



Virginia Horse Shows Association, Inc.

VHSA HANDBOOK FOR HORSE SHOWING

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*Junior Committee Co-Chairman

*This book is lovingly dedicated to all of our horse show
parents:*

*To the ones who wake up early and stay at the barn late,
thank you.*

*To the ones that support our dreams, but keep us
grounded, thank you.*

*To the ones who still don't understand why putting their
kids on a 2,000 lb. animal is a good idea, thank you.*

Yours truly, the VHSA Junior Committee

Table of Contents

About this Book	4
VHSA	5-6
About Hunters	7
Hunter Divisions & Eligibility	8
About Equitation	9
Equitation Divisions & Eligibility	10
About Jumpers	11
Jumper Divisions & Eligibility	12-13
Memberships	14-15
Entries & Checking In	16-17
Coggins	18-19
Scratching	20
What to Wear: For the Rider	21-22
What to Wear: For the Horse	23
Braiding	24-25
Schooling	26
In-Gate Etiquette	27-28
Timing Tips	28
Jogging	29-30
After You Show	31
Night Check	32
Checking Out	33
Prize Money	34-35
From the Mouth of the Horse	36

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Our Mission: This book aims to help simplify the wonderful world of horse showing for you! It helps to provide the basic tools and tricks of the trade for hunter/jumper/equitation competition in a step-by-step introduction to some of the main components of showing!

Think of this manual as your “Dummy’s Guide to Horse Showing”. It will give you a solid foundation for showing, but be sure to read the following sections with discretion as trends and rules are constantly changing. Additionally, make sure to talk with your trainer about these tips as every barn has different methods of operation!

We are here to simplify everything for you, but for more detail on a particular subject or to read about pertinent changes, be sure to check out the USHJA, USEF and VHSA sites:

http://www.ushja.org/programs/rules/rules_default.aspx

<https://www.usef.org>

<http://www.vhsa.com>

Virginia Horse Show Association: VHSA

***WHY* be a VHSA member? *WHAT* are the perks?**

As a VHSA member, you are recognized for your hard work throughout the show season as year-end prizes are awarded for all VHSA divisions in addition to scholarships recognizing good horsemanship. Also, if you compete in at least five local shows as an associate member, you are eligible to enter the VHSA Associate Championship Show in November! Similarly, if you show in the equitation or hunters on the “Regular” circuit, you can try to qualify for the VHSA/EMO medal finals or VHSA Hunter Championships, respectively, each summer.

***WHAT* is the difference between “Associate” and “Regular”?**

Both the Associate and the Regular show circuits in Virginia are known for the camaraderie they foster among riders and trainers, along with the prestige of their shows. However, Associate shows generally operate on a more local level, cost relatively less to exhibitors, do not count towards national or international standings, and serve as a great option for riders looking for an introduction to showing or a forum to compete with developing riders and horses. Shows registered for the “Regular” level generally offer more prize money, are USEF and USHJA registered, and allow riders and horses to compete for larger purses on a more national stage. All VHSA recognized divisions, regardless of ‘Associate’ or ‘Regular’ rating, award year-end prizes.

HOW do I calculate points for VHSA standings?

The ribbons earned at horse shows throughout the year translate into points in the VHSA standings. The top 6 finishers in each division at the end of the year receive recognition and ribbons at the VHSA Annual Awards Banquet held each December. Depending on whether you are competing on the “Associate” or “Regular” circuit (see distinction above), your points are calculated differently. See the table below for details.

*2016 Virginia Horse Shows Association
Horse Show Points Tables*

Regular Program:

Rating	“AA”	“A”	“B”	“C”
1st	25	20	15	10
2nd	20	15	10	6
3rd	16	12	8	4
4th	12	9	6	3
5th	11	8	5	2
6th	10	7	4	1.5
Champion	50	40	30	20
Reserve Chmp	30	24	18	12

Associate Program:

Rating	Associate Base Points	Add Bonus Points
1st	10	Bonus points are based on the number of exhibitors who complete the course of the first performance class of a division (Example: 1st Class has 4 who complete course = 1st place would receive 14 points instead of just 10 (10+4). The bonus points are the same for all three classes, based on the first class exhibitor number (completed course))
2nd	6	
3rd	4	
4th	2	
5th	1	
6th	.5	
Champion	10	
Reserve Chmp	6	

