

Douglas County 4-H Horse Project Rules & Guidelines



DOUGLAS COUNTY
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Project Objective:

The purpose of the 4-H Horse Project is to help youth learn how to properly care for and enjoy your horse while developing Life Skills. Through the 4-H Horse Project, youth can increase their knowledge and improve their horsemanship skills by learning basic safety and handling principles. As a member in the 4-H Horse Project, you will learn about your own horse, other horse breeds, safety, body colors and markings as well as health and care. Youth will also learn about facilities, grooming and training.



Douglas County Visual Model of Colorado 4-H Code of Conduct



HEAD

Conduct

Conduct themselves in a courteous, respectful manner, use appropriate language, exhibit good sportsmanship, and act as positive role models.



Abstain from abuse (physical and/or verbal) and harassment.



Adhere to program rules, curfews, dress codes, policies, and rules of the facility being used.



HANDS

Responsibility

Accept personal responsibility for behavior including any financial damage.



Be responsible for any financial damage caused by inappropriate behavior.



Fully participate in scheduled activities



HEART

Respect

Respect others property and privacy rights.



Respect the rights and authority of parents, leaders and Extension Agents.



HEALTH

Safety

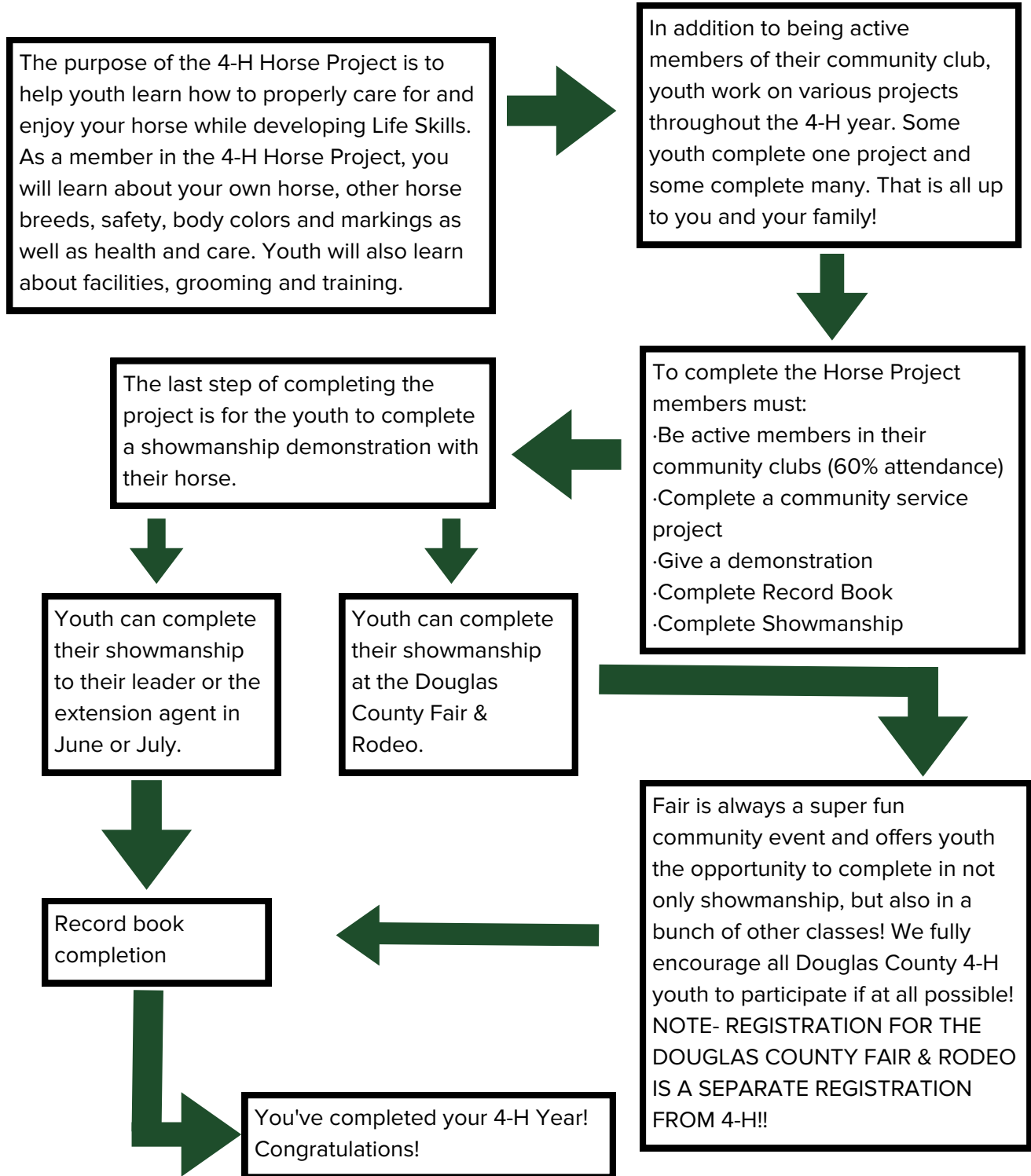
Adhere to principles and rules of safety



