



# The Morgan Horse Judging Standards

As Adopted by  
The American Morgan Horse  
Association, Inc.

# The Morgan Horse Judging Standards

Adopted by

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Designed as a handy reference book for Morgan judges and exhibitors, a guideline for Morgan breeders, and a measuring stick with which show committees may evaluate the performance of the judges and officials they hire.

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The American Morgan Horse Association recommends and expects that all persons will conduct themselves in an honest, forthright, ethical, and sportsmanlike manner in their relationship with each other at any time they are involved in Morgan competition and endorses the principles as stated in the USEF sportsmanship charter.

## ORIGINAL JUDGING STANDARDS STATEMENT ADOPTED 1972

“Report of the Judging Standards Committee

Dr. C. D. Parks, Chairman, Noxen, PA; Robert Brooks, East Lyme, CT; Harold Childs, Tunbridge, VT; John Lydon, Dalton, PA, Dr. S. Robert Orcutt, Rowley, MA; Mrs. Edward Ryan, Delavan, IL; W. Dayton Sumner, New York, NY; Prof. L.V. Tirrell, Durham, NH; Mrs. Archibald Cox, Wayland, MA, member of the committee during a preparation of the judging standards.

The members of this committee agreed unanimously on the material presented here. Some thought more strongly than others on certain points, but there was no major compromise.

The philosophy involved: There must be one recognizable standard for judging the Morgan horse. There is sufficient variation within the breed to make possible the selection of horses better suited than others for a particular purpose. To be shown in the ring a horse should be a show horse, regardless of what class or section he is shown in. We put him in competition before the public because we think he is a superior individual worthy to represent the breed.

Judging is the art of establishing a fixed image of the ideal representative of the breed in one’s mind and relating the individuals in each class to this mental image. It is our purpose to put the image of this ideal Morgan in the minds of the judges, breeders, trainers, and exhibitors so that we will all be working toward the same goal.”

## MEMBERS OF THE AMHA JUDGING STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Harry Sebring, Richmond, MA, <i>Co-Chairman</i>	Ellen Di Bella, Parker, CO
Mike Goebig, Kutztown, PA, <i>Co-Chairman</i>	Amanda DuPont, Port Matilda, PA
Julie Broadway, Shelburne, VT, <i>Staff Liaison</i>	Georgie Green, Morgan Mill, TX
Mark Bodnar, Marengo, IL	Terry Jones Brennan, Hollister, CA
Larry Bolen, Perrysburg, OH	Cindy Mugnier, Granby, MA
Richard Boulé, Hampton Falls, NH	Ken Swanson, Raleigh, NC
Sherry Cole, Sheridan, IN	

## THE GOAL OF THE JUDGING STANDARDS COMMITTEE

It is the primary goal of this committee to establish an accepted standard for all Morgan horse judges.

We believe every exhibitor has an absolute right to expect his or her horse to be judged against the same criteria regardless who is judging or in what part of the country the show is held. It is the function of this committee to establish this standard, and devise and recommend to the Board ways to see that it is universally accepted and adhered to, and research methods to generally upgrade the quality and consistency of our Morgan horse judging.

These standards have been adopted by The American Morgan Horse Association in order to provide all horse show judges with a standard of perfection against which horse show competitors may be measured and placed.

There will always be a need for personal judgment as to which individual most closely meets the standards. However, breeders and trainers who strive to produce individuals who meet these standards should feel confident that all judges will be using these standards as their criteria of excellence.

It is the responsibility of all judges, stewards, exhibitors, and officials to be familiar with and to comply with the criteria and the intent of the Morgan Horse Judging Standards.

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# MORGAN BREED CHARACTER STATEMENT

The beauty of the Morgan horse lifts the heart. The breed exists solely because they please people. It's their heritage.

The Morgan is easily recognized by his proud carriage, upright graceful neck, and distinctive head with expressive eyes. Deep bodied and compact, the Morgan has strongly muscled quarters.