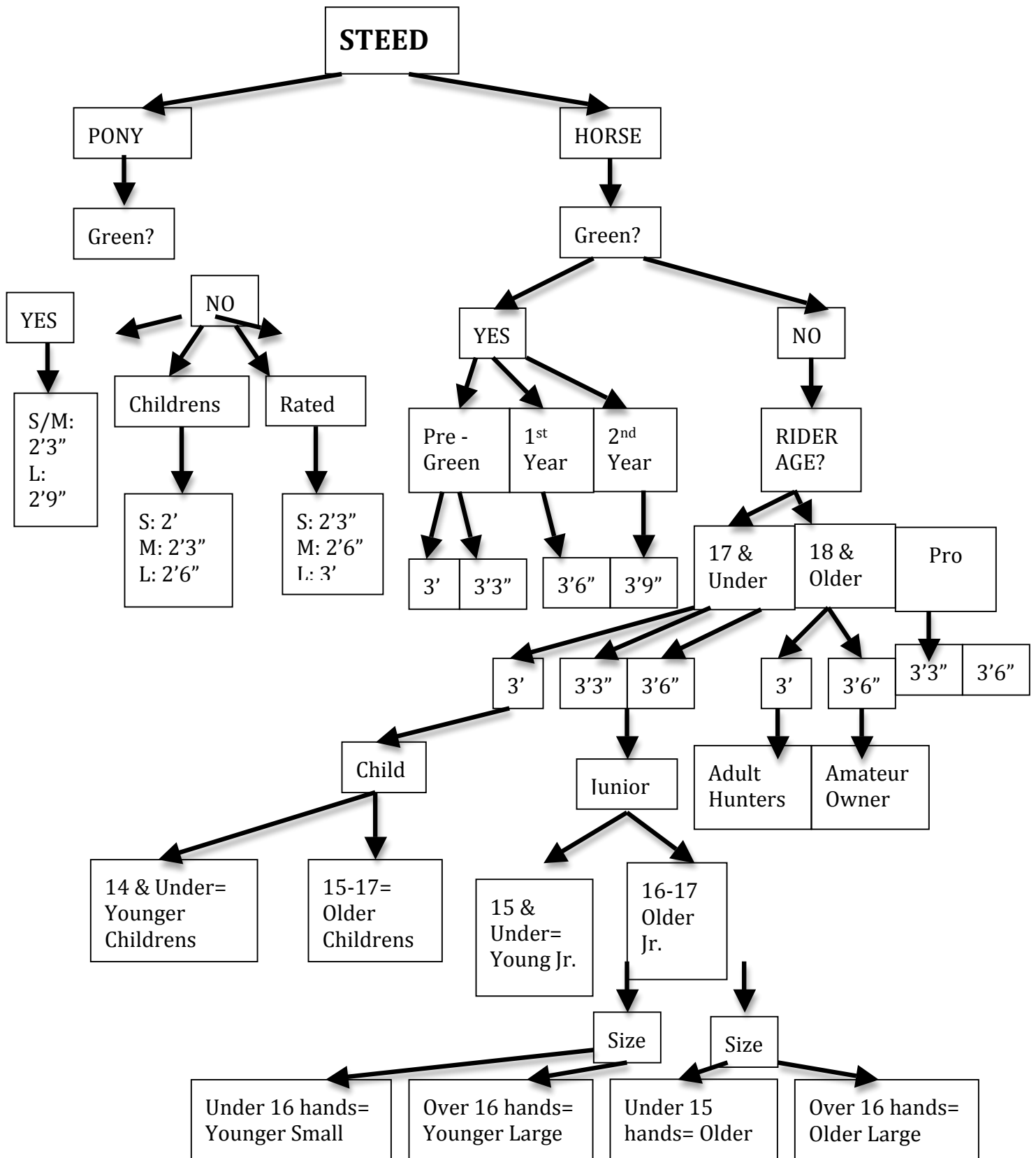
HUNTERS

How a Hunter is Judged

This discipline finds its roots in the history of classic foxhunters. A hunter horse requires style, scope and grace-necessary for a horse on a “hunt”. Traditionally on a field, the horse would have to carry a forward, but sustainable pace and jump over natural obstacles encountered. They were expected to jump over each barrier cleanly and in tight form to avoid hitting the fence. Building off of these ideals, show horses are expected to carry a consistent pace worthy of the hunt field as they complete courses of 8-12 jumps in good, classic jumping style with tight form. Some classes, especially “classics” are based on a 100-point system, with subtractions resulting from uneven pace, poor jumping form, hit rails, unsuitability, missed lead changes, etc. (Note: 3 refusals result in immediate elimination)

CLASSES DURING THE WEEK	CLASSES DURING THE WEEKEND
Performance Classes (3’3”-3’6”-3’9”-4’0”-4’6”)	Junior Hunter Divisions (3’3”-3’6”)
Green Horse Divisions (Baby-2’6”, Pre-Green-3’-3’3”, First Year-3’6”, Second Year-3’9”)	Rated Pony Divisions (Regulars 2’3-2’6”-3’0”, Green 2’3”-2’6”-2’9”)
Conformation Classes (Green-3’6”, Regular-3’9”)	Children Divisions (Horses 3’0”, Ponies 2’0”-2’6”)
Special, Open, Modified, Hopeful Hunters	Equitation Classes (Vary in Height)
Schooling Classes (Vary in Height)	Adult Amateur Divisions (3’0”)
Show Specific Classes (Vary in Height)	Amateur Owner Divisions (3’3”-3’6”)