Abstain from illegal behaviors, use of alcohol, marijuana, illegal or illicit drugs, and tobacco including e-cigarettes and vaping device during 4-H events and activities

4-H Project Vs. Douglas County Fair & Rodeo

There is a lot that goes into 4-H! Between club meetings, project meetings, 4-H activities, fairs, and other events, it's completely normal to have some confusion. Please be aware that the 4-H Extension Office is to help, there is no question to big or too small. Throughout the year, youth who participate in the Douglas County 4-H program work on different projects. The horse project is just one of the awesome projects we are proud to offer.



4-H Project Vs. Douglas County Fair & Rodeo vs. Colorado State Fair

4-H Horse Project

The horse project is just one of the many projects offered to the Douglas County 4-H community.

County 4-H programming policies are set following Colorado 4-H recommended policies. Some deadlines and other small adjustments may be made to best suit our County.

More Information: <https://douglas.extension.colostate.edu/4-h/programs-2/horses/>

DC Fair & Rodeo

Organized and run by the Douglas County Fair & Rodeo Fair Board and the Douglas County Fair Office.

Rules & policies are recommended by the Show Management Committee and voted in by the Fair Board. The Douglas County Fair & Rodeo Horse Show is not a 4-H event and therefore rules might differ from 4-H rules or State Fair rules. Please be sure to fully read the Douglas County Fair & Rodeo Competition Rules prior to registration and showing.

More Information:

www.FairAndRodeoFun.com

*Showing at the Douglas County Fair & Rodeo or Colorado State Fair is not a requirement of the project. However, they are a whole lot of fun if youth have the opportunity to participate.

Colorado State Fair

Organized and run by the Colorado State Fair Manager and Horse Events Coordinator.

State Fair horse entries and procedures are dictated by the Colorado State Fair and it is up to individuals wishing to compete to look up all necessary requirements for entry and participation.

More Information:

<https://www.coloradostatefair.com>

Colorado State Fair Eligibility

- Must be Level 2 or higher to attend. Requires Level 3 for some classes.
- Requires 4-H Agent Signature
- State Fair entries are due in early August - be sure to check the website and get them in on time.

