



SAVVY HORSEMANSHIP Trail Class

The trail class tests the horse and rider's ability to cope with many situations encountered in a natural setting such as everyday ranch work. The horse is ridden through a pattern of obstacles, which should be natural or nearly approximate to those found on the range. The horse is judged on cleanliness, neatness and promptness with which the obstacles are negotiated, ability to negotiate obstacles correctly and attitude and mannerisms exhibited by the horse while negotiating the course. Emphasis on judging should be on identifying the well-broke, responsive, well-mannered horse, which can correctly negotiate the course. The rider's horsemanship (including a well balanced seat, use of light hands and legs) and sportsmanship should be taken into consideration also. Management, when setting courses, should keep in mind that the idea is not to trap a horse, or eliminate it by making an obstacle too difficult. All courses and obstacles are to be constructed with safety in mind so as to eliminate any accidents.

SCORING THE TRAIL:

Each obstacle shall have a numerical score of 20, and the possible score for each obstacle shall be the same. Scoring is made on the ability of the horse to negotiate obstacles clean, correct, briskly, and without undue hesitation. Horses must be given credit for any portion of an obstacle that is done in a correct and timely manner. The rider's horsemanship skills are to be included within the score, and the rider has the option of eliminating any obstacle and taking a score of "0" for the missed obstacle. A judge may ask a horse to pass on an obstacle after three refusals or for safety concerns.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, DEVELOPMENT & POSTING

A. Course will include no less than six and no more than nine obstacles.

It is mandatory that the horse be asked to walk, trot and lope during the course. Walk-can be part of obstacle score and scored with approaching obstacle. Trot-at least 35 ft and either scored with approaching obstacle, or scored alone as a jog transitioned to a long trot for a minimum of 50 ft. Lope-at least 50 ft and scored with approaching obstacle and be lead specific.

B. Care must be exercised to avoid the setting up of any obstacles that

- may be hazardous to the horse or rider.
- C. NO EXTRA VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS MAY BE GIVEN TO EXHIBITORS BY MANAGEMENT OR JUDGES THAT IS NOT WRITTEN IN COURSE DESCRIPTION.
 - D. Show committees have the option of setting up the trail course to best fit their conditions be it arena or natural settings. The show committee, either through a pilot run or estimation, shall select a reasonable course that can be negotiated in a reasonable amount of time.
 - E. Judges must walk or ride the course and have the right and duty to alter the course if it is not in keeping with the intent of the SAVVY HORSEMANSHIP trail class. Judges may remove or change any obstacle they deem unsafe, non-negotiable, or unnecessarily difficult. If any time a trail obstacle becomes unsafe during a class, it shall be repaired or removed from the course. If it cannot be repaired and horses have completed the course, the score for that obstacle shall be deducted from all previous works for that class.
 - F. The actual trail course cannot be made available to exhibitors or posted prior to the day of competition, but must be posted at least one hour prior to competition. Printed handouts for contestants are helpful and encouraged.
 - G. The course may be walked on foot by the exhibitor in an arena setting, or in the case of a natural outside course, be observed from the outside of the course on horseback, but no horse/rider exhibitors are allowed on the actual course after it has been set until their trail run begins.

TRAIL CLASS OBSTACLES:

- A. Course must be designed using the following obstacles and maneuvers.
- B. Obstacles and Maneuvers:**
 1. Walk-overs – Ride over no more than five logs or poles. The space between logs for walk-overs should be 20” – 24” apart and no more than 10” high. These may be in a straight line, curved, zigzagged or raised.
 2. Trot-overs – Trot over no more than five logs or poles. The space between trot-overs should be 36” – 42” apart. Poles may be elevated a maximum of 10”. These may be in a straight line, curved, zigzagged or raised.

3. Lope-overs – Lope over no more than five poles. The space between lope-overs should be 6 ft. to 7 ft. Poles may be elevated a maximum of 10 inches. These may be in a straight line, curved, zigzagged or raised.
4. Opening, passing through and closing gate. A gate should be used that will not endanger horse or rider and requires minimum sidepassing.
5. Ride over wooden bridge. (Suggested minimum width shall be 36” wide and at least six feet long). Bridge should be sturdy, safe and negotiated at a walk only. Heavy plywood lying flat on the ground is an acceptable simulation of a bridge.
6. Rope drag – For Open and Non-Pro Horses ONLY. Not to be used in Novice or Youth classed. Drag should be no heavier than a 6” X 6 ft Cedar fence post, and may be dragged from point A to point B a minimum of 35 ft and a maximum of 50 ft.
7. Backing obstacles – Backing obstacles are to be spaced a minimum of 28” spacing. If elevated, 30” spacing required.
 - i. Back through and around at least three markers
 - ii. Back through L, V, U, straight or similar shaped course. May be elevated no more than 24”
8. Jump – An obstacle whose center height is not less than 14” high or more than 24” high. Holding the saddle horn is acceptable for this obstacle.
9. Side Pass - Any object, which is safe and of any length, may be used to demonstrate responsiveness of the horse to leg signals. Raised side pass obstacles should not exceed 12”.
10. Carry object from one point to another.
11. Trot through cones or natural objects – spacing to be minimum of 6 ft.
12. Trot for a distance of 35 ft with a transition to a Long Trot for 50 feet. This may be accomplished between obstacles, and incorporated with the Trot-over.
13. Swing rope – throw rope at dummy steer head.
14. Put on and remove slicker or coat.
15. Walk through water obstacle. Water should be no deeper than midway between the pastern and knee.
16. Walk through brush.
17. Stand to mount with mounting block.
18. Remove and replace materials from mailbox.
19. Ground Tie.

20. Pick up feet.
21. Lead at the trop.
22. Open gate on foot.
23. Cross Natural ditches or up embankments.

- C. **Prohibited obstacles:** Tarps, water obstacles with slick bottoms, bogs, stock tanks, PVC pipe used as a jump or walk over, tires, rocking or moving bridges, logs or poles elevated in a manner that permits such to roll in a dangerous manner. Animals (live or stuffed) should be used which would normally be encountered in a natural setting, and which are not used in an attempt to “spook” a horse.

Scoring Savvy Horsemanship Trail

Trail Credits:

- + Credit is awarded to horses negotiating the obstacles with style and some degree of speed, providing correctness is not sacrificed.
- + Horse should receive credit for showing attentiveness to obstacles and capability of picking their own way through the course when the obstacles warrant it, and willingly responding to the rider’s cues on more difficult obstacles.
- + Quality of movement and cadence should be considered part of the maneuver score for the obstacle.

Trail Deductions:

- Artificial appearance and/or unnecessary delay while approaching or going through obstacles.
- Tail wringing
- Each tick of an obstacle (unless obstacle is designed to be stood upon, or touched)
- Break of gait at walk, trot or lope
- Placing both front or hind feet in a single-strided slot or space
- Skipping over or failing to step into a required space
- Split pole in lope-over
- Stepping on a log, pole, cone or obstacle
- Wrong lead or breaking gait at lope
- Stepping outside the confines of, falling off or out of an obstacle such as a back through, bridge, side pass, and box or water obstacle.
- Refusals, balk or attempting to evade an obstacle by shying or backing

- Blatant disobedience (kicking out, bucking, rearing, striking)
- Failure to ever demonstrate correct lead or gait, if designated
- Failure to complete obstacle