



# Montana 4-H Rules

## Working Ranch Horse

*(for use at State and Local events)*

### 1. Project Overview and Background

The Montana 4-H Working Ranch Horse project is a heritage based, activity rich program designed to pass on to today's youth the traditional practices of safe livestock handling from horseback. This is not a rodeo project, but instead a practical and exciting opportunity for youth to use horses for handling, sorting and moving cattle. This project also teaches mounted roping skills as a humane and useful livestock handling tool as well as branding techniques, housing and care of cattle and horses. Like all 4-H projects, Working Ranch Horse members will develop the qualities of leadership and responsibility that come with being engaged in 4-H. In today's world, managing cattle from horseback is a disappearing tradition. Ranches are increasingly automated, using four-wheelers and other machines instead of horses. Many of the skills once learned for necessity are being lost. The 4-H Working Ranch Horse program is designed to teach and preserve age-old skills and traditions.

### 2. General Event Rules

- a. The intent of the competitions is to display your ability to perform ranch work type tasks while working horseback and showing CONTROL and SAFETY always. For example: Control is shown in horsemanship through responsiveness to rider cues. In cow work the intent is to work the cow in a calm manner as you would on a ranch (only as much pressure as needed to gain control of the cow). A trail class is an opportunity to display the ability for a person to work safely around and on-top a horse. Any time safety and/or control are compromised points will be deducted.
- b. All shows will commence despite weather and ground conditions that exist the day of the show as an example of actual working conditions. The judging will consider those existing conditions and any other site-specific conditions.
- c. Conduct – Conduct by exhibitors and spectators and all persons present at events shall be orderly, responsible, sportsmanlike and humane in the treatment of horses and cattle. Any violations of these will be subject to disciplinary procedures or removal from event.
- d. Attire - Attire shall be western boots, western pants, long sleeve button or snap shirt and a western hat or helmet. Spurs, chaps or chinks are optional.
- e. Protective Headgear – All 4-H competitors must be in compliance with the Montana State 4-H Horse Helmet Policy. Helmet education is required and will be enforced. Helmet use is

encouraged in all 4-H activities any time a member is around a horse. Protective headgear may be used in all classes and shall not be discriminated against. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian of the 4-H member to see that the headgear worn complies with such standards and is in good condition. An ASTM/SEI approved equestrian helmet with safety harness fastened in place is required in over-fence classes, gymkhana events, activities and practice sessions. Gymkhana refers to horseback speed events (timed and untimed) that do not use livestock. Events that usually fall in this category include but are not limited to: barrel racing, pole bending, keyhole races, stake races, rescue races, pony express race, etc. Events that are not intended to be included in this policy are events such as calf roping, team roping, goat tying and team penning that may be timed but use livestock. The Montana 4-H Center for Youth Development encourages the use of ASTM certified/SEI approved safety helmets in all equine events. For more information about Montana 4-H Helmet policy, visit <https://bit.ly/2Sgn38S>

f. Equipment –

- i. Saddles - Horses shall be shown in a western stock saddle with a horn. Silver equipment will not count over good, clean working equipment. Regarding saddle horns; mule hide, latigo, elk hide, basic leather or rubber are suggestions and all acceptable for horn coverings. Leather gives better when dallied than rubber and is suggested more for younger members learning how to rope. Rubber bites harder on the rope and gives a better grip when dragging cows.
  - ii. Bits – Working Ranch Horse will follow the Montana 4-H Horse Project Bit Rules available at <https://bit.ly/2Sgn38S>
  - iii. Romal, split or roping reins are legal to be used during ranch horse competitions. Martingales and tie-downs are not allowed. A snaffle bit or hackamore shall be used with two hands on the reins. A curb or shank bit shall be ridden with one hand on split reins or with a romal. Touching or using free hand on reins will be cause for point deduction but not disqualification.
  - iv. Horses five-years old and older shall be shown in a curb or shank bit. Horses four-years old and younger may be shown in a snaffle or any bit within bit rules.
  - v. Chain curb straps are permissible, but must meet the approval of the judge, be at least ½” inch in width, and lie flat against the jaw of the horse. Absolutely no rigid material will be permitted under the jaws, regardless of how padded or covered.
- g. Liability - Neither the Host County, facility nor 4-H Center for Youth Development is liable for any accident, damage or loss of personal property, livestock, or person including travel to and from the show. Liability release must be signed and submitted as part of registration for events.
- i. Travel to and from the show is the responsibility of the exhibitor. Exhibitors are strongly encouraged to obtain their own accident insurance for both themselves and their horses.
- h. Horse Ownership and Entry
- i. For 4-H Ranch Horse Level Classes following Montana 4-H Ranch Horse Curriculum