4-H Horse Project Progression

Starting Out Beginner

- Learn the requirements of the 4-H Horse program
- Learn about horses
- Tips for choosing the appropriate horse
- How to identify the parts of a horse
- Identify breeds of horses
- Identify body colors and markings
- Learn parts of the hoof
- Learn about blemishes and unsoundness
- Learn about digestion
- Learn feeding tips
- Learn vital signs
- Learn about facilities
- Learn about grooming
- Learn about saddling and bridling
- 4-H Advancement levels program

Learning More Intermediate

- Characteristics and uses of various breeds
- Definitions and locations of blemishes, lameness and unsoundness
- Types of nutrients and value of them
- Basic requirements of a good pasture
- Common health problems, their symptoms, cause and treatment
- Gain knowledge of sound management practices
- Develop sportsmanship
- Develop public speaking skills
- Approaching and handling the horse
- 4-H Advancement levels program

Exploring Depth Advanced

- How to deal with current issues relating to raising a horse
- Gain leadership skills by helping others learn about horse
- Explore career opportunities in the horse industry
- Safety when handling horses
- Fire Safety
- Housing and fencing
- Learn about internal and external parasites



Considerations before starting the 4-H Horse Project

- Have you considered the time and financial commitment that it takes to own or lease a horse?
- Have you discussed the type of horse that would best suit you with a trusted equine professional?
- Have you given thought to your plan B if your horse becomes injured or sick? Are you okay not riding for a bit while your horse heals?
- What are your goals in the horse project and horseback riding? You want to be sure you find a horse that fits these goals.
- Who can you reach out to for help, lessons, guidance, and education during the 4-H Year?
- If you buy your own horse, have you thought about what happens when you progress beyond their training or abilities?
- Do you understand the 4-H Policies on project animals? More specifically, do you understand that youth need to be providing the primary care to the animal?

Considerations for Choosing a Horse for your 4-H Horse Project

Select a healthy, sound, and well-mannered horse. A pre-purchase exam conducted by a veterinarian is recommended to aid with general appraisal of a horse's health and soundness. You are not required to purchase a purebred or "registered" horse for a 4-H Project. Utilize horse leaders, professionals, and your veterinarian when selecting a horse to buy - it's a big decision. Before buying a horse keep these few things in mind:



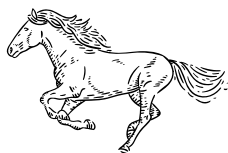
Make safety your top priority - look for a calm, well-broke horse



Avoid auctions/horse sales for a first-time horse purchase.



Consider the rider's age, size, and experience and the intended use of the horse.



If purchase prices are prohibitive, consider leasing a quality horse.



Horse Project Guidelines



What type of facilities do I need for my horse?

- Shelter should protect the horse from the hot sun, wind, or stormy weather. Shelter can vary from a three-sided loafing shed in the pasture to a barn with box stalls and a tack room. Make sure there is plenty of light and ventilation.
- Horses should have access to water at ALL TIMES. Water buckets should be hung high enough so that the horse cannot get its hoof into the bucket. Fence should be sturdy, safe, visible, and well-maintained.

What do I need to feed my horse?



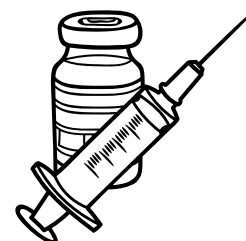
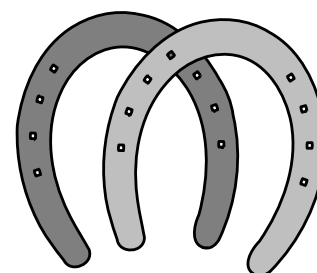
- Provide high quality roughage with a complementing grain (if needed). Feed by weight, not by volume. On average a horse will eat 2% of its body weight per day.
- Always maintain at least half of the ration as roughage, such as hay or grass.
- Never feed moldy or dusty hay, grass, or grain. Horses should NEVER be fed lawn grass clippings.
- Have fresh, clean water available at all times - except to a hot, sweaty horse. A sweaty horse needs to be given water slowly after being exercised hard.
- Watch your horse while it eats and inspect feed containers daily to detect abnormal eating or drinking behaviors.
- Proper exercise improves appetite, digestion, muscle tone, and mental health for horses.
- Ration changes should be gradual - over a minimum of five days to prevent digestive problems.



How do I keep my horse healthy?