HUNTER DIVISIONS & ELIGIBILITY

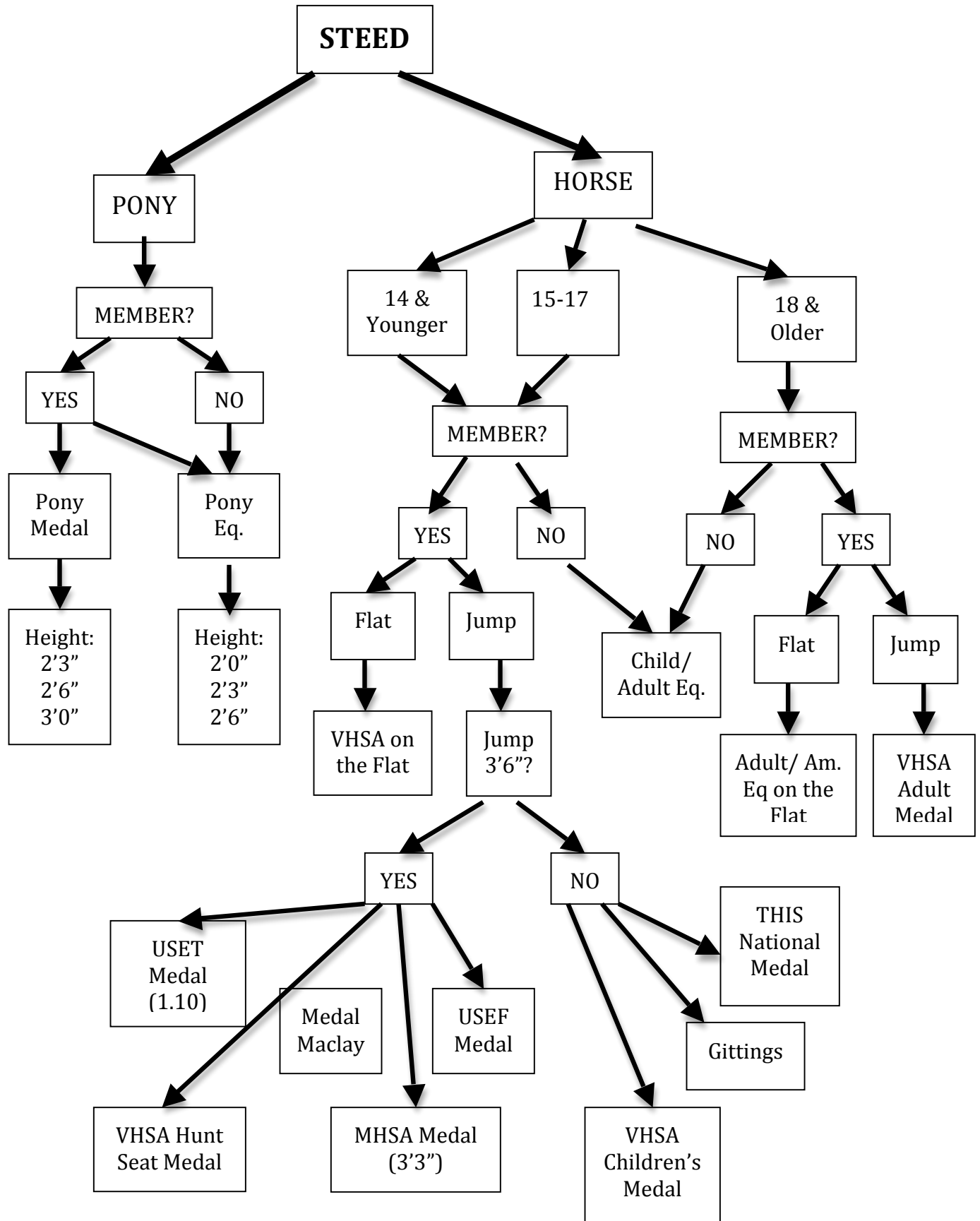


EQUITATION

How Equitation Classes are Judged

Like hunter divisions, equitation classes are judged subjectively. However, instead of judging the horse, the rider is assessed on their style and ability to control their mount over a technical course. The performance of an equitation horse does not necessarily matter, however a poorly behaving horse may be seen by judges as an outcome of the rider's abilities. The best equitation riders maintain a consistent pace and rhythm throughout the course while keeping a correct position (i.e. heels down, eyes up, tight leg, etc.). This discipline recognizes the "horsemanship" behind riding as it rewards riders who enhance their mounts by riding with classic style.

EQUITATION DIVISIONS & ELIGIBILITY



JUMPERS

How a Jumper is Judged

Jumpers are judged on how quickly and efficiently they can complete a course. Ideally, the horse should complete a course with the fastest time and fewest faults. Faults come from: knocking down a rail, stopping, or completing the course in a time slower than the set time allowed. A buzzer will sound once you enter the ring indicating that you have 45 seconds before your course starts. Your course begins once you cross the start timers; it finishes after you pass the final timers. Each extra second taken to complete the course corresponds with one fault. Knocking a rail or stopping at a fence counts for four faults with each mistake. If your horse refuses twice after crossing the start timers, you are eliminated from the class and signaled out by the buzzer.

Type of Jumper classes

- Table II, Sec.1 -The first round is decided by adding together jump and time faults. Horses with clear rounds or with an equal amount of faults are placed according to the time it took them to complete the course.
- Table II, Sec. 2 (a) - The first round must be completed without any faults. The horse and rider exit the ring after the initial course and return for a jump-off after all of the entries have completed the first round.
- Table II, Sec. 2 (b) - The first round must be completed without any faults. The horse and rider combination immediately jump-off without leaving the ring in between courses.
- Table II, Sec. 2 (a/b) - Each competitor in the class who completes the course free of faults has the option of doing the jump-off right immediately after the first around as in 2(b), or after all entries in the class have completed the first round as in 2(a).
- Table II, Sec. 2 (c) - This is commonly known as power and speed. The course is split into two sections, first power then speed. If you complete the power part of the course fault free then you advance to the speed section. If you have any faults during the power sections you will be sounded to stop.

LEVEL/METER CLASSES: Level classes are usually run during the week at a horse show, and provide extra experience for the horse or rider. At most shows there are no restrictions for these classes, meaning any rider can jump any height with any horse. The level classes are run as divisions during the week, meaning there will be two or more classes at that height competing for points, ribbons, and sometimes prize money.