- Horse must be a 4-H project horse for the current 4-H year. A project horse is any horse registered with the county extension office with documentation on file and enrolled in any established county horse project.
- The same horse must be used for all classes at one competition for the 4-H Ranch Horse Level classes.
- The 4-H name and emblem are copyrighted, so 4-H classes are limited to Montana 4-H Horse Project members.
- Entries will be verified by the member's extension agent or their designee, indicating that:
  1. The named exhibitor is a bona fide 4-H member
  2. The named 4-H members horse(s) is (are) part of the 4-H member's project for the current year and
  3. They have been assessed into the current level.
- ii. For Ranch Horse Versatility Classes (Open classes offered at some shows)
  - Members can use any horse for versatility classes as long as horse meets class qualifications. Only horses aged 5 and under can enter colt division.
  - To compete for overall versatility awards the same horse must be ridden in all qualifying classes at one event
  - Stallions may not be shown in any classes at the State Working Ranch Horse finals.

### **3. Competition Levels and Divisions**

- a. Curriculum based 4-H Working Ranch Horse Competition
  - i. The Ranch Horse curriculum book provides completion rules for a comprehensive event including individual competitions in the following categories:
    - Knowledge
    - Heading
    - Heeling
    - Ranch Sorting
    - Ranch Riding / Working Cow Horse Pattern
  - ii. The working ranch horse project is set up in 4 levels. The levels are intended to be progressive in skills and knowledge. A member should be assessed to determine proper placement in a level based on skills and with keeping safety in mind.
  - iii. Members shall enter only 1 level per year and per competition.
  - iv. Members shall progress forward in levels. You may remain in the same level for up to 3 years but may not drop back to a lower level at any point. Level placement is determined through skills of rider not capabilities of horse.
  - v. A 4-H curriculum-based competition (see section #4) will offer levels 1 through 4 and should be entered in accordance with member enrollment and assessment.

- b. Versatility Ranch Horse Competitions (Optional classes to enhance events)
  - i. The curriculum book states that counties may add or delete tests based on skills, preferences or resources. Other competitions such as Ranch Horse Halter/Conformation, Ranch Trail, Ranch Pleasure/Riding or a Versatility class could be used.
  - ii. Recognized American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) Versatility Ranch Horse (VRH) and Stock Horse of Texas (SHOT) classes may be used. These include: Pleasure, Halter, Reining, Working Cow Horse, Trail and Cutting.
  - iii. Classes may be offered in divisions as follows:
    - Junior (Ages 10 & Under)
    - Intermediate (Ages 11-13)
    - Senior (Ages 14 & Over)
    - Novice (1<sup>st</sup> year of competing)
    - Green Horse or Colt Division (Horse aged 5 or under)
    - Open (open to adult or youth, 4-H membership not required)

#### **4. Individual Class Descriptions / Rules – 4-H Division**

- a. 4-H Knowledge Test
  - i. Written exam worth 100 points OR Oral interview with Judge
  - ii. Questions are to be taken from Working Ranch Horse and 4-H Horsemanship manuals for Levels 1 – 4. Questions may also be from Horse Science books for Levels 3 & 4.
  - iii. Each competitor must complete their own test with no help from others.
  - iv. Write exhibitor number on top of written exams.
  - v. Answer questions to the best of your ability and submit to score table upon completion.
- b. 4-H Roping –Heading and Heeling
  - i. Level 1
    - Evaluates skills of rope handling and throwing loops at a stationary dummy while standing on the ground.
    - Competitors are allowed a maximum of 5 loops within a 2-minute time limit.
    - Each participant will only use one rope during each competition section and must re-coil and build a new loop for each throw. A different rope may be used for heading and for heeling.
    - The participant is allowed and encouraged to move to various positions around the dummy appropriate to loop being thrown.
    - Participants are encouraged to “call their shots” to show knowledge of loops. Additional points may be awarded by judge for calling shots but bonus points are awarded only for calling and throwing an “alternative shot.” Overhand and sidearm are considered traditional shots. Backhand, Houlihan, Scoop Loop, Hip Shot and more are considered alternative shots.