Parasite Prevention Tips:

- Keep stalls clean, dry, and well-bedded
- Prevent fecal contamination of feed and water.
- Don't overstock or overgraze pasture.
- Deworm horses on a schedule and follow labels.
- Clip leg hairs with fly eggs attached.
- Drag pastures to break up manure piles.
- Consider having your vet test fecal samples if needed.
- Use fly spray regularly.



Regular Hoof Care:

Trim or shoe your horse every 6-8 weeks. Consider pulling shoes during winter months.

Vaccinations:

Work with your veterinarian to properly vaccinate. Consider travel when deciding on vaccinations. Highly recommended vaccinations to include: Flu/Rhino, West Nile, Rabies, Tetanus, Eastern and Western Encephalomyelitis (WEE and EEE).

4-H Horse Project Member Responsibility

To be eligible for participation in the Douglas County Fair & Rodeo

1. You must have passed the Colorado 4-H Horse Safety Certification to compete at the Douglas County Fair & Rodeo as an unrated, or Walk/Trot rider.
2. You must have taken, and passed, the Horse Level 1 written and riding test with an 80% or better in order to exhibit in classes other than Walk/Trot at the Douglas County Fair & Rodeo.
3. A member must pass the written and riding level tests for each discipline (English, Western, or Ranch Horse) prior to the deadline that they are showing in.
4. To be eligible for the High Point Award in any riding discipline, the Exhibitor must complete in the Written Test, Record Book, Showmanship, and Equitation/Horsemanship in that riding discipline.
5. You are expected to have complete access to the project horse(s) at any time and must provide care and management the majority of the time whether you own or lease the horse.
6. You must have a horse I.D. on file through 4HOnline for every horse you intend to ride at the Douglas County Fair & Rodeo. If you have two horses, it is encouraged to ID both, even if you intend on only taking on to fair. Every horse that is ID'd online must be entered into your record book. **If you are leasing a horse, you must have a lease agreement submitted to the Extension Office (every year) by the ID Deadline Date and be included in your record book.**
7. You must attend at least 60% of chartered club meetings after your joining date.
8. You must give a demonstration, illustration, talk, or public speech at the club level.
9. You must submit you fair entries online and select your classes by the deadline date (do this early as no corrections can be made after the deadline).

What are the different classes at the Douglas County Fair & Rodeo

Douglas County Fair & Rodeo classes are separated by age, so make sure you are signing up for the correct class. Fair written test scores will count towards high point calculation in every division. For detailed class descriptions, look at the Horse Rule Book. Brief class descriptions are as follows:

English: (Riders MUST wear a helmet) Riders must take the Fair Written Test, Showmanship, and English Equitation Classes to be considered for highpoint.

- ✓ **Showmanship:** In-hand class with a pattern
- ✓ **Control:** Advanced pattern class judged on horse/rider
- ✓ **Hunter Seat Equitation Over Fences:** Pattern class over jumps. **(Must have leader approval to jump)**
- ✓ **Equitation:** Pattern class judged on a rider's ability
- ✓ **Show Hack:** Rail class includes extension of gaits

Western: Riders must take the Fair Written Test, Showmanship, and Horsemanship Classes to be considered for highpoint.

- ✓ **Showmanship:** In-hand class with a pattern
- ✓ **Horsemanship:** Pattern class judged on horse/rider
- ✓ **Reining:** Advanced pattern class includes spins & slides
- ✓ **Equitation:** Pattern class judged on a rider's ability
- ✓ **Western Riding:** Advanced pattern class judged on horse/rider with focus on lead changes
- ✓ **Trail:** Pattern class; you must maneuver through a course with combination of obstacles

Gymkhana: (All events are times - Riders MUST wear a helmet) Riders must take the Fair Written Test, Showmanship, and Horsemanship Classes to be considered for highpoint. **(MUST be Level I or higher)**