Level	Height in Meters	Height in Feet
0	.80m	2'7"
1	.90m	2'11"
2	1.0m	3'3"
3	1.10m	3'7"
4	1.15m	3'9"
5	1.20m	3'11"
6	1.30m	4'3"
7	1.40m	4'9"

AGE DIVISIONS: To compete in these divisions your horse has meet the age requirement of the division.

Division	Height in Meters	Height in Feet
5 Year-Old	1.20m	3'11"
6 Year-Old	1.30m	4'3"
7 & 8 Year-Old	1.35m	4'5"

WEEKEND CLASSES: During the weekend, there are more divisions for the juniors and adults to compete in. Most of these divisions will have a classic that offers more prize money than other classes in the division, but prize money will vary depending on the show.

Division	Height in Meters	Height in Feet
Low Ch/Ad Jumper	1.0m	3'3"
Pony Jumper	1.0m	3'3"

Division	Height in Meters	Height in Feet
High Ch/Ad Jumper	1.10m	3'7"
Modified Jr/A-O Jumper	1.15m	3'9"
Low Jr/A-O Jumper	1.30m	4'3"
High Jr/A-O Jumper	1.40m	4'7"

***In classics, the jumps are typically set slightly higher**

HIGH STAKE CLASSES: These classes usually have large audiences in attendance as they generally serve as the classes that have the highest jumps and offer the largest prize money purses at a show

Division	Height in Meters	Height in Feet
Open/Welcome Class	1.45m	4'9"
Grand Prix	1.50 and above	5' and above

All of this information will change slightly per show, depending on the way it is conducted.

MEMBERSHIPS:

**There are different benefits to being a member in each association, but talk with your trainer about which associations are right for you and your horse. You can register online or at a horse show, but keep in mind that most memberships need to be renewed annually, so stay on top of expiration dates! Also, check the details for each association, as some require both the rider and their horse to be members, while others only need rider membership.

JUMPER ASSOCIATIONS

VHSA (Virginia Horse Show Association)- Jumper classes and divisions held in Zone 3 will be counted in either the regular or associate VHSA standings (jumper ratings depend on amount of money offered). Horses that accumulate the most points in their respective divisions will receive year-end recognition and awards.

USHJA (United States Hunter/Jumper Association)- Points accumulated at a USHJA recognized show will be recorded in the annual standings. At the end of the year, the USHJA national and zone standings will be determined and riders in the top 8 of each division will receive ribbons and/or other awards.

WIHS/NAL (Washington International Horse Show/ North American League)- Sign up for these two associations if you plan to compete in the childrens/adult jumpers. In doing so, all of your placings in NAL/WIHS classics throughout the year will help you qualify for the finals at the end of the year. The top riders in the NAL/WIHS standings will be invited to compete in year-end finals so be sure to renew your membership each year!

CVSJA (Central Virginia Show Jumping Association)- Approximately nine shows are held throughout the year, for all different levels. Jump heights start at 2'3" and go up to 4'. These shows will be recorded as associate points if you are a member of VHSA, and CVSJA will award additional year end prizes.

HUNTER/EQUITATION ASSOCIATIONS

VHSA (Virginia Horse Show Association)- With this membership, points accumulated in Zone 3 hunter divisions will go towards the regular or associate standings (depending on the rating of the show) and will make you eligible for year-end awards and prizes. Also, you are able to compete in VHSA medal classes and have the chance to qualify for finals.

USHJA (United States Hunter/Jumper Association)- This membership makes you eligible for USHJA International and National Hunter Derbies, USHJA outreach programs and tracks points accumulated in USHJA recognized shows throughout the year. Riders and Horses at the top of zone or national standings will be awarded year-end prizes and honors. *Also, be sure to check out the **World Champion Hunter Rider (WCHR)** program, which recognizes the highest placing hunter riders at specific shows in each zone and in the nation. Top finishes in these standings qualify you for the finals in the fall at Capital Challenge Horse Show.*

USEF (United States Equestrian Federation)- USEF tracks points accumulated in USEF recognized divisions throughout the year and awards Horse of the Year Prizes along with prizes for national and zone year-end placers. You must acquire this membership in order to compete in the USEF medal classes and final as well.

WIHS/NAL (Washington International Horse Show/ North American League)- Throughout the year, you can compete in WIHS/NAL children/adult classics and medals and points accumulated in those competitions make you eligible for the finals at the Washington International Show and Pennsylvania National Show and Capital Challenge

NHS (National Horse Show)- This is the home of the Maclay Horsemanship Finals. To participate in qualifying classes throughout the year, regional finals and the national finals, you must be a NHS member.

****Some Zone 3 medal classes require membership with other state associations (ex. To accumulate points for the Gittings Horsemanship Class, you must be a member of MHSA). Check with the class requirements and your trainer when applying for memberships each year.**

ENTRIES & CHECKING IN

HOW do I enter a horse show?

Entry forms are found in a horse show's prize list. These can be found online or sent in the mail. Check the due dates for entry forms and stall fees because late entries result in late fees.

*Some trainers will send entries in for their clients, while others ask clients to do it themselves- discuss with your trainer what the policy is at your barn!

WHAT do I need to enter a horse show?

Horse name, breed, age, color, USEF number, etc.

Trainer name and contact information

Rider name and contact information

Class numbers

WHEN do I check in?