ii. Level 2

- Evaluates skills of rope handling, control and position while throwing loops at a stationary dummy and dallying while mounted on a horse.
- Competitors are allowed a maximum of 5 loops within a 2-minute time limit.
- Each participant will only use one rope during each part of the competition and must re-coil and build a new loop for each throw. A different rope may be used for heading and for heeling.
- The participant is allowed and encouraged to move to various positions around the dummy appropriate to loop being thrown.
- Participants are encouraged to “call their shots” to show knowledge of loops. Additional points may be awarded by judge for calling shots but bonus points are awarded only for calling and throwing an “alternative shot.” Overhand and sidearm are considered traditional shots. Backhand, Houlihan, Scoop Loop, Hip Shot and more are considered alternative shots.

iii. Level 3

- Purpose is to show the ability of the horse and rider’s skills of handling and roping cattle as if they were doctoring sick or injured cattle. Cattle should be handled as slowly and calmly as possible. Skills of horse handling and position, rope handling ability and catches are evaluated in score.
- Competitors will attempt to make 3 catches in a 2-minute time limit while horseback. Number of loops is unlimited.
- For Heading - A breakaway honda shall be used.
- For Heeling – It is optional to use a breakaway honda or regular honda. Animals shall not be dallied on and held tight with regular rope.
- Competitors may rope at any animals in pen in any order.
- Participants are encouraged to “call their shots” to show knowledge of loops. Additional points may be awarded if competitor calls out animal to be roped and successfully catches named animal. No deductions shall be given for not calling animal prior to throw.

iv. Level 4

- Purpose is to show the ability of the horse and rider’s skills of handling and roping cattle as if they were doctoring sick or injured cattle. Cattle should be handled as slowly and calmly as possible. Skills of horse handling and position, rope handling ability and catches are evaluated in score.
- Option A – Small Pen Roping (Heading or Heeling)
  1. Competitors will attempt to make 3 catches in a 2-minute time limit while horseback. Number of loops is unlimited.

2. A breakaway honda shall be used for heading. Either a breakaway or regular honda is acceptable for heeling. Animals should not be dallied on and held tight with regular honda and rope.
  3. Competitors must rope numbered animals in order. For example, the announcer calls #3, competitor ropes animal#3 first, then #4, then #5.
  4. Participants are encouraged to "call their shots" to show knowledge of loops. Additional points may be awarded by judge for calling shots but bonus points are awarded only for calling and throwing an "alternative shot."
  5. This option for competition is to be executed in a small pen, such as 1 side of the round pens used for sorting or a similar size pen dependent upon facility options.
- Option B – Heading in Arena or Large Pen
    1. Competitor will rope one animal with regular rope, dally and face.
    2. 2-minute time limit.
    3. Extra points will be awarded if competitor clearly calls and designates animal to be roped or calls a shot prior to roping an animal.
    4. This option for competition is intended to be done in an arena or large size pen for safety and opportunity.
  - Option C – Heeling animal headed and handled on rope
    1. Competitor will rope one animal with regular rope, dally and stretch cow.
    2. 2-minute time limit or 3 loop limit. Must be determined by show management prior to start of competition. At discretion of show management and to be based on type of cattle in use and facility set up.
    3. An adult header, who is very capable of handling roped cattle, will rope an animal and bring it from the herd. The 4-H heeler then will rope to catch the heels. Time will start when header brings animal from herd. Time will end when a heel catch is completed, and the ropers have dallied and stretched the animal.
    4. Extra points will be awarded if the participant is communicating with the adult header to set up shots and manage situation and also if shot is called before roping heels.
- c. 4-H Sorting
- i. Event consisting of a mounted rider with objective of sorting cattle in numbered sequence from one pen into another. Levels 1-4 compete in sorting.
    - Option A – sort maximum of 3 head of cattle in sequence (This format is used for most competitions and can be applied to any or all levels. Requires a lower competitor to cattle ratio for event as cattle are handled less.)
    - Option B – sort as many cattle as possible in numbered sequence within 90 second time limit (This format is offered for upper level competitors to enhance competition.)