- ✓ **Barrel Race:** Clover leaf pattern class through three barrels
- ✓ **Flags:** Must pick up a flag and move to a different container
- ✓ **Pole Bending:** Pattern class weaving through upright poles
- ✓ **Keyhole:** Must enter a designated area

Working Ranch Horse: Riders must take the Fair Written Test, and compete in all five (5) WRH classes to be considered for highpoint. **(MUST be Level I or higher)**

- ✓ **Ranch Showmanship:** In-hand class with a pattern
- ✓ **Ranch Trail:** Pattern class requiring maneuvers through a course of ranch related obstacles
- ✓ **Individual Cow Work:** Rider "boxes" the cow at one end of the arena, showing the horse's ability to control the cow, then drives the cow halfway down the arena and stops
- ✓ **Ranch Cutting/Penning:** Rider "cuts" a cow out of the herd, shows the horse's ability to "hold" the cow, then pens the cow at the opposite end of the arena
- ✓ **Ranch Riding:** Pattern class which includes ability to demonstrate the extension of gaits

Project Guidelines & Details

Record Books

The 4-H Record Book is an important and required part of completing the 4-H Project. It is something that should be started as soon as the youth begins the 4-H year and is frequently updated.

Horse Record Books

<http://co4h.colostate.edu/program-areas/animals/>

Tips & Tricks

- Track everything
- Record mileage to ride nights, shows, meetings, the barn, etc.
- All horses ID'd must be included in the record book
- Start early and update often.



Record books will be checked prior to the DC Fair & Rodeo to ensure correctness and completeness.

Record Books will be due in their final form to the Extension Office at your Club Deadline.

4-H Levels Program

<http://co4h.colostate.edu/resources/horse/CO-HorseAdvancementLevelsGuidelines.pdf>

The 4-H Horse Levels Program is a way for youth to learn by doing. When a member first joins, they are considered "unleveled". Through working with their leader's, youth learn and progress their way up the levels by first preparing and passing their written level test. Upon passing the written level test, youth may take the riding portion of that level test. Upon passing both the written and riding portion, the youth is then considered a Level 1 rider in that discipline.

The speed of which youth progress through the levels is completely independent, we suggest one level per year at the most, unless the youth begin 4-H with prior experience and can progress through Levels 1 and 2 a bit quicker. Safety for both youth and horse are always a top priority.

Written Portion of Levels Test

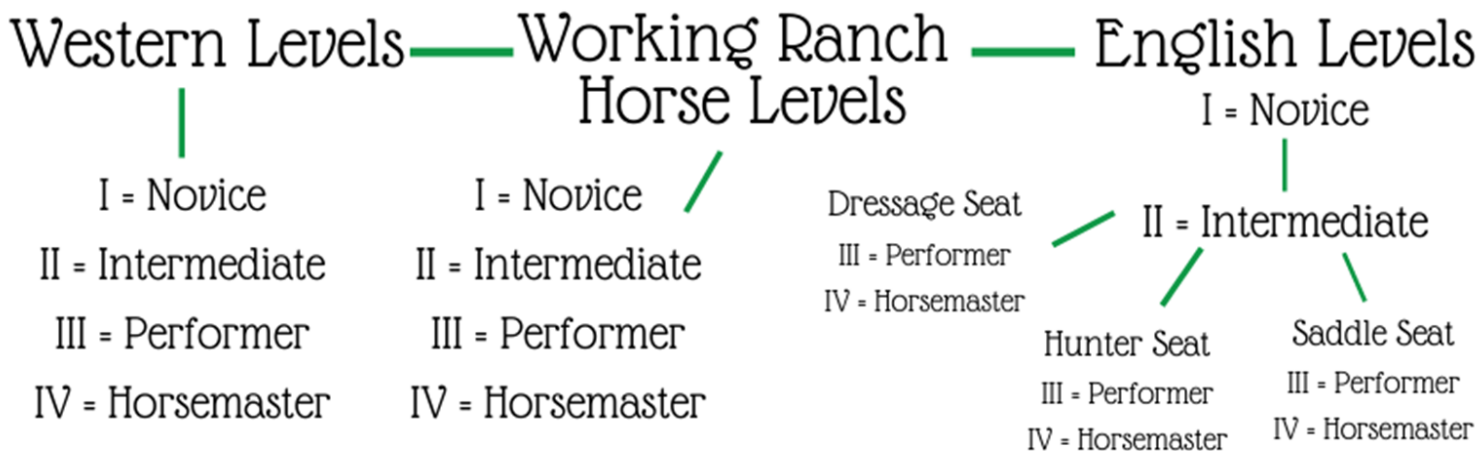
- Written level tests are comprehensive and cover information across all disciplines and are the same for all disciplines and progress from Level 1 to Level 4.
 - *Exception: the Level 1 written exam has two sections of tack ID (English and Western). It is required that members take both tack ID sections of the test, regardless of the discipline they are pursuing.
 - ***All Written Levels Exams must be taken at the Douglas County Extension Office or at County-Organized Study/Exam night.
- Resources: <https://douglas.extension.colostate.edu/4-h/programs-2/horses/>