The intelligence, willingness, zest for life, and good sense of the Morgan is blended with soundness of limb, athleticism, and stamina. In addition, Morgan thriftiness and longevity have made this breed a good bargain for more than 200 years—easy to love and affordable to own.

The Morgan horse is free moving and calm under western tack or elegant and aristocratic when ridden in English style. A tractable temperament allows the Morgan to excel when driving in single or multiple hitches.

Companionable and comfortable on a quiet pleasure ride anywhere open skies beckon, working as a sensible partner in a long day of ranch work or endurance riding, waiting alert and ready to enter a show ring, or performing in formal riding disciplines, the Morgan is a versatile horse within a versatile breed. The Morgan horse agreeably adapts to his owner's lifestyle. This first American breed can be found worldwide.

Reliable, loyal, tireless, and versatile, a Morgan becomes one with people of all ages and walks of life and shares the mutual enjoyment in every equine pastime.

## INTRODUCTION

The Morgan horse is one of today's most versatile breeds, and his uses are many and varied.

The tireless working stock horse, the competitive trail horse, and the all-around using pleasure horse (which form an integral part of thousands of American family homes) all contribute to the popularity of the Morgan horse.

Much could be written on these various uses. In the following guidelines, we will concern ourselves only with that portion of horses produced by our most conscientious breeders to meet the stringent demands of these judging standards.

These are our breed diplomats, our showcase of Morgan horses which represent our breed in the public eye, and from which we must demand the very highest degree of excellence.

The Morgan Type and Conformation as described is the standard to which all breeders must strive. This is the horse our successful breeders will choose to enter their breeding herds and perpetuate the breed. In the close competition of today's major horse shows, there is little room for deviation from this type either by the breeder who selects his

or her show Morgan or by the judge who evaluates this Morgan against the standard. Naturally, only a small percentage of the Morgans produced by even our most successful breeders will meet the ideal type and conformation needed to win in today's "In-Hand" classes.

There is but one standard of perfection for the Morgan horse and that is the ideal standard for all sections within the Morgan Division. The natural variations of style within the breed, the mental attitude and the natural aptitude of the individual animal make it possible for some Morgans to be better suited for particular uses than others. Occasionally we find an individual who, with proper training, may excel in many areas throughout his career, but more often individuals tend to do well only in those areas where constant training and development are offered.

It should be noted that, in some SECTIONS of the JUDGING STANDARDS, a greater variation from the ideal type may be acceptable. In open competition against other breeds, the Morgan breed type will seldom be considered.

# MORGAN HORSE JUDGING STANDARDS

## I. TYPE and CONFORMATION

Type is the ideal or standard of perfection for the breed. In addition to the physical characteristics that identify the Morgan, a Morgan is distinctive for its stamina and vigor, personality and eagerness, and strong natural way of moving.

Conformation is the degree of perfection of the component parts and their relationship to each other.

**Correct Morgan type and conformation is the same in each section of the Morgan Horse division where conformation is considered. There is only one standard for type and conformation of the Morgan horse.**

If in-hand classes are offered for horses in specific disciplines, specific classes or suitable to become classes (Classic Pleasure In-Hand; Western In-Hand, etc.), horses shall be judged against the criteria stated in the Judging Standards manual for the in-hand section. If such classes are offered, no horse will be judged against any standard for another breed, discipline, or division.

Judges should seek the same correct Morgan type and conformation not only in the in-hand section, but also in those performance sections where rules indicate type and conformation is to be considered. When judging type and conformation, the maturity of that individual should be consistent with the age of that individual.

1. The head should be expressive with a broad forehead; large, prominent eyes; straight or slightly dished short face; firm, fine lips; large nostrils; and well-rounded jowls. The ears should be short and shapely, set rather wide apart, and carried alertly. Mares may have a slightly longer ear.