- ii. There is a time element and scored element to the competition. See scoring – judging section for details.
- iii. 90 second time limit with 30 second warning whistle. A lap timer is used for recording of time for each animal as it is sorted through opening.
- iv. Cattle will be bunched and settled in one pen at start of run. Time starts when rider enters cattle pen. The number of the cow to begin sort on will be called as rider enters pen. (If #5 is called, contestant will sort cow #5 first, followed by #6 and then #7.)
- v. If time limit expires and only 1 or 2 cattle have been sorted, competitor will receive lap time for 1 head or 2 head. If three head are sorted time stops when 3rd animal crosses line.
- vi. In event that an “out of sequence” animal crosses gate line, the competitor may enter the holding pen and retrieve the incorrect cow and then resume sorting. Notation will be made on judge’s sheet “Cow out of sequence” Lap time will continue to be recorded for all correct cattle sorted. In the case that the “out of sequence cow” is not retrieved, the competitor will receive lap time on the number of correctly sorted animals. In the case that the “out of sequence” cow and correct cows come back sort will resume in initial sort order.
- vii. Recommended set up is two conjoined 50’ – 60’ diameter round pens with a 12’ – 16’ “gate” opening between pens.
- viii. No less than 5 and no more than 10 consecutively numbered cattle in the herd.
- ix. A gate person will be designated by show management. The following instructions will be provided to the gate person prior to start of event.
  - Rider shall control gate as would be done in every day ranch work.
  - Gate person must make every attempt to treat all contestants equally.
  - Gate person should be the same individual for every run in a level class.
  - Communication between the contestant and gate person is permissible to communicate sorting strategy and for rider to notify gate person of intents. For example, to push an animal past but not through the gate to create an opening for another animal to present to gate.
  - Gate person will hold sorted cattle in second pen.
  - While contestant is sorting - gate person will not allow extra animals to drift through gate. In every day ranch work sorter is expected to work at identifying and separating designated animal without worry of extra animals drifting towards gate.
  - When contestant is bringing designated animal to gate to sort through it is the contestant’s job to push only the correct animal to and through the gate and to get extra cattle past or back from gate opening. It is not gate person’s role to turn back incorrect cattle being pushed at gate. Gate person in every dayranch work would be expected to hold entire group if too many cattle are coming at gate and not to let the whole bunch pass, even if correct animal is in the mix.

- d. **4-H Patterns – Ranch Riding or Working Cow Horse**
- i. The pattern classes will demonstrate the horse and rider combination to perform basic maneuvers in the level 1 class and advance to cattle work and more advanced maneuvers by the time level 4 is reached.
  - ii. Patterns will measure the ability of the horse to be a pleasure to ride while being used as a means of conveyance from performing one ranch task to another. The horse should reflect the versatility, attitude and movement of a working ranch horse riding outside the confines of an arena. The horse should be well-trained, relaxed, quiet, soft and cadenced at all gaits. The ideal ranch horse will travel with forward movement and demonstrate an obvious lengthening of stride at extended gaits. The overall manners and responsiveness of the ranch riding horse is to make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner.
  - iii. For Cattle Work portions of patterns (Levels 2, 3, 4)
    - The exhibitor will be allowed a reasonable working zone when working the cow (This could be marked with cones or ribbons on fence). If the cow escapes the working zone points will be deducted.
  - iv. **Level 1** – Patterns may include gaits of walk, trot, lope and back as well as introductory maneuvers like pivots. In the case of a “Horsemanship Level 1” rider being entered in “Ranch Horse Level 1” – for the sake of safety the rider may trot the lope portions of the pattern and will be judged according to ability. The show committee will make best effort to ensure judge is informed of any rider that is only of walk/trot ability prior to start of class. There will be no cattle work in Level 1.
  - v. **Level 2** – Pattern class will consist of simple ranch riding pattern and will demonstrate gaits, transitions and basic maneuvers. At show committee’s discretion a cattle work portion may be included. If so, at the completion of pattern exhibitor will call for cow to be turned into arena. The contestant will box the cow on one end of the arena and then drive the cow down the fence past the center marker of the arena. 45 second time limit with 15 second warning whistle.
  - vi. **Level 3** – This class combines reining ability and cow sense of the horse. It will start with a basic reining pattern and then exhibitor will call for cow. Show committee has 2 options for Level 3 cow work.
    - Option A – Box, Drive and Turn (60 second time limit, 30 second warning)
      - Box cow on end of arena, drive cow down fence past center marker and turn cow back (1 fence turn)
    - Option B – Box, Drive and Box (90 second time limit, 30 second warning)
      - Box cow on end of arena, drive cow down fence, box cow on opposite end of arena
  - vii. **Level 4** – This will be a working cow horse class. At conclusion of reining pattern, exhibitor will call for cow. Show committee has 2 options for Level 4 cow work.
    - Option A – Box, Fence and Pen (2 minute time limit, 30 second warning)



