

Douglas County Buckle Series Open Show Standing Rules

The Douglas County 4-H Horse Steering Committee and Douglas County 4-H Extension Agent reserve all rights to modify or change any part of these rules at any time and add that by participating in the Douglas County Buckle Series, exhibitors agree to *Douglas County, Colorado Fairgrounds Release and Waiver of Liability and Assumption of Risk Agreement*.

- I. **Colorado State 4-H Horse Show Rules:** The Douglas County Buckle Series is governed by Colorado State 4-H Horse Show Rules except where exceptions are noted. Exhibitors are responsible for knowing and understanding the rules. A link to the current version of the Colorado State 4-H Horse Show Rule Book and Addendum is below.

<https://co4h.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/27/2025/12/HorseShowRuleBook.pdf> (This link will take you to the Colorado State 4-H Horse Show Rule Book and Addendum)

The Colorado State 4-H Rule Book provides guidance on attire, tack, legal bits, hand position, class routine, penalties, drugs, humane treatment of animals and conduct.

- II. Stallions are not permitted at the Douglas County Buckle Series Horse Shows.
- III. Divisions – Age Groups
 - a. Exhibitor Age is determined as of January 1 of the current horse show year.
 - i. DC 4-H Walk Trot Novice Rider 8-18
 - ii. 8-13
 - iii. 14-18
 - iv. 19 and Over
 - b. DC 4-H Walk-Trot Novice Rider 8-18: ***The Walk-Trot 8-18 age group is a BEGINNER division, intended for BEGINNING riders ages 8-18 who are not yet proficient at the lope or canter. It is not intended for experienced riders.***
 - i. Eligibility for the DC 4-H Walk Trot Novice Rider 8-18
 1. Exhibitor must be enrolled in Douglas County 4-H for the 2025-2026 year.
 2. Exhibitor must not have passed their Level 1 Riding Test in any discipline prior to 01/01/2026.
 3. Exhibitor must not have won Series Highpoint or Reserve Series Highpoint Walk Trot at the 2025 Buckle Series (or prior) in any discipline.
 - ii. Riders in the DC Walk-Trot Novice Rider 8-18 age group may not enter any other age group even if they are showing a different horse. For example, a Walk-Trot rider may not enter the 8-13 age group.

- iii. Riders in the DC 4-H Walk-Trot Novice Rider 8-18 Western Discipline may show a horse of any age two-handed in a snaffle bit with split reins. Leverage bits must use the hand positions described in the Colorado State 4-H Horse Show Rule Book.
 - iv. Patterns originating from the Colorado State 4-H Horse Show Rule Book will be modified for Walk-Trot Novice Riders 8-18. Examples include, but are not limited to, English Control and Ranch Riding.
 - IV. Sharing Horses – Two riders may share the same horse if they are entered in different age groups or different disciplines. Two riders may not share the same horse in the same class.
 - V. Multiple Horses for One Rider – One rider may show multiple horses but the horses must be entered in different classes. No rider may show more than one horse in any class. Highpoints are calculated on a single horse rider / combination.
 - VI. Disciplines / Classes
 - a. English Discipline Classes
 - i. English Equitation (Pattern)
 - ii. English Equitation (Rail)
 - iii. English Show Hack (Rail) – In the interests of time and well-being of horses, the judge will not call for all 9 gaits in both directions.
 - iv. English Hunter Hack (Cross Rails) – fence height not to exceed 18 inches on center.
 - v. English Control (Pattern)
 - b. Showmanship
 - i. Showmanship (English or Western)
 - c. Western Discipline Classes
 - i. Western Horsemanship (Pattern)
 - ii. Western Horsemanship (Rail)
 - iii. Ranch Riding (Pattern)
 - iv. Reining (Pattern)
 - v. Western Riding (Pattern)
 - VII. Points and Awards
 - a. Class Points are calculated as shown below:

Douglas County Buckle Series Class	
Points	
Class Placing	Points Awarded
1st	6
2nd	5
3rd	4
4th	3
5th	2
6th	1

- b. Ribbons 1st through 6th Place are awarded in every class and may be picked up at the in-gate at the conclusion of the class.

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- c. Single Horse/Rider Combination Rule: Daily and Series Highpoint awards are based upon a single horse and rider combination within each discipline. If for any reason a rider uses a different horse within a discipline at a single show or during the series, the new horse/rider combination will be counted as a separate set of points. There are no exceptions to the Single Horse/Rider Combination Rule including but not limited to: veterinary issues with the horse, behavioral issues with the horse, and death of the horse.
- d. The 2026 Awards Schedule is shown below:

