

Montana 4-H Congress Horse Skill-A-Thon Contest

Updated 2012

PURPOSE:

Horse Skill-A-Thon is an activity that can make learning fun for 4-H members, by letting them exhibit their horse knowledge in a friendly but competitive setting. You can use Horse Skill-A-Thon at your regular 4-H meetings as a great learning tool.

AWARDS:

Winners will be announced at the awards program during Congress. The winning team will receive a medal and be recognized at Congress. In addition, the winning team will be awarded a trip to the Denver Western Regional 4-H Roundup.

RULES:

Each county may nominate **two (2) teams** of four (4) members to participate in the State Invitational Horse Skill-A-Thon contest. County teams must be made of 3 or 4 members, all of which must be eligible to attend the Western National Roundup in Denver. Those who have previously attended the Western National Roundup in Denver are not eligible to attend roundup again and must be entered as alternates at Montana 4-H Congress. **Counties can enroll an unlimited number of alternates.** Each county must declare the members of their team when they register for congress. If counties have less than 3 members that are eligible for the Western National Roundup they may join with an adjacent county or counties (the counties must share a common border) to make an eligible team of 3 or 4. There will be no substitutions on the team that goes to Denver. Members must compete in the Montana 4-H Congress contest in order to be eligible for the award trip to Denver. All contestants must be 4-H members of the county(s) they are judging for.

This year's Horse Skill-A-Thon Contest has four phases:

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| 1. Examination phase | 200 points |
| 2. Station phase | 200 points |
| 3. Judging phase | 200 points |
| 4. Team problem | 200 points |

Examination Phase (200 points)

This phase of the contest may include a 100-point written exam; 50 points of projected slides to be identified as to breed, color, color pattern, activity, etc; and 50 points of anatomy which may include external skeletal (scientific names only) internal organs, parts of gastrointestinal tract, male and female reproductive organs, detailed anatomy of the foot and detailed anatomy of the lower limbs.

Station Phase (200 points)

This phase will consist of a series of stations or tables where at each, all contestants will respond to the requirements of the stations. Two minutes per station are allowed.

Examples of stations are:

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| 1. Types of saddles (pictures or actual) | 8. The Hoof |
| 2. Parts of saddles | 9. Performance events |
| 3. Bridles | 10. Horse sports |
| 4. Grooming aids | 11. Bits – type and parts |
| 5. Horse breeds | 12. Gaits and defects |
| 6. Horse colors | 13. Normal Horse |
| 7. Markings | 14. Farrier Tools – their uses |

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| 15. Color descriptions | 22. Teeth |
| 16. Anatomy defects | 23. Performance classes |
| 17. Skeleton | 24. Place of origin |
| 18. Conformation and defects | 25. Safety |
| 19. Training equipment | 26. Horse parts |
| 20. Blemishes and unsoundness | 27. Commonly used knots & hitches |
| 21. Feed samples | 28. Internal and external parasites |

At each station a picture or an object may be presented; contestants' may be asked to describe the use of the item, or to demonstrate the use of the item.

Judging Phase (200 points)

Contestants will place at least 2 classes of horses. The classes judged will be held with the horse judging contest. The official placing and cuts from the horse judging contest will be used.

Team Problem (200 points)

Each team will have eight (8) but not more than twelve (12) minutes to discuss among themselves the problem, immediately after which they will have up to ten (10) minutes to present an oral solution or procedures relative to the problem. Each member of the team should contribute to the oral presentation. Evaluation will be based on the understanding of the problem, completeness of the response, the probability of success of the solution or procedures and the logic used in making the oral response. The official may ask questions of any or all of the team members to clarify the presentation.

Examples of possible team problems might include:

1. Balancing a horse's ration
2. Horse farm management
3. Establishment of a new stable
4. Information on horses
 - a. How to look
 - b. Where to look
 - c. How to use
 - d. Suppliers of information (specialty)
 - e. Duplicating or repeating information
5. Behavior problems
6. Training and conditioning programs
7. Breeding and/or leasing contracts, specific clauses for insurance, liability, payments, care termination, transport, etc.
8. Teaching lessons in horse management

Responses to team problems should include not only "how" but "why," with special attention given to the rationale leading to the response.

RESOURCES:

Please check with MSU Extension Publications and the current 4-H Clover for the most up to date listing of available resources. Extension specialists may also be available to assist with your preparation in this contest area. Please contact Todd Kesner in the 4-H Center for more information regarding this contest. 406-994-6816.

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County 4-H Horse Skill-A-Thon Program Sample

Actually, the Horse Skill-A-Thon is just the study of the horse. You can become an all-around horseman or horsewoman with knowledge about the horse that would make any trivia lover envious. It could even help your understanding of your horse and make you better partners. Guest speakers will help make learning more exciting.

- February:** Get acquainted meeting.
Origin of the horse
Structure and action of the horse
Unsoundness—will help pave the way for the next workshop
- March (1):** Ferrrier workshop NO FEET, NO HORSE Parts of the hoof
Types of shoes and their parts
Unsoundness and the importance of hoof care. Also covers leg problems
- March (2):** Horse Dentist Workshop Identify age properly Parts of a horse's mouth
How to identify problems with teeth
- April (1):** Veterinarian workshop
Digestive system of the horse
Identification of worms and how to control them
Reproduction of the horse
- April (2):** Feed workshop
Nutrients of different grains
Hay nutrients
Pelleted feeds, pros and cons
- May (1):** Workshop
Saddle Parts
Bits, bridles and their uses
Harness and driving
- May (2):** Workshop
Guidelines for safety with horses
- May (3):** Training workshop
Training of the colt and riding a green horse
- May (4):** Judging workshop Conformation Performance Giving reasons
- May (5):** Genetics and colors of horses
Patterns of footfalls
Gaits of different types of horses
- June:** Reviewing for state contest at Congress