- Box cow on one end of arena, Drive cow down fence past halfway point and show 1 fence turn in each direction, Drive cow into pen or out designated gate
- Option B – Box, Fence and Rope or Circle (2 minute time limit, 30 sec warning)
  - Box cow on one end of arena, Drive cow down fence past halfway point and show 1 fence turn in each direction, Rope cow with breakaway honda, dally and stop OR circle cow in each direction
- e. VRH – Ranch Horse Pleasure (Ranch Riding) – Open division
  - i. The ranch horse pleasure class measures the ability of the horse to be a pleasure to ride while being used as a means of conveyance from one ranch task to another. The horse should be well-broke, relaxed, quiet, soft and cadenced at all gaits. The horse should be ridden on a relatively loose rein with light contact and without requiring undue restraint. The horse should be responsive to the rider and make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner. The horse should be soft in the bridle and yield to contact. The ideal stock horse should have a natural, level head carriage at each gait and shall travel with forward movement and demonstrate obvious length of stride in all gaits. The ideal is a natural ranch horse look from head to tail.
  - ii. The competitors may be asked to ride in a rail class or in an individual pattern or circuit of the ring to demonstrate a variety of gaits and transitions.
- f. VRH – Ranch Horse Reining
  - i. The reining class measures the ability of the stock horse to perform basic handling maneuvers. Each pattern is a combination of maneuvers including stops, spins, rollbacks, circles, back up, hesitate, lead changes and run downs. A variety of gaits may be specified.
- g. VRH – Working Cow Horse
  - i. The ideal stock horse must also be a cow horse and this Class demonstrates and measures the horse's ability to do cow work. The working cow classes have varying requirements depending upon the division.
    - Seniors or Open Division complete a traditional working cow horse pattern consisting of boxing, taking the cow down the fence and executing at least one turn in each direction, and then circling the cow in each direction. Riders have the option of roping with a breakaway honda instead of circling the cow. 2 minute time limit with 30 second warning whistle.
    - Intermediate Division demonstrate their ability to control a cow by boxing one end, driving the cow to the opposite end and boxing on the opposite end. 90 second time limit with 30 second warning whistle.
    - Junior, Colt or Novice Divisions demonstrate the ability to show control while boxing the cow on one end of arena and then to drive the cow down the fence past the halfway point. 45 second time limit with 15 second warning whistle.
- h. VRH – Ranch Trail

- i. The ranch trail class, as the name implies, tests the horse's ability to cope with situations encountered in everyday riding. The horse is ridden through a pattern of obstacles which should nearly approximate those found during the course of everyday work. The horse/rider team is judged on the correctness, efficiency, and pattern accuracy with which the obstacles are negotiated, and the attitude and mannerisms exhibited by the horse. Judging emphasis is on identifying the well-broke responsive, well-mannered horse which can correctly navigate and negotiate the course.
- ii. The trail class will include no less than 6 and no more than 9 obstacles. It is mandatory that the horse be asked to walk, trot and lope during the course. These gaits can be part of obstacle score or be scored with the approaching obstacle. Trot must be at least 35 feet. Lope must be lead specific and at least 50 feet.
- iii. Care must be exercised to avoid setting up any obstacles that may be hazardous to the horse or rider. All courses and obstacles are to be constructed with safety in mind to reduce risk for accidents.
- iv. Each single-performance event can be time consuming, especially with large classes, so it is imperative that time restrictions are placed on this class. The show committee, shall select a course that has a continuous, positive flow that can be negotiated in four minutes or less. A time limit may be set, and course may be run as timed competition with bonus score given for lowest time.
- v. **Mandatory Obstacles**
  - Ride over obstacles on the ground – usually natural looking logs or poles. Walk, trot, or lope may be used, but only one gait is required. Walk-overs shall be spaced 24-30 inches. Trot-overs shall be spaced 36-42 inches. Lope overs shall be 6 – 7 feet. Formation can be straight, curved, zigzagged or raised. There shall be no more than 5 logs in a series.
  - Opening, passing through, and closing gate: Use a gate that will not endanger horse or rider and requires minimum side passing. It is suggested to use a metal or wood gate with a latch. A rope gate is not recommended.
  - Ride over wooden bridge: Bridge should be sturdy, safe, natural looking and negotiated at a walk only. Heavy plywood lying flat on the ground is an acceptable simulation of a bridge. Suggested minimum width shall be 36 inches wide and at least 6 feet long.
  - Backing obstacle: Backing obstacles are to be spaced at a minimum of 30 inches and up to 40 inches. Back through and around at least three markers or back through L, V, U, straight or similarly shaped course. Options may include logs, straw bales, poles or barrels.
  - Side pass obstacle: 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 inches.