Many trainers or barn managers will send in entry fees a few weeks prior to the show and then check in with the office at the beginning of the week to make sure that all of their barn's business is in order. This is the time when you are given your stall assignments and can order hay and bedding (if you have not already done so ahead of time). Some trainers may have each rider check-in separately when they arrive on property. Check with your barn to see what their policy is.

WHERE do I check in?

The horse show office handles the portion of checking in that concerns starting your bill and checking class entries. The stabling office is in charge of bedding and hay.

WHAT do I need to bring to check in?

When checking in, your membership cards, your horse's coggins, and blank checks should be handy to make the process as smooth and efficient as possible.

WHY do I check in?

Checking in is the time when you confirm or edit the divisions you are entered in. You can also start up your running bill for the show by providing the office with an empty check so that the checking out process is quicker and easier. You also receive your back number for the weekend, which is necessary wear in all classes. Finally, you must check in to get all of the information and equipment needed for your horse's stall (i.e. bedding, hay, etc.)

COGGINS

***WHAT* are Coggins?**

“Coggins” is a blood test for Equine Infectious Anemia (also referred to as Swamp Fever). It is a highly contagious and potentially deadly disease that can be transmitted by biting insects and must be tested for annually. Horses generally receive vaccines for Equine Infectious Anemia, EHV1 and EHV4 every 6 months*. A Coggins serves as a good bill of health for your horse and permits them to travel.

*Make sure that your horse is up-to-date with all its vaccines and in a consistent program with your vet. We owe it to our four-legged friends to stay on top of these routine and important treatments!

***WHO* needs Coggins?**

All competing horses must present a valid Coggins upon arrival at the show. Also, a horse should travel with their Coggins when going to a new place (i.e. new barn, clinic, etc.).

***HOW* often does my horse need a new Coggins?**

Each horse must be tested annually.

***WHERE* should I keep my Coggins?**

Coggins should be kept in a safe and memorable place, such as a barn office or in a designated binder/folder. Most barns also make multiple copies of each horses' Coggins so that the trainer, manager, and owner all have access to the paperwork.

WHY DO I NEED Coggins?

Coggins ensure that your horse can safely enter new places (i.e. shows, new barns, clinics, etc.) without the risk of spreading disease.

HOW do I get my horse's Coggins?

You get a Coggins test through your vet. They will draw a small blood sample, take notes of your horse's physical features (markings, colors, etc.) and after 1-3 days, your Coggins should be completed! You will usually receive a paper that outlines everything; it includes your address, the location where the horse is stabled, and the horse's name, age, breed, and color. Then it will have a picture of the horse showing all of their markings (either a photograph or a detailed drawing). The test results and dates are also included on this form.

SCRATCHING

***WHAT* is scratching?**

Scratching is the act of deleting your entry from a certain class or division.

***WHY* would you scratch your entry?**

If for any reason you or your horses are unable to compete in your division it is your responsibility to scratch from a class or entry. One may scratch due to weather, lameness, scheduling conflicts, etc.

***WHEN* do you scratch your horse?**

Once you decide to scratch, alert a representative at the show office as soon as possible. You should always scratch before your division starts in order to avoid scheduling issues (skewing class entries may speed or retard the show day). Also, waiting until the last minute may result in scratch fees, which are charged at some shows in order to dissuade people from scratching.

***WHERE* do you scratch an entry?**

The show offices at horse shows handle all adding or scratching from classes/divisions. By going to the office, your bill will be edited to reflect your action, however, you are also responsible for bringing a carbon copy/receipt of your add/scratch to the in-gate manager to alert him/her of the change if it occurs the day of that class.

WHAT TO WEAR: For the Rider

Interestingly enough, there is no standardized rulebook on proper attire in the show ring. These descriptions are based on widespread experience and general consent. Read with discretion and always consult your trainer when in doubt!

	Hunters	Equitation	Jumpers
Helmet	Required to wear an ASTM approved helmet at all times when mounted	Required to wear an ASTM approved helmet at all times when mounted	Required to wear an ASTM approved helmet at all times when mounted
Hair	Two Braids with bows on the ends* OR hairnet with ponytail tucked into helmet	Hairnet with ponytail tucked into helmet	Hairnet with ponytail tucked into or left out of helmet
Show Shirt	Button up, long-sleeved shirt with a high collar and choker. Traditionally a light, solid color such as blue, yellow or white.	Button-up, long sleeved shirt with a high collar and choker. Traditionally white.	Button-up, long sleeved shirt with a high collar and choker or a collared polo. Colors may vary.
Show Coat	Required in all judged hunter classes. Must be a dark color such as black, brown, grey or hunter green.	Required in all judged equitation classes. Must be a dark color such as, black, brown, grey or hunter green.	Not required in training classes, however required in classics and Grand Prixes. Colors typically dark.
Number	The horse's number should be worn on the riders back and secured with a black string around the jacket. The ends of the string should be tucked into the jacket so they do not distract from the whole picture.	The horse's number should be worn on the riders back and secured with a black string around the jacket. The ends of the string should be tucked into the jacket so they do not distract from the whole picture.	The horse's number may be worn on the rider's back or on the horse's saddle pad. The number should be visible to the in-gate manager so make sure that it is on the side of the pad closest to the in-gate stand.
Riding Pants	Buff Breeches required with tall boots or jodhpurs worn with garters and paddock boots. Should be belted.	Buff Breeches required with tall boots, buff jodhpurs worn with garters and paddock boots. Should be belted.	Buff Breeches required with tall boots or jodhpurs worn with garters and paddock boots. Should be belted.