## A MORGAN STALLION

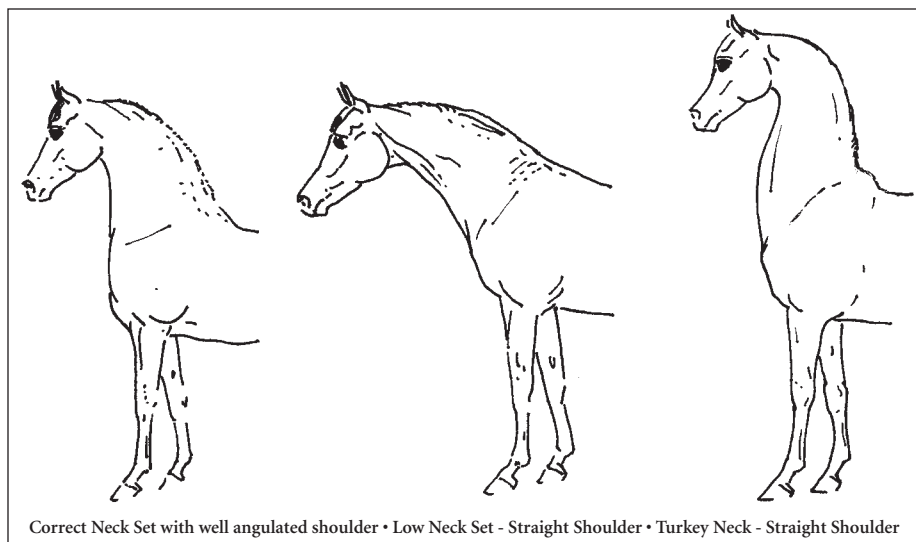




A MORGAN MARE



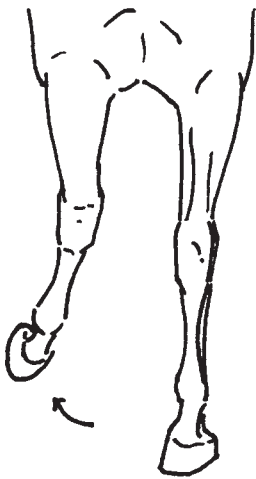
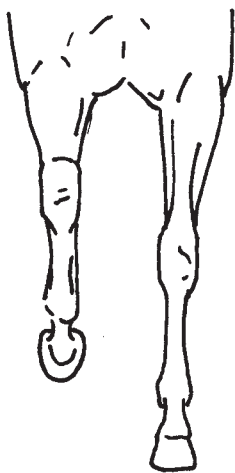
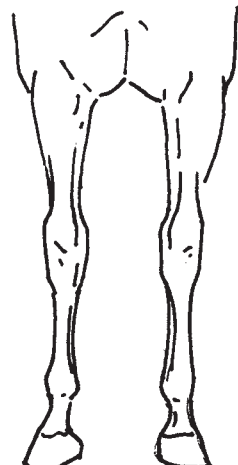
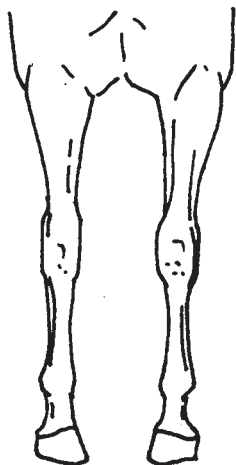
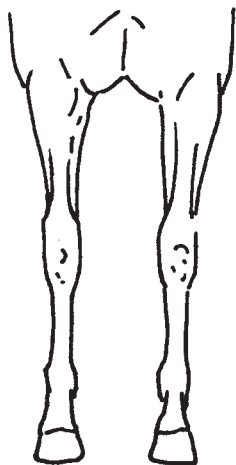