vi. Optional Obstacles

- Rope drag: Drag may be a from point to point or complete figure eight.
- A jump obstacle whose center height is not less than 12" high or more than 24" high. Holding the saddle horn is permissible for this obstacle.
- Carry object from one part of the arena to another.
- Remove and replace materials from a mailbox.
- Trot through cones spaced a minimum of 6 feet apart.
- Cross natural ditches or ride up embankments.
- Swing rope or throw rope at dummy steer head.
- Step in and out of obstacle.
- Put on slicker or coat.
- Stand to mount with mounting block.
- Walk through water obstacle.
- Open gate on foot.
- Pick up horse's feet.
- Walk through brush.
- Lead at the trot.
- Other obstacles may be used at discretion of show committee.
- The safety of obstacles is of paramount importance and shall always be kept in consideration by the show committee. If a parent or competitor feels an obstacle is a hazard the question of inclusion of the obstacle must be brought to the show committee for review prior to the beginning of the class.

vii. Disallowed Obstacles

- Rocking or teetering bridges.
- Loose – flapping tarps.
- Obstacles that a horse may get a foot caught in.

5. Scoring and Judging

- a. Each event will be scored individually. Scores will be tabulated by the office to calculate cumulative scores.
- b. Judge's decision is final.
- c. A contestant is judged from the time the contestant enters the arena until the run is finished.
- d. Horses are judged on performance only.
- e. The Scoring System is designed to be positive, straightforward, and always encourage growth and improvement in both horse and rider. The scoring system is designed to give credit for the work done.
- f. For Pleasure, Trail, Reining, Ranch Riding and Working Cow Horse Classes:

Score sheets from or modeled after American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) Versatility Ranch Horse (VRH) and Stock Horse of Texas (SHOT) score sheets will be used.

- i. Each horse/rider team is scored between 0-100 points and automatically begins the run with a score of 70 points. The horse/rider team is scored on the quality of each maneuver (e.g., -1½ Extremely Poor, -1 Very Poor, -½ Poor, 0 Correct, +½ Good, +1 Very Good, and +1½ Excellent). Pluses and minuses reflect the smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness, and authority of the horse/rider team when performing the various maneuvers. Penalties may be accrued for incorrect maneuver execution.
  - ii. The AQHA novice/rookie rule will be used regarding off pattern elements. If a rider goes off pattern or fails to execute a required element that element shall be circled to indicate it was off pattern. On the score sheet each run must be indicated (Yes/No) in the given column to indicate if the run was executed correctly or off pattern. Scores will be tabulated for all runs. Any off pattern run must be placed in the class below those with correct runs.
  - iii. Tie breaker maneuvers will be designated by the judge prior to start of judging a class. In the event of a tied score within a class the tie breaker maneuver will be used to make placing determination.
  - iv. To rein a horse is not only to guide him, but also to control his every movement. The best reined horse should be willingly guided or controlled with little or no apparent resistance and dictated to completely. Any movement on his own must be considered a lack of control. All deviations from the exact written pattern must be considered a lack of, or temporary loss of, control and therefore a fault that must be marked down according to severity of deviation. The horse/rider team's overall performance should be credited for smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness and authority of performing various maneuvers, while using controlled speed which raises the difficulty level and makes the horse/rider team more exciting and pleasing to watch.
- g. For 4-H Knowledge Test:  
Score is based on correct answers out of 100 possible points. Tests will be evaluated against a standard answer key.
- h. For 4-H Sorting Competition:
- i. This event is scored and timed.
    - 50 possible points are available for cattle sorted by fastest time.
    - 50 possible points are scored by the judge on the horsemanship, cattle handling and herdsman's ability of the rider. Smoothness, approach, ability to read cattle, efficiency and working advantage will all be considered by judge. Sorting is not only about speed but about how to effectively separate and handle cattle in a calm, controlled and effective manner with a horse.

