

4-H Horsemanship Proficiency Program A Member's Guide

OVERVIEW

The 4-H Horsemanship Proficiency program helps you learn what you need to know about your 4-H project. Your project leader will assist you in setting and achieving your goals. Through your project, you will learn horse behavior, mounting and dismounting, proper and safe techniques when handling a horse and general riding techniques.

There are many resources to help you learn more about your project:

- The University of California Davis has free resources available online by visiting: <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/4HYouthDevelopment/>. This site lists a variety of project materials and resources recommended for use in your project.
- The Solano County 4-H Resources and Lending Library at our county 4-H Office includes other books, videos, and reference materials that can be checked out by members and leaders.
- Check to see if there is a breeder's organization in your community that conducts educational activities and shows. Local breeders are excellent sources of help and information.

There are five levels in the Project Proficiency Program. You may choose how many levels you wish to complete:

- ◆ Level I – “Explorer”, you begin to learn about many different aspects of safe handling and horsemanship.
- ◆ Level II – “Producer”, you practice and refine the many skills involved in learning about horsemanship and the show ring.
- ◆ Level III – “Consumer”, you will learn proper riding position and become a more experienced horseman.
- ◆ Level IV – “Leader”, allows you to show your own leadership potential.
- ◆ Level V – “Researcher”, you carry out a demonstration or experiment on some aspect of horsemanship, and prepare a paper or portfolio.

As you work through the proficiency program, your leader will date each skill item as you complete it. When all items in a proficiency level are completed, your leader will sign the Certificate of Achievement.

HORSEMANSHIP

Level I - Explorer

Date
Completed

- _____ 1. Give 5 safety rules and a reason why each is important.
- _____ 2. Explain how hand-feeding treats to horses can get your fingers nipped.
- _____ 3. Identify the parts of a horse from a diagram or live animal.
- _____ 4. Identify the parts of tack (saddle, bridle, etc.).
- _____ 5. Explain the nutritional requirements of a horse (how, when, what, how much to feed).
- _____ 6. Demonstrate how to approach and lead a horse correctly and safely.
- _____ 7. Demonstrate 5 grooming aids and how to properly use them.
- _____ 8. Demonstrate how to properly tie a horse, including how to tie a quick release knot.
- _____ 9. Develop a feeding plan for a horse, explain the feed you chose.
- _____ 10. Demonstrate how to clean a stall, clean the stable area and stable chores.
- _____ 11. Demonstrate the proper basic attire for riding, and why each should be worn.
- _____ 12. Demonstrate how to properly and safely halter, bridle and saddle a horse.
- _____ 13. Demonstrate how to hold the reins when riding western and/or English.
- _____ 14. Describe the four natural aids and how to properly use them.
- _____ 15. Submit a management record for a minimum of 90 days that indicate how often you provided fresh water, clean feed, clean housing and general care for a horse.
- _____ 16. Share one aspect of your project with someone not in your project.
- _____ 17. Show how to check and adjust your equipment before riding, and explain why.

Member Name: _____ Date: _____

Project Leader's Signature: _____ Date: _____

HORSEMANSHIP
Level II - Producer

Date
Completed

- _____ 1. Give 5 safety rules for trail riding.
- _____ 2. Explain why you should not let a horse eat grass on trail rides.
- _____ 3. Design a simple Western, English or Dressage ring pattern.
- _____ 4. Describe or demonstrate how to sanitize equipment.
- _____ 5. Demonstrate competency in showmanship with your horse.
- _____ 6. Complete a tack check on both sides; explain why you are adjusting the tack.
- _____ 7. Identify three types of tack and explain why they are used and how they work.
- _____ 8. Display your animal outside of your project group.
- _____ 9. Clean a saddle and a bridle.
- _____ 10. Mount with control and without disturbing the horse. (Horse may be held by assistant. Very small riders may mount from a safe mounting block.)
- _____ 11. Dismount safely with control and prepare the horse to lead.
- _____ 12. Mount and adjust your stirrup to the proper length.
- _____ 13. Ride at a walk with proper position and control.
- _____ 14. Ride at a trot around the rail with proper position and control.
- _____ 15. Halt from the walk and the trot on command, with control.
- _____ 16. Ride turns, and reverse at the walk and trot, with control.
- _____ 17. Demonstrate proper control while: Ride twice around the ring at a jog or trot without breaking the gait; Keep the proper distance when riding in a group or on the trail; Lead changes at the lope or canter.
- _____ 18. Show how to properly cool off a hot horse.
- _____ 19. Demonstrate how to ride uphill and downhill.
- _____ 20. Explain what to do if you see a hazard like a hole or a fire.
- _____ 21. Attend or audit a horseshow or educational equine clinic.
- _____ 22. Help someone by sharing your knowledge