Boots	Black or brown tall boots OR black or brown paddock boots worn with garters. Should be polished for show ring.	Black or brown tall boots OR black or brown paddock boots worn with garters. Should be polished for show ring.	Black or brown tall boots OR black or brown paddock boots worn with garters. Should be polished for show ring.
Gloves	Recommended for show ring. Typically black or brown leather to match helmet color	Recommended for show ring. Typically black or brown leather to match helmet color	Recommended for show ring. Typically black or brown leather to match helmet color
Crop	To be carried only when necessary. Must be black or brown. No longer than 30”.	To be carried only when necessary. Must be black or brown. No longer than 30”.	To be carried only when necessary. Colors may vary. No longer than 30”.
Spurs	To be used only when necessary. Spur leathers should match boot color.	To be used only when necessary. Spur leathers should match boot color.	To be used only when necessary. Spur leathers should match boot color.
CLASSICS	Shadbellies may be worn in classics. To be worn with a stock tie and pin with high-rise pants.	Classics generally are not held in the equitation discipline.	Formal attire (white pants, show jackets, etc.) required for classics and Grand Prix.

***Although very fashionable-control your bows! Don't let them cover your number!**

Exceptions in inclement weather:

Extreme Heat: Show Management can choose to waive show coats

Rain: Show Management may approve of raincoats in the show ring.

However, stick to dark colored jackets!

IT'S TRADITION!

Tips and explanations that have stood the test of time:

Classically, shadbellies were only worn with tall boots to reflect the classic attire of the hunt field. Although wearing garters and shadbellies is a popularly accepted trend, that combination is comparable to wearing a dress with sneakers!

“In the old days, the idea behind the dress code was not to flaunt your money, the idea was to be conservative... There was a time when bay or brown or black were the only accepted colors for a horse.” ~Carol Miller

“Remember: this is a horse show, not a rider show” ~Anonymous

WHAT TO WEAR: For the Horse

	Hunters	Equitation	Jumpers
Bit	Some bits (ex. gag) are not allowed in hunter classes, however check with your trainer for which bit is most appropriate for you and your horse.	Some bits (ex. gag) are not allowed in equitation classes, however check with your trainer for which bit is most appropriate for you and your horse.	Nearly all bits are allowed in jumper classes, however check with your trainer for which bit is most appropriate for you and your horse.
Braids	Required for most A and AA classes (see "Braiding" section for specific requirements).	Suggested for most classes	Optional.
Pads	Clean, white show pads are required for all classes. Cream or white bump pads may be used as well.	Clean, white show pads are required for all classes. Cream or white bump pads may be used as well.	Square, baby, show and bump pads may all be used. All pads should be clean and white or a modest, solid color.
Martingale	A standing martingale may be used in jumping classes if needed. Not allowed during under saddle classes.	Standing martingales may be used in hunter phases. Only running martingales are allowed in jumper phases. Must be removed for flat phases.	Running martingales & breastplates allowed in all classes. Standing martingales allowed in classes under 1.30
Boots/Wraps	All boots and wraps must be removed before entering the ring.	Boots and wraps are allowed in all phases of competition.	Boots and wraps are allowed in all phases of competition.

Remember Your overall appearance is the first thing the judge sees and it sets the tone for the rest of your course. You want to make a great first impression, so make sure you and your horse are turned out well with clean tack and a polished look.

A CAUTIONARY TALE ABOUT TAILS:

Everybody has left a tail bandage on their horse as it walks into the show ring, but we all learn quickly because a TAIL BANDAGE=NO SCORE!

BRAIDING

WHO CAN BRAID MY HORSE?

When it comes to braiding, you have options! You can choose to braid your horse yourself or you may hire a braider (See pros and cons on next page). It is the rider's responsibility to ensure that the horse gets braided or that a professional braider has been contacted. Ask your trainer or barn manager for a braider's contact information. The professional braider should be alerted of the horse's stall location, the division that the horse will compete in and what parts of the horse need braided (Mane, Tail, and Fake Tail).

WHEN ARE BRAIDS REQUIRED?

Associate shows and B-C rated competitions typically do not require braids, while most A-AA shows strongly suggest it. Some A-AA winter shows, will wave braids; however, check with your trainer and the show management before making a decision. Most rated divisions advise braiding the mane, tail and tying-in a fake tail if necessary. Check with your braider, trainer and the class specs to ensure that you make the right choice!

WHY DO YOU BRAID YOUR HORSE?

Horse *shows* are constructed to *show-off* your horse! The braids outline the crest of a horse's neck and allows for the judge to clearly see the "top line" of the mount. The yarn color should match the horse's mane and tail so that the braids accurately represent your steed's crest and do not distract from the animal's performance. Especially when competing in classics or conformation classes, braids help give a polished look worthy of the big rings and important classes.

PROS AND CONS OF BRAIDING YOURSELF

PROS OF HIRING A BRAIDER	CONS OF HIRING A BRAIDER	PROS OF BRAIDING YOURSELF	CONS OF BRAIDING YOURSELF
<i>Convenient Service-</i> Braids will be finished on time and ready for the ring	<i>Planning Problems-</i> You must schedule your horse into the braider's busy day	<i>Personalized schedule-</i> No need to work around a professional braider's busy day	<i>Inconvenient Agenda-</i> Your showing schedule may force you to work at inconvenient times since it takes about 1-2 hours per horse
<i>Dependable and Consistent-</i> You can count on the braids to be show-ready and pristine each time	<i>Added Expense-</i> Approx. \$50 for a mane braid, \$50 for the tail and \$10 for a fake tail tie in	<i>Free Labor-</i> You can save around \$100 per horse, per day	<i>Risky Business-</i> If you do not have as much experience as a professional braider, the quality of your braids may fall short

SCHOOLING

WHAT is schooling?