2. The throatlatch is slightly deeper than other breeds and should be refined sufficiently to allow proper flexion at the poll and normal respiration.
3. The neck should come out on top of an extremely well-angulated shoulder with depth from top of withers to point of shoulder. It should be relatively fine in relation to sex. It should be slightly arched and should blend with the withers and back. Ideally, the neck should have sufficient length and be set on high enough to allow the individual to set his head in a proper position while still maintaining his entire head and nose above the line of the withers. Judges must be cautious, however, not to reward length of neck over proper placement of the neck, and must keep in mind the balance and symmetry necessary to maintain the “Morgan look” which is predicated upon the way the neck grows out of the back. The top line of the neck should be considerably longer than the bottom line. The stallion should have more crest than the mare or gelding. An animal gelded late in life may resemble the stallion more closely.
4. The withers should be well defined and extend into the back in proportion to the angulation of the shoulder.
5. The body should be compact with a short back, close coupling, broad loins, deep flank, well-sprung ribs, croup long and well muscled, with tail attached high, carried gracefully and straight. A weak, low, or long back is a severe fault. The Morgan horse should not be higher at the rump than at the wither. Judges must penalize unnatural tail carriage. Unnatural tail carriage includes evidence of tail settings and/or breakover, dead tail and wry tail (wry tail is defined as twisted, carried askew, or distorted). Judges have an obligation to see that tails carried vertically with an abrupt breakover are severely penalized.
6. The stifle should be placed well forward and low in the flank area. It is imperative that weak or loose stifles be severely faulted.

7. The legs should be straight and sound with short cannons, flat bone, and an appearance of overall substance with refinement. The forearm should be relatively long in proportion to the cannon. The pasterns should have sufficient length and angulation to provide a light, springy step.
8. The structure of the rear legs is of extreme importance to the selection of a long-lasting equine athlete. Judges must take special care to severely fault individuals displaying weakness in this area. Any sign of poor angulation of the hocks, sickle hocks, or cow hocks must be considered a severe fault. Lack of proper flexion of the stifle and hock is cause for very close examination of the entire structure of the rear legs and should not be tolerated in breeding stock or show ring winners.
9. The feet should be in proportion to the size of the horse, round, open at the heel, with a concave sole and hoof of dense structure.
10. Viewed from the front, the chest should be well developed. The front legs should be perpendicular to the ground and closely attached to the body.
11. Viewed from the side, the top line represents a gentle curve from the poll to the back, giving the impression of the neck sitting on top of the withers rather than in front of them, continuing to a short, straight back and a relatively level croup rounding into a well-muscled thigh. The tail should be attached high and carried well-arched. At maturity, the croup should NOT be higher than the withers. The under line should be long, and the body deep through the heart girth and flanks. The extreme angulation of the shoulder results in the arm being a little more vertical than in other breeds, placing the front legs slightly farther forward on the body. The front legs should be straight and perpendicular to the ground. The rear cannons should be perpendicular to the ground when points of hocks and buttocks are in the same vertical lines.
12. Viewed from the rear, the croup should be well-rounded, thighs and gaskins well muscled. Legs should be straight. The gaskin should be relatively long in relation to the cannon. The Morgan should portray good spring of rib and well-rounded buttocks. Slab-sided individuals should be faulted.
13. The height ranges from 14.1 to 15.2 hands, with some individuals under or over.
14. Horses shall be serviceably sound.
15. Stallions two years old and over must have all the fully developed physical characteristics of a stallion. Mature stallions must be masculine in appearance, and both testicles must be dropped and appear normal. Mares must be feminine in appearance.
16. Coat or eye color has no bearing when judging Morgan horses.
17. Brands, including freeze brands, must not be discriminated against in any class.

# CONFORMATION DETERMINES WAY OF GOING



Normal Forelegs  
Travel Straight

Toe-In (pigeon toe)  
Wings Out

Toe-Out (splay)  
Wings In



Normal  
Heel

Contracted  
Heel

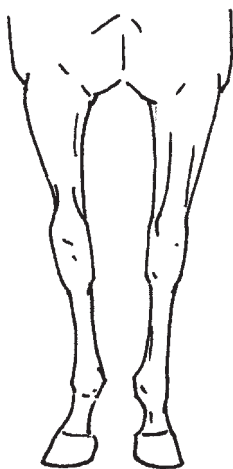
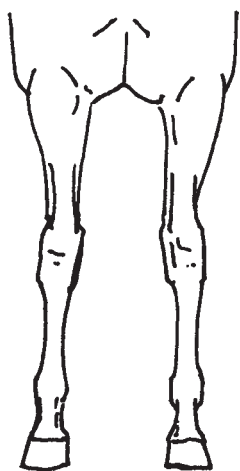
Sheared  
Hill