Riding Portion of Levels Test Information

- For Walk/Trot riders, you must pass the Safety Certification for unrated riders in order to compete at the Douglas County Buckle Series, Horse Camp, or Douglas County Fair & Rodeo.
- Level 1 riding tests must be scheduled with County-approved leaders through the Extension Office, while Level 2 and above riding tests must be scheduled with State-approved Level raters.
- Resources: <http://co4h.colostate.edu/program-areas/horse-resources/levels-testing/>

Project Guidelines & Details - Riding Levels

Safety Certification



Project Guidelines & Details - Showmanship

Participating in Showmanship is a requirement for completing the Horse Project in Douglas County. Showmanship competition reflects how a well-trained horse should behave on the ground. Every horse should be easy to handle, work effortlessly off his handler's cues, allow others to approach and move around him without concern, and stand still when asked.

Class Requirements

In showmanship, your horse is not being judged directly, rather your ability to show him "in-hand" as a competitive team. Maneuvers include: squaring or setting up for inspection, pivoting, being led at the walk and jog, backing up, and upward and downward transitions between the jog, walk and halt. Showmanship patterns will include variations of all these maneuvers in a pattern format.

Showmanship Tips

- Perform the pattern that the judge has drawn. It is usually posted or handed out at the show.
- Don't wear your spurs: they are not only prohibited but are a tripping hazard.
- Maintain the quarter system during inspection and in line up. Change sides appropriately as the judge passes in front of or behind your horse.
- Keep your eye on the judge and wait for the judge to acknowledge you.
- Always move to the correct side of your horse before moving out of line up.
- Keep your horse set and alert looking and keep showing your horse until the class is over.
- For additional showmanship class explanation, including a description of the "quarter system", consult the 4-H Horse Manual and the State 4-H Rule Book.

General Terms, Rules, and Requirements

Levels Review

Every rider begins 4-H unrated and can level up throughout the year. The levels program is a logical step-by-step guide to teach youth horsemanship and care and is highly encouraged in Douglas County 4-H. Even though County Fair is not shown by levels, the levels program is still highly encouraged in Douglas County 4-H to create a solid and consistent foundation. The Levels Program Starts with Level I Western or English and progresses from there. After Level 2 English, riders may choose from Dressage, Non-Jump Hunt Seat, and Jumping Hunt Seat for Level 3 or 4. For more information on the Levels Advancement please see this [document](#).

At Douglas County Fair & Rodeo - You must be at least safety certified to show Walk/Trot. Some of the disciplines at County Fair (Working Ranch Horse, Gymkhana, and Jumping) require you to be Level 1. Make sure to schedule testing **early**. The test is two parts, a written and riding part. The rider must pass the level written portion before attempting the riding portion.