- ii. Each sorting run will be timed using a lap timer. Time will be recorded for each animal passing through the gate. Time is noted for each animal as it passes through the gate by indication of the judge's flag.
  - iii. The fastest time in the class on correct sequence sorted animals will be awarded 50 points. The second fastest time will receive 48 points and on down in 2-point increments. 3 animals sorted places before 2 animals and before 1 sorted. Then ranking moves to 3 animals "not in sequence", 2 and so on. All runs will be notated on score sheet as to whether "cows were sorted in correct sequence". Any run with cows out of sequence must place below runs in correct sequence.
  - iv. Show management may use a different point spread increment when converting time to points if necessary based on number of contestants or similar factors.
- i. For 4-H Patterns:
- i. Option A – Base 70 score
    - 100 points possible
    - 60-80 points awarded on pattern elements. Each run starts with a score of 70 and each maneuver is scored with a +/- point system
    - 1-20 points are awarded on style, execution and eye appeal of overall performance.
  - ii. Option B – Base 10 scoring
    - 1-10 points awarded per maneuver (0 given for off pattern or missed element)
    - Judge or steward will attempt to designate pattern maneuvers into 10 parts when possible to create possible 100 points
  - iii. The AQHA novice/rookie rule will be used regarding off pattern elements. If a rider goes off pattern or fails to execute a required element that element shall be circled or marked OP to indicate it was off pattern. On the score sheet each run must be indicated (Yes/No) in the given column to indicate if the run was executed correctly or off pattern. Scores will be tabulated for all runs. All exhibitors in class will be placed but OP scores will be placed after those with correct pattern execution.
  - iv. Tie breaker maneuvers will be determined by judge prior to start of class. In event of tied total score the tie breaker maneuvers will be used to determine class placing.
  - v. The discretion of the judge and show committee will determine which scoring procedure to be used.
- j. For 4-H Roping Competitions:
- i. Levels 1 & 2 (Heading and Heeling) - 100 Total Points Possible
    - 30 points - Handling and control of rope
    - 5 points – Position
    - 50 points – Throws (1-10 points awarded for each throw. Catches shall receive higher credit than misses, but points are also applied to correctness, style, delivery and calling shots)

- 15 points – 3 points for each catch using a declared alternative loop
- ii. Levels 3 Heading and Heeling and Level 4 (Small Pen Roping) - 100 Total Points Possible
  - 20 points – Horsemanship and position
  - 20 points – Rope handling
  - 45 points – Catches (goal of 3 catches) (no loop limit) (2 min time limit)
    - a. Up to 15 points for clean head catch or 2 feet
    - b. Up to 10 points for deep body catch or 1 foot
    - c. Catches shall receive higher credit than misses, but points are also applied to correctness, style, delivery and calling shots.
  - 15 points – 5 points for each catch using a declared alternative loop
- iii. Level 4 Heading and Heeling (Arena Roping) - 100 Total Points Possible  
Roping 1 animal with 2 minute time limit (or 3 loop limit) as determined by show management
  - 30 points – Horsemanship and position
  - 30 points – Rope handling
  - 35 points – Roping (Delivery, Catch, Handling and calling shots)
  - 5 points – Bonus for using a declared alternative loop

#### 6. Patterns

- a. Patterns will be posted a minimum of 1 hour prior to the start of the show and will be available from the show office.
- b. Patterns for practice or show committee use are available in the 4-H Ranch Horse Curriculum and on the Montana 4-H Horse Project page at <https://bit.ly/2Sgn38S>. The available patterns are intended to be a resource and to set example and style for each level.
- c. Patterns used at WRHF State Competition are not limited to those posted on website or in curriculum.