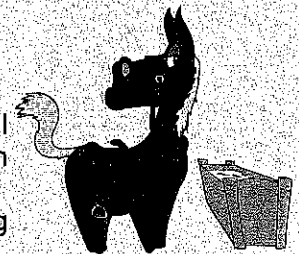
Always groom your horse well before you saddle him, paying special attention to the areas that will be covered with tack. Be sure to clean the cinch/girth area well because dirt and bedding left there can be irritating to the horse.

Every horse owner needs a basic grooming kit. The kit should include...

Hoof Pick	Rubber Curry Comb	Dandy Brush	Body Brush
Grooming Cloth	Sponge	Mane & Tail Comb	Scissors
Shedding Blade	Sweat Scraper	Grooming Mitt	

HORSE SAFETY

- Always speak to your horse before approaching or touching him.
- Do not run around horses.
- When working under the horse, do not sit or kneel. If the horse moves, you will not be able to get out of the way. A hand placed on the ground as you work can easily be stepped on.
- When riding, wear boots with proper heels to prevent your feet from slipping through the stirrups.
- Never wrap the lead strap, halter shank, or reins around your hand, wrist, or body.
- When saddling your horse, keep your feet well back and in the clear. Reach forward to saddle your horse.
- When you tie your horse, tie it to a solid object that will not break or move if the horse pulls back.
- Slow down when riding on rough ground or in deep sand, mud, ice or snow or on pavement. Always be careful where there is any danger of falling or slipping.
- Be sure to store your shovels, forks, etc. in a safe place.
- Feed should always be stored where your horse can never get into it.



AQHA Showmanship Rules- 2009 Rule Book

473. SHOWMANSHIP AT HALTER. Available only in the amateur and youth divisions.

(a) The showmanship class shall be judged strictly on the exhibitor's ability to fit and show a horse at halter. The horse is merely a prop to demonstrate the ability and preparation of the exhibitor. The ideal showmanship performance consists of a poised, confident, neatly attired exhibitor leading a well groomed and conditioned horse that quickly and efficiently performs the requested pattern with promptness, smoothness and precision. The showmanship class is not another halter class and should not be judged as such.

(b) It is mandatory that the judge post any pattern(s) to be worked at least one hour prior to the commencement of the class; however, if the judge requires additional work of exhibitors for consideration of final placing, the finals pattern may be posted. Pattern(s) should be designed to test the showman's ability to effectively present a horse to the judge. All ties will be broken at the judges' discretion.

(c) **CLASS PROCEDURES:** All exhibitors may enter the ring and then work individually or each exhibitor may be worked from the gate individually. When exhibitors are worked individually from the gate, a working order is required. The following maneuvers are considered acceptable: lead the horse at a walk, jog, trot or extended trot, or back in a straight or curved line, or a combination of straight and curved lines; stop; and turn 90 (1/4), 180 (1/2), 270 (3/4), 360 (full turn) degrees or any combination or multiple of these turns. The judge must have exhibitors set the horse up squarely for inspection sometime during the class.

(d) **SCORING:** Exhibitors are to be scored from 0 to 20 with 1/2 point increments acceptable. Ten points should be allocated toward the overall appearance of exhibitor and horse and 10 points allocated toward performance. - The exhibitor's overall poise, confidence, appearance and position throughout the class, and the physical appearance of the horse will be evaluated.