In order to receive an award for leveling up to Level 3 or 4, the member must be a DC 4-H Member in Good Standing and complete the project.

Unrated members can come to ride nights, workouts, and fun shows. Some workouts/clinics may require passing the Safety Test Certification (found [here](#)) to participate.

Please note: for leveling up requirements, see "Members Responsibility" in this guide as well as the **DC 4-H Policies for Success**.

General Horse Show Rules

- All Douglas County Buckle shows follow the CO State 4-H Horse Rule Book and Douglas County 4-H Horse Project guidelines: <http://co4h.colostate.edu/program-areas/animals/>
- The Douglas County Fair & Rodeo Horse Show will follow the Douglas County Fair and Rodeo Competition Rules: www.DouglasCountyFairandRodeo.com
- A horse with a history of kicking must be identified by a red ribbon on its tail while on the Douglas County Fairgrounds.

Notice: Show superintendent or show management reserves the right to excuse any horse deemed unsafe from any or all 4-H shows.

English Requirements

A properly fitting, certified equestrian helmet with a properly fastened safety harness in place is **REQUIRED** in all English classes, activities, and practice sessions.

General Terms, Rules, and Requirements

Gymkhana Requirements

All members who want to compete in gymkhana events at the Douglas County Fair & Rodeo must have passed Level 1 written test and Level 1 Western riding test by **June 15th**. A properly fitting, certified equestrian helmet with a properly fastened safety harness in place is **REQUIRED** when practicing and competing in all gymkhana events.

Working Ranch Horse Requirements

To participate in WRH, riders must pass the Western Levels written exams and the WRH Division Riding Levels test. Note: These riding tests have changed over the past few years to be more specific to the skill set of the WRH. To compete at Fair, you must be WRH Level 1.

Master Showmanship (Horse Qualifier Class)

If you enter this class, you **MUST** be able to participate with your horse in the Master Showmanship Contest, typically the Friday following the Horse Show. See the [Douglas County Junior Division Competition Rules](#) for additional information, dates, and rules.

County Open Ride Nights

At Douglas County Fairgrounds Indoor Arena. Please see the Douglas County Fairgrounds [website](#) for more information and to check the events calendar online for weekly availability. The cost is \$5 per horse or rider (whichever is greater).

4-H Open Ride Nights

Sponsored by the Douglas County 4-H Horse Steering Committee

With the idea to give our Douglas County 4-H Horse project members more experience and educational opportunities, the DC Horse Steering Committee sponsors a series of open ride nights each fall and spring at the Fairgrounds indoor arena. Each night will have a theme/topic and instruction will be provided by our amazing volunteer horse leaders.

Please note - These are nights dedicated to the education of the 4-H members, parents should be present, but please do not expect to ride. To give the 4-H kids the best atmosphere to learn and for safety, we ask that only active, safety tested, 4-H members in good standing participate in these ride nights.

Keep an eye on the 4-H weekly blast for upcoming ride night opportunities.

Project Educational Resources & Opportunities

Douglas County 4-H Horse Camp

June 10th-13th, 2024 (Register by May 15th)

Each year Douglas County Horse Steering Committee is proud to offer the DC 4-H Horse Project youth a fun and educational horse day camp opportunity!

Important: Riders **MUST** be currently enrolled in the 4-H Horse Project and safety certified at a **MINIMUM** to attend camp.

Working Ranch Horse Clinic

June 14, 2024 (Register by May 15th)

In combination with the horse camp, the Douglas County Horse Steering Committee is proud to offer a yearly WRH Clinic where youth have the chance to work with cattle prior to the Douglas County Fair & Rodeo.

Important: Riders must be currently enrolled in the 4-H Horse Project and Level 1 Western to participate in the WRH Clinic. Opportunities to test for the WRH Levels at the clinic *may* be available. Be sure to contact the Extension Office ASAP for more details.

