

SHOWMANSHIP AT HALTER

Showmanship at halter is not merely the act of showing a halter horse, but to be able to do so with the utmost concern for safety, control and precision. While performing a prescribed pattern, any deviation from the pattern must be considered a lack of control and/or correctness and must be marked down accordingly. Examples would include but not be limited to: any unsafe leading or positioning of horse or exhibitor, any lack of show ring decorum, and failure to properly complete any portion of the pattern as written.

The appearance of both the exhibitor and the horse are a significant part of showmanship. Ill-fitting, dirty or inappropriate equipment (halter) or clothing (including boots and hat) should be penalized. The horse must be groomed, clipped and in fit condition. The exhibitor must be neat, professional looking and clothing functional. The exhibitor should maintain a natural, upright posture.

Credit should be given for a controlled, natural presentation of the horse. This should include leading or tracking the horse in an unobstructed manner, enabling the horse to be easily viewed by the judge. A minimum of visual and audible cues should be used. The exhibitor should not appear over animated or artificial. Maneuvers should be executed at the appropriate location (markers) and in a timely manner.

The horse should be set-up with the legs squarely under the body and presented in a manner that will allow for the horse to be easily observed and inspected with a complimentary view of the horse. The exhibitor should never obstruct the judge's view. It is recommended that the exhibitor employ the quartering system when presenting his horse to the judge.

Important considerations while judging showmanship should be to allow for variations of style with emphasis on safety. An example of variation of style could include: a small person who is showing a large horse. This person might need to step back slightly while presenting the horse in order to maintain a visual field with the judge. Emphasis on safety would include the exhibitor always keeping himself between the judge and the horse.

Maneuvers to be included in designing a pattern are: leading the horse at a walk and trot in a straight line, or to arc around a marker; back-up; stop; pivot 90 degrees, 180 degrees, 270 degrees, 360 degrees or any combination of these; set-up; and presentation of the horse. A judge or ring steward should inspect the horse. These maneuvers can be performed in any order that the judge deems necessary to evaluate the run.

Patterns should be clearly drawn with precise written instructions. Markers are suggested to aid in the execution of the pattern. A legend also enables exhibitors to more thoroughly understand the pattern. It is also recommended that judges utilize computer generated or type written patterns.