(A) Presentation and Position of Exhibitor

- appropriate western attire must be worn. Clothes and person are to be neat and clean. The use of any type of artificial aid including, but not limited to lighters, hay, dirt, sharp pins, etc. will be considered a disqualification.
- exhibitors should be poised, confident, courteous and genuinely sportsmanlike at all times, quickly recognizing and correcting faults in the positioning of the horse. The exhibitor should continue showing the horse until the class has been placed or they have been excused, unless otherwise instructed by the judge. The exhibitor should appear business-like, stand and move in a straight, natural and upright manner, and avoid excessive, unnatural or animated body positions.
- the exhibitor must lead on the horse's left side holding the lead shank in the right hand near the halter with the tail of the lead loosely coiled in the left hand unless requested by the judge to show the horse's teeth. It is preferable that the exhibitor's hand not be on the snap or chain portion of the lead continuously. The excess lead should never be tightly coiled, rolled or folded. When leading, the exhibitor should be positioned between the eye and the mid-point of the horse's neck, referred to as the leading position.
- both arms should be bent at the elbow with the elbows held close to the exhibitors side and the forearms held in a natural position. Height of the arms may vary depending on the size of the horse and exhibitor, but the arms should never be held straight out with the elbows locked.
- the position of the exhibitor when executing a turn to the right is the same as the leading position except that the exhibitor should turn and face toward the horse's head and have the horse move away from them to the right.

- when executing a back, the exhibitor should turn from the leading position to face toward the rear of the horse with the right hand extended across the exhibitor's chest and walk forward beside the horse with the horse moving backward.
- when setting the horse up for inspection, the exhibitor should stand angled toward the horse in a position between the horse's eye and muzzle, and should never leave the head of the horse. It is recommended, but not mandatory that exhibitors use the "Quarter Method" when presenting the horse. The exhibitor should maintain a position that is safe for themselves and the judge. The position of the exhibitor should not obstruct the judge's view of the horse and should allow the exhibitor to maintain awareness of the judge's position at all times. The exhibitor should not crowd other exhibitors when setting up side-by-side or head-to-tail. When moving around the horse, the exhibitor should change sides in front of the horse with minimal steps and should assume the same position on the right side of the horse that they had on the left side.
- leading, backing, turning and initiating the set-up should be performed from the left side of the horse. At no time should the exhibitor ever stand directly in front of the horse. The exhibitor should not touch the horse with their hands or feet, or visibly cue the horse by pointing their feet at the horse during the set-up.

(B) Presentation of Horse

- the horse's body condition and overall fitness should be assessed. The hair coat should be clean, well-brushed and in good condition. The mane, tail, forelock and wither tuft may not contain ornaments (ribbons, bows, etc.), but may be braided or banded for English or Western. The length of mane and tail may vary, as long as they are neat, clean and free of tangles. The mane should be even in length or may be roached, but the forelock and tuft over the withers must be left. The bridle path, eyebrows, and long hair on the head and legs may be clipped, except where government regulations prohibit.
- hooves should be properly trimmed and if shod, the shoes should fit correctly and clinches should be neat. Hooves must be clean and may be painted black or with hoof dressings, or shown naturally.
- tack should fit properly and be neat, clean and in good repair.

(2) PERFORMANCE (10 POINTS)

- the exhibitor should perform the work accurately, precisely, smoothly, and with a reasonable amount of speed. Increasing speed of the work increases the degree of difficulty, however, accuracy and precision should not be sacrificed for speed. The horse should lead, stop, back, turn and set up willingly, briskly and readily with minimal visible or audible cueing. A severe disobedience will not result in a disqualification but should be penalized severely, and the exhibitor should not place above an exhibitor that completes the pattern correctly. Excessive schooling or training, willful abuse, loss of control of the horse by the exhibitor, failure to follow prescribed pattern, knocking over or working on the wrong side of the cones shall be cause for disqualification.
- the horse should be led directly to and away from the judge in a straight or curved line and track briskly and freely at the prescribed gait as instructed. The horse's head and neck should be straight and in line with the body.
- the stop should be straight, prompt, smooth and responsive with the horse's body remaining straight.
- the horse should back up readily with the head, neck and body aligned in a straight or curved line as instructed.

- pull turns to the left should be 90 degrees or less. On turns of greater than 90 degrees, the ideal turn consists of the horse pivoting on the right hind leg while stepping across and in front of the right front leg with the left front leg. An exhibitor should not be penalized if their horse performs a pivot on the left hind leg, but an exhibitor whose horse performs the pivot correctly should receive more credit.