“Schooling” gives you and your horse a chance to get in the show ring before you have to compete. Some shows have “ticketed warm-ups” during which several riders go around the whole course at one time for a small fee. Others shows will allow all riders to school over one or two jumps in the ring and may even open up the entire course free of charge. However, some shows only allow hand-walking or flatting in the ring prior to competing. Check in with the in-gate manager and your trainer about schooling times and policies.

WHEN do you school?

The show management will typically open the ring after each show day is complete as well as early in the morning before classes begin. Most riders try to arrive at the show a day or two in advance to take advantage of schooling opportunities. Talk to the office or an in-gate manager about times and specifics for your ring, as rules differ between each horse show. (Tip- most shows will publish schooling times and policies in their prize lists so check there too!)

WHY do you school?

Schooling your horse in the ring is a great opportunity for both you and your mount to get comfortable in the ring’s environment and assess and confront any possible issues before you are judged. Additionally, riding in the ring in the morning before your show day begins helps to loosen up you and your horse.

IN-GATE ETIQUETTE

WHAT should you ask your in-gate manager?

Remember to be respectful when you ask questions so that you don't annoy the in-gate manager, as they have to juggle different divisions and conflicts. Try to answer questions yourself (See timing tips below) or talk with fellow riders and trainers about some conflicts so the in-gate manager doesn't get flooded with questions- they are trying to make your life easier so try to make theirs just as nice!

Some good questions to ask your in-gate manager before you show:

- What time do you think my division will begin?
- How many horses are in my division?
- Is there a posted order or check in?
- How many horses are in the division before mine?
- Are they dragging the ring before my division?
- Are there any breaks in-between divisions?

WHEN should you talk to your in-gate manager?

Make sure that you touch base with the in-gate manager at the beginning of the day and multiple times throughout the show. The earlier you check in, the better chance you have of getting a good spot in the "order of go". Talking during the day will let you get a good time estimate of when your division will start. Keep in mind- this start time is subject to change depending on ring, rider, and trainer conflicts. Be sure to stay flexible with your schedule and pay attention to announcements throughout the day.

WHO should contact your in-gate manager?

At some barns, trainers will put their students into the “order of go”, while other farms expect the riders to check themselves in the list themselves. Talk with your trainer before entering yourself into a rotation to avoid confusion and conflicts.

TIMING TIPS

These timing tips should help you figure out when you will compete or predict the pace of the horse show! Remember that these times are just approximations so make sure that you check in with your in-gate manager to make sure your guesses are in the right ballpark!

DRAG	10-15 minutes
JOG	2 minutes
MODEL	5-10 minutes
ONE TRIP	2-3 minutes
HEIGHT CHANGE	5-10 minutes
COURSE CHANGE	12-25 minutes

JOGGING

WHY do I jog?

The “jog” is designed to evaluate the horses’ soundness after completing their jumping rounds. The entries that place in the top eight or top twelve places are assessed to make sure that they are not being shown if they are lame, which could harm the horse and potentially the rider. It is a way to keep tabs on the integrity of the show world.

HOW do I jog?

In the “jog” the top 8-12 riders run beside their horses for the judge to evaluate their soundness. The horse wears only its bridle (this must be the same bridle that the horse showed in) with the reins in the handler’s hands (exception: if the bridle has two reins, the bottom rein is put over the horses neck and only the top rein is used to lead). The handlers are asked to run their horses to the opposite side of the ring so that the judge has a full view of the horse in order to assess its soundness. Two extra horses, called “reserves”, jog in addition to the ribbon placers in case a placing horse is deemed lame and thus eliminated. Every horse that initially jogged below the unsound horse moves up a place and the first reserve takes over the last ribbon spot (ex. if the third place horse is lame, the original 4th place horse moves to 3rd, 5th to 4th Reserve to 8th place, etc.)

WHAT divisions require jogging?

All rated divisions are required to jog the competing horses. In some zones, unrestricted divisions (ex. Childrens) may be asked to jog their horses. Also, most high stakes classes (i.e. big derbies, Grand Prixs, etc.) require a jog before the class starts.

WHO jogs the horse?

Whoever rode the horse in the division is responsible for jogging him/her or finding another person to jog. The “jogger” should be in full show attire to jog, except in extreme circumstances (ex. short term notice, substitute jogger, etc). Additionally, the jogger must be in the same age group as the competitor. For example, if the horse and rider competed in a junior division (ex. Childrens, ponies, juniors, etc.) then the jogger must be a junior.

WHEN do I jog?

The “jog” takes place after all competitors have completed the over fences portion of their division for the day. Some shows have all of the riders do one course, jog, do their second course and then jog again while others allow the horses to complete all of the jumping classes and then jog all of the classes at once.

WHERE do I jog?

The “jog” takes place in the ring where the exhibitor competed. The judge will either view the horses from his/her booth or will come into the ring to watch. In extreme cases (ex. ring is too wet to run in), the “jog” may be moved to an alternate location.