Member Name: _____ Date: _____

Project Leader's Signature: _____ Date: _____

HORSEMANSHIP

Level III - Consumer

Date
Completed

- _____ 1. Identify the parts of the hoof, and explain hoof care.
- _____ 2. Demonstrate how to ride over or through simple trail obstacle (a creek, stepping poles or a muddy spot).
- _____ 3. Explain how to recognize colic and founder and how to treat both.
- _____ 4. Give 5 rules for being a responsible trail rider.
- _____ 5. Design an advertisement or a marketing strategy for your project or animal by-product.
- _____ 6. Ride with good position, balance and control for: walk without stirrup; sitting trot or jog without stirrups; posting trot on correct diagonal, demonstrating change of diagonals; canter or lope in both directions on the correct lead, identifying lead.
- _____ 7. Demonstrate the following aids and what they ask the horse to do:
 - Leading rein
 - Indirect rein
 - Pulley rein
 - One leg aid used in normal position
 - Seat aid (weight aid)
 - Direct rein of opposition
 - Neck rein or bearing rein
 - Both leg aids used in normal position
 - One leg aid used 3 or 4 inches behind the girth
- _____ 8. Show proper form and control while riding through the following movements:
 - Circle at sitting trot or jog
 - Smooth transitions, all gaits
 - Change of direction on the diagonal
 - Figure 8, large or small
 - Serpentine or alternate riding pattern
 - Turn back on the rail
- _____ 9. Ride with proper position and balance at the walk and trot or jog: Jumping position or standing.
- _____ 10. Demonstrate good trail gaits at a: long striding walk, jog/trot, long striding trot, canter.
- _____ 11. Demonstrate how to pass another rider and how to handle your horse when being passed.
- _____ 12. Explain and demonstrate:
 - Direct flexion (getting the horse to flex at the pole)
 - Correcting a faulty head set or head position
 - Proper use of artificial aids (crop, bat, dressage whip, spurs)

- _____ 13. Complete a ring evaluation, dressage evaluation, program ride or one of the western performance patterns.
- _____ 14. Create a conditioning and feed program for a horse. If possible, carry out the conditioning of a horse according to your program.
- _____ 15. Explain (demonstrate if possible) how to:
- Plan an overnight trail ride, including what to take.
 - Secure a horse for an overnight campout (using a picket line or other method approved by instructor, showing tying safety).
 - Demonstrate or explain the care of horses and equipment on arrival in camp for an overnight stay.
- _____ 16. Alone or with your group, plan and complete a community service activity related to your horse project.
- _____ 17. Execute the following, using the correct aids:
- Stop from the lope
 - Roll back
 - Back one horse length in a straight line
 - Pivot on the hindquarters
 - Figure 8 with simple lead change
- _____ 18. Complete a gymkhana pattern.
- _____ 19. Demonstrate two training methods of holding the reins.
- _____ 20. Invite a guest speaker to one of your meetings and introduce them to the group.
- _____ 21. Design an advertisement or a marketing strategy for your animal or animal by-product.

Member Name: _____ Date: _____

Project Leader's Signature: _____ Date: _____

HORSEMANSHIP
Level IV - Leader

Date
Completed

- _____ 1. Serve as Junior or Teen leader in this project for one year.
- _____ 2. Assist younger members in designing and constructing needed equipment or learning proper riding techniques.
- _____ 3. Prepare teaching materials for use at project meetings.
- _____ 4. Develop and put on a demonstration or judging event or train a junior team for a judging activity.
- _____ 5. Speak on a project-based subject before an organization other than your 4-H group.
- _____ 6. Assist at a show as a clerk, secretary, recorder, assistant to the judge, ring master or with set up, registration, etc.
- _____ 7. Teach younger members about learning a specific topic in the project.
- _____ 8. Develop your own special project related activity. Chart your progress, plan the activities, analyze successes and problems, and report on your accomplishment to your club.

Member Name: _____ Date: _____

Project Leader's Signature: _____ Date: _____

HORSEMANSHIP Level V - Researcher

Date
Completed

1. _____ Report on the results of a demonstration comparing measurable differences in management procedure. (Experiment)
2. _____ Prepare a paper of 300 words or more on one of the following topics:
 - Management of horses.
 - Feeds, feeding, and nutrition.
 - Diseases, prevention and control, and general sanitation.
 - Markets and methods of marketing.
 - Reproduction, breeding and genetics.
 - By-product preparation for market, how marketed, and used.
 - Keeping and using records as a basis for improving your animal project.
 - Other
3. _____ Prepare a speech or illustrated talk to orally summarize your findings and present at a club, project meeting or other educational event.

Member Name: _____ Date: _____

Project Leader's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Certificate of Achievement

This certifies that

has completed the Horsemanship Proficiency

in Solano County.

Explorer

Producer

Consumer

Leader

Researcher

Date

Date

Date

Date

Date

Initials

Initials

Initials

Initials

Initials