- the horse should be set up quickly with the feet squarely underneath the body. The exhibitor does not have to reset a horse that stops square.

(3) FAULTS: Faults can be classified as minor, major or severe. The judge will determine the appropriate classification of a fault based upon the degree and/or frequency of the infraction. A minor fault will result in a 1/2 to 4 point deduction from the exhibitor's score. A major fault will result in a deduction of 4 ½ points or more from the exhibitor's score. An exhibitor that incurs a severe fault avoids elimination but should be placed below all other exhibitors that complete the pattern correctly. A minor fault can become a major fault and a major fault can become a severe fault when the degree and/or frequency of the infraction(s) merits.

(A) Faults in the Overall Presentation of

Exhibitor and Horse include:

- poorly groomed, conditioned or trimmed horse
- dirty, ragged, or poorly or ill-fitted halter or lead
- poor or improper position of exhibitor
- excessively stiff, artificial, or unnatural movement around horse or when leading
- continuous holding of the chain portion of the lead, or lead shank tightly coiled around hand or dragging the ground
- changing hands or placing both hands on the lead, except when preparing to show the horse's teeth

Faults of the Performance include:

- drifting of horse while being lead
- horse stopping crooked or dropping a hip out when stopping, setting up or standing
- backing, leading, or turning sluggishly or crooked
- horse not set up squarely or excessive time required to set up
- failure to maintain a pivot foot during turns or stepping behind right front leg with left front leg when turning to the right
- horse holding head and/or neck crooked when leading, stopping or backing
- failure to perform maneuvers at designated markers; but horse is on pattern

(B) Severe Faults of the Overall Presentation of Exhibitor and Horse (avoids disqualification but should be placed below other exhibitors that do not incur a severe fault) include:

- leading on the off or right side of the horse
- complete failure to move around horse by exhibitor and obstructing judge's view
- exhibitor touching the horse or kicking or pointing their feet at the horse's feet during set up
- standing directly in front of the horse
- exhibitor wearing spurs or chaps

Severe Faults of the Performance (avoids disqualification but should be placed below other exhibitors that do not incur a severe fault) include:

- severe disobedience including rearing or pawing; horse kicking at other horses, exhibitors or judge; or horse continuously circling the exhibitor

(C) Disqualifications (should not be placed) include:

- loss of control of horse that endangers exhibitor, other horses or exhibitors, or judge including the horse escaping from the exhibitor
- failure of exhibitor to wear correct number in a visible manner
- willful abuse
- excessive schooling or training, or use of artificial aids
- knocking over the cone or going off pattern

SUGGESTED FINAL SCORING shall be on a basis of 0-20, with an approximate breakdown as follows:

20: Excellent performance. Completes pattern accurately, quickly, smoothly and precisely; and demonstrates a high level of professionalism. Horse is fit and groomed well. Exhibitor is neat, clean and appropriately dressed.

18-19: Generally excellent performance with one minor fault in the execution of the pattern or in the appearance of exhibitor or horse. Overall execution of the pattern is excellent and exhibitor is highly professional.

16-17: Good pattern execution with one or two minor faults in performance or appearance of exhibitor and horse. Exhibitor is reasonably professional in presentation of horse.

14-15: Average pattern that lacks quickness and precision, or commits two or more minor faults in performance or appearance of exhibitor and horse. Horse is not presented to its best advantage.

12-13: One major fault or several minor faults in the performance and/or appearance that prevents an effective presentation of the horse.

10-11: Two major faults or many minor faults in the performance and/or appearance of exhibitor and horse

6-9: Several major faults or one severe fault in the performance and/or appearance of exhibitor and horse. Exhibitor demonstrates complete lack of professionalism in showing the horse or commits a severe fault.

1-5: Exhibitor commits one or more severe faults, but does complete the class and avoids disqualification.