Douglas County Buckle Series 2026 Awards				
Discipline / Age Group	Daily Highpoint	Daily Reserve Highpoint	Series Highpoint	Series Reserve Highpoint
English DC4-HWalk Trot	Prize	Prize	Buckle	Buckle
English 8-13	Prize	Prize	Buckle	Buckle
English 14-18	Prize	Prize	Buckle	Buckle
English 19 and Over	Prize	Prize	Buckle	Buckle
Western DC4-HWalk Trot	Prize	Prize	Buckle	Buckle
Western 8-13	Prize	Prize	Buckle	Buckle
Western 14-18	Prize	Prize	Buckle	Buckle
Western 19 and Over	Prize	Prize	Buckle	Buckle
Showmanship DC4-HWalk Trot	Rosette	Rosette	Neck Ribbon	Neck Ribbon
Showmanship 8-13	Rosette	Rosette	Neck Ribbon	Neck Ribbon
Showmanship 14-18	Rosette	Rosette	Neck Ribbon	Neck Ribbon
Showmanship 19 and Over	Rosette	Rosette	Neck Ribbon	Neck Ribbon

Daily Awards will be announced at the conclusion of each discipline and may be picked up in the horse show office. Series Awards will be announced at the conclusion of the final show of the season (Show 5.)

- e. Tie-Breaker classes for daily and series highpoint awards are shown below.

Douglas County Buckle Series Tie Breaker Classes 2026				
Discipline / Age Group	1st Tiebreaker	2nd Tiebreaker	3rd Tiebreaker	4th Tiebreaker
English DC4-HWalk Trot Novice Rider	English Equitation Pattern	English Equitation Rail	English Show Hack	N/A
English (8-13) (14-18) (19 and Over)	English Equitation Pattern	English Equitation Rail	English Show Hack	Eng Control/Hunter Hack
Western DC4-HWalk Trot	West Horsemanship Pattern	West Horsemanship Rail	Ranch Riding	N/A
Western (8-13) (14-18) (19 and Over)	West Horsemanship Pattern	West Horsemanship Rail	Ranch Riding	Reining/West Riding
Showmanship	Total Shows Entered	Total First Places	Total Second Places	N/A

- VIII. **Helmets:** ASTM approved helmets with safety harness buckled are required for all exhibitors in English Discipline classes.
- IX. **Conduct:** The Douglas County Buckle Series strives to create a safe and welcoming environment. Our goal is to give exhibitors an opportunity to improve their horsemanship, practice good sportsmanship, and foster a spirit of volunteerism. Bullying, unsportsmanlike conduct of any kind and disrespectful behavior towards horse show staff, volunteers, and fellow exhibitors will not be tolerated. If exhibitors or spectators have concerns, they need to address those concerns with the Horse Show Office, Horse Steering Committee Members, or the Douglas County 4-H Extension Office before the next class. Approaching another exhibitor in an unsportsmanlike manner will not be tolerated. Management reserves the right to disqualify exhibitors if they, their parents, or coaches display such behavior.
- a. **Approaching the Judge:** Exhibitors and Parents may not approach the judge at any time during the judged events or breaks. If time permits, judges may be available for a limited period at the conclusion of the judged events to provide feedback to exhibitors. If a rider has a question prior to the start of a class, they should raise their hand and ask the ring steward.
 - b. **Approaching the Announcers' Desk:** Do not approach the announcer with questions. Questions should be directed at the Horse Show Office. If an exhibitor or parent interrupts staff at the announcer's desk while the event is in progress, they may be disqualified.
 - c. **Questions About Patterns:** Patterns will be posted well in advance of the show. Please direct all questions about patterns to show management prior to the start of the show. Should an exhibitor have a question arise prior to the start of their class, they should notify the ring steward before the class starts that they have a question.
 - d. **Spectators:** Spectators should avoid making loud noises or sudden movements in the stands that might startle horses. Spectators should keep children under control in the stands. Playing, roughhousing or engaging in any behaviors that are disruptive to the horses and the horse show are not permitted.
- X. **Grounds and Facility:** We are privileged to have use of the Douglas County Fairgrounds. It is the responsibility of show management, exhibitors, and families to be good stewards of this facility.
- a. **Parking Lot:** Park in designated areas. Do not park between the barns or in front of the entrance to the indoor arena. Exhibitors are responsible for cleaning up all manure, hay, and trash around their trailers.
 - b. **Stalls:** Stalls may be available for day use during the horse show at no charge on a "first-come first-served" basis. Exhibitors must provide their own shavings and completely strip their stalls before leaving. Show management will notify exhibitors in advance on Facebook if stalls will not be available.