AFTER YOU SHOW

Talk with your trainer and barn manager about your barn's policy on taking care of your horse after you show. The integrity of this sport revolves around good horsemanship, so ensure that you have properly praised and cared for your horse after each show day. Although specifics differ from barn to barn and from show to show, here is a general checklist for taking care of your horse after you show:

Bathe (whole body or just legs depending on amount of work)

Wrap (dry wrap or apply an ointments such as "poultice" or "sore no more")

Unbraid

Pack Feet (typically this is only necessary when a horse has been ridden on poor footing or was worked especially hard)

Groom (your horse deserves to be rubbed on after a long day of showing!)

Treats and Pets (spoiling is allowed after hard work!)

NIGHT CHECK

WHAT is night check?

It is the final time you get to check in with your horses before leaving them for the rest of the night. You pick, hay, feed and water the horses and make sure their stalls are set up for the rest of the evening so that they can perform at the top of their game the next day.

WHO does night check?

Riders are responsible for ensuring their horse has been checked on after the show day ends. Usually, riders and grooms will help with night check, but talk with your trainer about their policy. A supplement to your initial check is to pay for Night Check Services provided by the show (only available at some venues). These programs send people in to check on each horse multiple times throughout the night (usually 3-5 times). This is a great option if your horse is generally restless during the night or if inclement weather is forecasted.

WHEN does night check occur?

Night Check happens after the show day is over. Generally, it should be performed as late as practical so that you leave your horse alone for the shortest amount of time possible.

Most barns go back to the show between 6pm-9pm, but check with your trainer for specifics. If you are hiring a night check service, your horse will generally be checked on every 2-3 hours throughout the night (although this service does not include haying, picking, watering, etc.; they only check on the horse and call if there is an emergency)

CHECKING OUT

WHEN do I check out?

Once you are all finished showing for the weekend, make sure that you check out.

Waiting until you finish competing allows for all of the prize money amounts to be totaled and all of your classes to be accounted for.

WHERE do I check out?

Checking out is typically done in the show office.

WHAT do I need to take with me to check out?

1. Entry Number/ Back Number- you do not need to have the physical cardboard square, you just need to know the number so that your horses' classes and results can be easily found.

2. Check- If you have not already given the office a blank check, make sure to bring one to the office. Try to fill in as much of the check as possible before arriving at the desk and then quickly fill in the correct amount once you are handed your bill. This will help to keep the line moving and make for a shorter show day!

*Some shows accept credit cards, but policies vary- so, plan accordingly!

WHY do I need to check out?

Checking-out is the time when you pay for your show bill. Your check covers class fees, bedding, stall cost, etc. Make sure to check the bill for any discrepancies, especially if you entered into or scratched from a class.

PRIZE MONEY

***WHAT* is prize money?**

Prize money is a monetary reward for competitors in certain divisions and special classes. The money usually comes from the management or class/division sponsors. In most rated divisions, prize money is awarded to first through sixth place finishers in the class, with higher amounts given to top placers (Exceptions- classics, California-splits, Derbies, Nighttime Classes, etc.). Price listings are outlined in each prize list.

***WHERE* do I claim my prize money?**

When checking out, prize money totals from the whole show are put on your final bill. The prize money can be distributed in one of two ways: management will either subtract the amount won from the total bill or they will send a check in the mail directly to the competitor.

***WHO* gets prize money?**

In most rated divisions at A-AA horse shows, prize money is distributed for placings first through sixth. These are the divisions that DO NOT receive prize money:

- Divisions for Youngsters (Baby Green Hunters, Three-Four-Five Year Olds)
- Unrated Divisions (Local Pony Hunters, Children's Pony Hunters, Warm Up Divisions such as the "Middleburg Hunter" at the Middleburg Classic Horse Show).

In the hunters, "stake" classes, nighttime classes, derbies and classics all usually tend to give out more prize money than regular classes. In division classes, only the winnings for

first place might match the entrance fee; however in most classics the cash you win for places up to 5th will typically cover the cost of your class. In the Jumpers, prize money amounts are typically higher rewarding classics and nighttime classes with the highest totals. Prize money is forbidden in all equitation classes.

TAKE NOTE:

Prize money is considered income, so some riders under eighteen will need to reflect prize money on a tax return.

Parents- Consult your tax advisor for questions.

FROM THE MOUTH OF THE HORSE (and its rider)

Riders' favorite words of advice heard around the show ring

"Any time you are in the ring, you are always being judged."

~Adam Edgar

"You can't just want to win—you have to ride to win."

~Courtney Morill

"You're only as good as your last performance."

~Kalli Meagher

"You ride—I'll pray"

~Grace Boston

"You have to move on in order to make a new mistake."

~Makayla Benjamin

"When in doubt, don't try to leave it out!"

~Mary Elizabeth Cordia

"Breathe."

~Gillian Aiken

"It's never the horse's fault."

~Kelsi Okun

"Jesus, take the wheel!"

~Devan Graham

"LEG!"

~Lauren Dean

"This is your class—go in and own it!"

~Haley Redifer

"The most important thing to remember is to learn from the bad and try harder the next time."

~Katlynn Butler

"Be shiny."

~Kirsten Schuler

"Trust your instincts."

~Erin Gill

"Do it for your country!"

~Kelsey Campbell

"The most important thing is to have fun."

~Emma Fass

"It ain't worth ridin' if dirt ain't flyin'!"

~Hanna Powers

"Trust your horse"

~Amanda Tran

"Don't take this sport too seriously- remember that you are just jumping fluffy animals over sticks!"

~Rachel Okun