Douglas County 4-H Buckle Series Horse Shows

Each year the Douglas County Horse Steering Committee is proud to run a 4-H Horse Show series throughout the winter and spring. The show series is a low key, fun, and safe environment for 4-H youth and community members alike to learn and progress with their horses. Check out the website for more information:

<https://douglas.extension.colostate.edu/4-h/buckleseries/>

4-H Horse Steering Committee

The Horse Steering Committee does exactly what the name suggests, it "steers" the 4-H Horse Program for Douglas County 4-H to improve the program and provide more opportunities to our horse youth and leaders. There are no qualifications or nominations, you simply show up and provide your input. If you have ideas, suggestions, or changes you would like to see, please plan to join us.

Meetings are typically held the fourth Monday of each month at the CSU Extension Office Basement. Be sure to check the blast for updated information. **All parents and members are welcome to attend.**

Master Showmanship (Horse Qualifier Class)

If you enter this class, you **MUST** be able to participate with your horse in the Master Showmanship Contest, typically the Friday following the Horse Show. See the Douglas County Junior Division Competition Rules for additional information, dates, and rules.

Project Guidelines & Details

4-H Materials For Your Project

- Horse Manual
- 2021 Colorado 4-H Horse Rule Book
- Horse E-Record (By age)
 - Junior ([excel](#) / [pdf](#))
 - Intermediate ([excel](#) / [pdf](#))
 - Senior ([excel](#) / [pdf](#))
 - **If you are having trouble accessing the excel workbook try using Microsoft Edge
- Horse Project Guide/Rules (this guide)

Remember to:

- Ask questions often
- Find a 4-H member or leader to help you
- Read the Douglas County Fair & Rodeo Competition Rules
- Read your newsletter and Thursday Blast
- Complete your Record Book

4-H Rules

My performance goal is never to only beat someone else.

I respect and learn from other competitors more skilled than myself.

I don't criticize other competitors, officials, or judges.

I do my best, always.

I have fun.

I stay home if I am not able to follow the above rules.

Horse Animal ID

4-H Members must own or lease their horse in order to complete the 4-H Horse Project.

An Animal ID **MUST** be entered into 4HOnline by the County Due Date: **APRIL 1.**

4HOnline Animal ID Includes:

- Fully filled out boxes of information
- Proof of animal ownership/Lease paperwork
- Animal Care & Housing Form

Lease Paperwork Must Include:

- Date of Signing
- Lease Period (Start and End Date)
- Three Signatures (horse owner, youth, and youth's parent/guardian)

All ID'd animals must be accounted for in your record book.

Contact your 4-H Animal/Equine Science Agent ASAP if you have questions.

Animals MUST be ID'd by the ID deadline or youth may not be eligible to participate in county and/or state events.

Douglas County Horse Superintendent(s)

Lindsay Griffith and Andrea Slattery

Extension 4-H Specialist

Mercedes Glenn

4-H Youth Development - Animal/Equine Science

Interested in Horse Judging, Hippology, or Horse Bowl?

For more information, please contact Mercedes Glenn at Mercedes.Glenn@colostate.edu or Lindsay Griffith at lgriffith@brwncaid.com.



Douglas County 4-H Horse Project Resources

Be sure to ask us about signing up for the weekly Douglas County 4-H newsletter!

Douglas County 4-H Website Calendar:

<https://douglas.extension.colostate.edu/4-h/resources/>

Douglas County 4-H Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/183640871675571/>

Douglas County 4-H Horse Project Website:

<https://douglas.extension.colostate.edu/4-h/programs-2/horses/>

Horse Record Book:

<http://co4h.colostate.edu/program-areas/animals/>

Douglas County 4-H Buckle Series Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/dcbuckleseries>

Douglas County 4-H Buckle Series Website:

<https://douglas.extension.colostate.edu/4-h/buckleseries/>

For more questions, or resources, please contact Mercedes Glenn at Mercedes.Glenn@colostate.edu