- c. Paddock Area
 - i. Horses in the Paddock Area must be attended at all times.
 - ii. Always maintain a safe distance between horses.
 - iii. Any hay and manure must be COMPLETELY cleaned up at the conclusion of the show. Please use available stalls whenever possible.
 - iv. Horses may not be left unattended under any circumstances.
 - v. Red Ribbon rule – if your horse might kick, put a red ribbon in its tail. If you see a red ribbon, please keep a safe distance from the horse (whether while walking around or when in the arena.)
 - d. Stands and Restrooms: Please clean up after yourself. Dispose of all trash. Clean up spills. No graffiti or otherwise defacing the facility.
 - e. No dogs. No smoking. No alcoholic beverages.
- XI. Protests: (Adapted from the Douglas County Fair Competitor Rules and Regulations)
- a. DECISIONS OF JUDGES ARE FINAL AND NOT ELIGIBLE FOR PROTEST
 - b. Whenever any person believes that an exhibitor, competitor, contestant or Douglas County Buckle Series official has engaged in any activity that violates Douglas County Buckle Series Rules or the Colorado 4-H Horse Show Rule Book or engaged in any unethical activity during the course of the competition that may violate these rules, such person has the opportunity to provide their allegations of wrong-doing (protest) to the Douglas County Horse Steering Committee for review. Any person making such a report must do so in writing and it must be personally presented to a Douglas County Horse Steering Committee Representative.
 - c. Each protest must be accompanied by a one-hundred-dollar (\$100) bond.
 - d. The following is the Protest Procedure:
 - i. The protest must be presented, in writing, and sworn to, within 24 hours after an entry is displayed for viewing or sooner if the subject matter is time sensitive.
 - ii. In the event a protest is presented after the judging has begun on the item or activity in question, the judging will proceed, and the protest will be handled as if the protest has been presented following the judging.
 - iii. The written protest must state the name of the exhibitor, competitor, contestant, or horse show official as applicable, who has allegedly committed a violation, or identified the activity in question. The protest shall include the class in question, the specific allegations giving rise to the protest, the facts that support the protest with reference to Rules as applicable.
 - iv. Upon receipt of a properly presented protest, the Douglas County Horse Steering Committee will review the protest and render a decision, the review process may include interview with the parties involved to assist in obtaining the facts associated with the filed protest.
 - v. The decision of the Douglas County Horse Steering Committee is final.

- vi. If the decision of the Douglas County Horse Steering Committee determines that the facts described constitute a violation the bond may be returned. The bond may be retained if the protest is not upheld and will be deposited in the Douglas County Horse Steering Committee funds.
- XII. Entries, Payment, and Fees
- a. Pre-Entries may be done online via Facebook approximately one week prior to the show. Pre-entries typically close approximately 48 hours before the show. Follow us on Facebook for specific dates and times for each show.
 - b. Pre-Entries must check in at the Horse Show Office to receive an exhibitor number, sign a release and pay fees. Check-in closes 15 minutes before the discipline starts.
 - c. Manual in-person entries may be completed the day of the show. Entries close 15 minutes before the discipline starts.
 - d. 2026 Fees
 - i. \$10 entry fee per class
 - ii. \$10 Office Charge Per Exhibitor (waived if an online entry was completed)
 - iii. \$70 all day fee per horse/rider combination if entered in 8 or more classes.
 - e. The DC Horse Steering Committee accepts only cash and checks.
 - f. Checks should be made payable to the DC Horse Steering Committee.
 - g. No Open Checks will be accepted.
 - h. No Refunds. If you are in doubt about whether you will be able to show in all your classes, please enter one discipline at a time and write multiple checks or make multiple cash payments. Adding classes is permissible.
 - i. Adding Classes: Classes must be added at the Horse Show Office. Adds must be accompanied by payment and must be completed 15 minutes before the class starts. There are no adds at the gate.
 - j. Scratching Classes: Scratches may be done at the gate or at the Horse Show Office.
 - i. If an urgent situation arises and you can't get into the class, you may scratch at the gate.
 - ii. If you are scratching for the day, please visit the horse show office and notify us.
 - iii. There are no refunds for scratches.

- k. Exhibitor Numbers: Each horse and rider combination are assigned a unique number. The Horse Show Office makes every effort to write the exhibitor's and horse's name on the back of the number at time of entry.
 - i. Use of Incorrect Exhibitor Number: It is the exhibitor's responsibility to display the correct exhibitor number on the correct horse/rider combination. Failure to do so may result in nullification of any points earned while the horse/rider combination was exhibited with the incorrect number.
 - ii. Placement of Exhibitor Numbers:
 - 1. In mounted, judged events, exhibitor numbers should be placed on both sides of the saddle pad or saddle blanket. Two copies of the exhibitor number are provided for this purpose.
 - 2. In showmanship, the exhibitor number should be placed on the exhibitor's back and should not be obscured by the exhibitor's hair.
 - 3. It is at the judge's discretion how he/she will respond to incorrect placement of exhibitor numbers.
- l. Name of Horse: Please be consistent when stating your horse's name on the entry form. If you use a barn name for one show and a registered name for the same horse at the next show, your points may be counted as two separate horses. It is the exhibitor's responsibility to consistently provide the correct name for their horse.

XIII. Release

- a. All adult exhibitors must sign a release at every show.
- b. All parents or legal guardians of minor exhibitors must sign a release at every show.
- c. An exhibitor number will receive an exhibitor number until a release is signed. An exhibitor entry is not completed until a signed release is provided.