

BUTTE COUNTY 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
4-H Horse Project Proficiency Program
A Member's Guide

OVERVIEW

The **4-H Horse Project Proficiency Program** helps you learn what you need to know about your 4-H Project. Your 4-H Project Leader will assist you in setting and achieving your goals. Through your 4-H Project, you will learn animal care basics, good management practices and record keeping. You will also learn about the size and scope of the animal industry as it relates to your 4-H Project.

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

- The [4-H Publications Catalog](#) lists a variety of project materials and resources recommended for use in your project.
- The **4-H Educational Resources Lending Library** at the Butte 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 breeders' 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 4-H Horse Project Proficiency Program. You may choose how many levels you wish to complete:

Level 1 – Explorer You begin to learn about many different aspects of raising animals.

Level 2 – Producer You practice and refine the many skills involved in learning about and raising animals.

Level 3 – Consumer You become an experienced animal raiser.

Level 4 – Leader Allows you to show your own leadership potential.

Level 5 – Researcher You carry out a demonstration or experiment on some aspect of your project.

As you work through the 4-H Project Proficiency Program, your 4-H Project Leader will date and initial each skill item as you complete it. When all items in a proficiency level are completed, your 4-H Project Leader will notify the Community Club Leader. A 4-H Project Proficiency Program Pin and First Year Leg will be awarded for Level 1. Previous Year Leg will be returned when the next Level is awarded for Levels 2-5.

HORSE PROFICIENCY

Level 1 – Explorer

Each proficiency will be dated and initialed by your project leader.

Date Completed 4-H Member's Name: _____
Leader's Initials

4-H Club: _____ Project Leader: _____

- _____ 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 the horse from 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 management records 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.

KEEP IN YOUR RECORD BOOK WITH PROJECT RECORD

HORSE PROFICIENCY

Level 2 – Producer

Each proficiency will be dated and initialed by your project leader.

Date Completed 4-H Member's Name: _____
Leader's Initials

4-H Club: _____ Project Leader: _____

- _____ 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 for your animal.
- _____ 6. Complete a tack check on both sides, explain why you are adjusting the tack.
- _____ 7. Identify three types of bits, and explain why they are used and how they work.
- _____ 8. Display your animal or an aspect of your project outside of your project group.
- _____ 9. Demonstrate how to clean a saddle and 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. Adjust and mount 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:
 - A. Ride twice around the ring at a jog or trot without breaking the gait.
 - B. Keep the proper distance when riding in a group or on the trail.

- _____ 18. Show how to properly cool out 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. Demonstrate jumping position at a walk and trot in good balance.
- _____ 22. Ride over practice poles or cavaletti in jumping position.
- _____ 23. Attend or audit a horse show or educational equine clinic.
- _____ 24. Help someone else by sharing your knowledge or by giving away a product from your project to demonstrate positive citizenship.

KEEP IN YOUR RECORD BOOK WITH PROJECT RECORD

HORSE PROFICIENCY

Level 3 – Consumer

Each proficiency will be dated and initialed by your project leader.

Date Completed 4-H Member's Name: _____
Leader's Initials

4-H Club: _____ Project Leader: _____

- _____ 1. Identify the parts of the hoof, and explain proper hoof care.
- _____ 2. Demonstrate how to ride over or through a 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. Design an advertisement or a marketing strategy for your project.
- _____ 5. Ride with good position, balance and control for:
- A. Walk, without stirrup or bareback.
 - B. Sitting trot or jog, without stirrups or bareback.
 - C. Posting trot on correct diagonal, demonstrating change of diagonals. (optional western)
 - D. Canter or lope in both directions on the correct lead, identifying lead.
- _____ 6. Show proper form and control while riding through the following movements:
- A. Circle at sitting trot or jog
 - B. Figure 8, large or small
 - C. Smooth transitions
 - 1. Walk to trot or jog
 - 2. Walk to canter or lope
 - 3. Trot or jog to stop
 - 4. Canter or lope to walk
 - D. Serpentine or alternate riding pattern
 - E. Change of direction on the diagonal (optional western)
 - F. Turnback on the rail (western only)
- _____ 7. Ride with proper position and balance at the walk and trot or jog:
- A. Jumping position (English) or standing (Western)
- _____ 8. Demonstrate how to pass another rider and how to handle your horse when being passed.

- _____ 9. Explain and demonstrate:
- A. Direct flexion (getting the horse to flex in the pole and jaw).
 - B. Correcting a faulty head set or head position.
 - C. Proper use of artificial aids (crop or bat, dressage whip, spurs).
- _____ 10. Complete a ring evaluation, dressage evaluation, program ride, or one of the western performance patterns.
- _____ 11. Create a conditioning and feed program for a horse. If possible, carry out the conditioning of a horse according to your program.
- _____ 12. Alone or with your group, plan and complete a community service activity related to your project.
- _____ 13. Execute the following, using correct aids (optional English):
- A. Stop from the lope (need not be a sliding stop).
 - B. Pivot on the hindquarters
 - C. Roll-back
 - D. Figure 8 with simple change of leads at center.
 - D. Back one horse length in a straight line.
- _____ 14. Complete a gymkhana pattern. (cloverleaf barrel race, pole bending, keyhole pattern or flag race or other gymkhana pattern)
- _____ 15. Demonstrate two training methods of holding the reins.
- _____ 16. Invite a guest speaker to one of your meetings and introduce them to the group.
- _____ 17. Design an advertisement or a marketing strategy for your animal.

KEEP IN YOUR RECORD BOOK WITH PROJECT RECORD

HORSE PROFICIENCY

Level 4 – Leader

Each proficiency will be dated and initialed by your project leader.

Date Completed 4-H Member's Name: _____
Leader's Initials

4-H Club: _____ Project Leader: _____

- _____ 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 and use teaching materials at project meetings.
- _____ 4. Develop and put on a demonstration, 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 own progress, plan the activities, analyze successes and problems, and report on your accomplishments to your club.

KEEP IN YOUR RECORD BOOK WITH PROJECT RECORD

HORSE PROFICIENCY

Level 5 – Researcher

Each proficiency will be dated and initialed by your project leader.

Date Completed 4-H Member's Name: _____
Leader's Initials

4-H Club: _____ Project Leader: _____

_____ 1. Report on the results of a demonstration comparing measurable differences in management procedure. (experiment) Send a copy to the 4-H office.

_____ 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 (topic must be pre-approved by project leader or 4-H staff)

_____ 3. Prepare a speech or illustrated talk to orally summarize your findings and present at a club, project meeting or other educational event. Send a copy to the 4-h office.

KEEP IN YOUR RECORD BOOK WITH PROJECT RECORD

REQUIREMENTS:

For members to qualify for proficiency awards they must complete all the requirements below and give a 4-H presentation during the 4-H year.

- Have up-to-date and complete enrollment packet and enrollment fees on file at the 4-H office.
- Attend 80% of club and project meetings or meet requirements of a county-wide project.
- Members must provide 4-H Records to the club leader for project completion verification.
- Records must include **Personal Development Report** and **Annual Project Report** form for each project a member is applying for a Proficiency Award, and the completed Proficiency Form.