Dish  
foot

foundered foot  
with seedy toe

upright pastern  
club foot

coon  
foot



Bench Knees  
Leg rotations

Base narrow  
Cross over (rope walker)



Hitting on Heels

Hitting Correctly

Other distinctive attributes of the Morgan horse are his presence and personality. These include:

1. Animation
2. Stamina
3. Vigor
4. Alertness
5. Adaptability
6. Attitude
7. Tractability

## **SOME CONFORMATION FAULTS**

### **HEAD:**

The typical Morgan head is one of the most distinguishing characteristics of the breed. Any of the below mentioned faults seriously detracts from it and should be penalized accordingly.

1. Course or plain head
2. Long and coarse ears
3. Lop ears
4. Ears set too far forward
5. Pig eyes
6. Parrot mouth
7. Coarse muzzle
8. Narrow, long head
9. Roman nose
10. mall nostrils
11. Broken wind–respiratory distress
12. Stallions lacking masculinity
13. Mares lacking femininity

### **NECK:**

These faults seriously interfere with flexion at the poll and detract from the beauty and efficiency of the horse.

1. Ewe necked
2. Crest fallen
3. Coarse throat latch
4. Short necked
5. Neck bowed on the bottom
6. Lacking arch

### **WITHERS:**

Good withers are very important. Deficiency of the withers should be penalized according to its severity.

1. Mutton withers
2. Lowness of withers
3. Dip in front of withers
4. Coarseness on sides of withers

### **SHOULDERS:**

One of the distinctive characteristics of the Morgan horse is a deep well-angulated shoulder. Any of these faults seriously detracts from good Morgan type and efficiency and should be penalized.

1. Too short
2. Too straight
3. Poor angulation

## BODY:

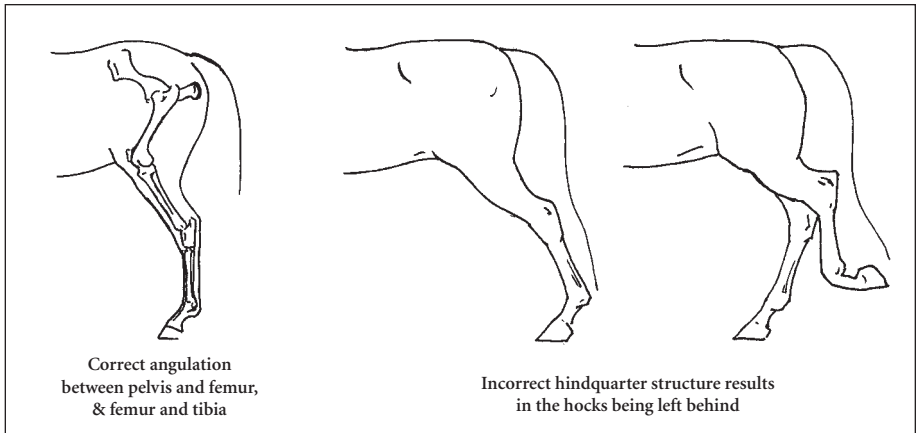
The body should be compact with a short back, close coupling, broad loins, deep flank, and well-sprung ribs. These faults should be penalized according to their severity.

1. Low backed
2. Flat ribbed
3. Roach backed
4. Long backed
5. Weak coupling
6. Shallow bodied
7. Hollow chested
8. Lack of depth through the heart girth and flank

## CROUP:

The croup is long and well-muscled, with the tail attached high. A croup higher than the withers is usually associated with a low back. A short croup interferes with the length of stride behind. Insufficient muscling inhibits propulsion. A steep croup and low tail set detract from the overall balance of the individual horse. These faults should be penalized according to their severity.

1. High croup
2. Short croup
3. Insufficient muscling
4. Steep croup
5. Low tail set
6. Overly long croup



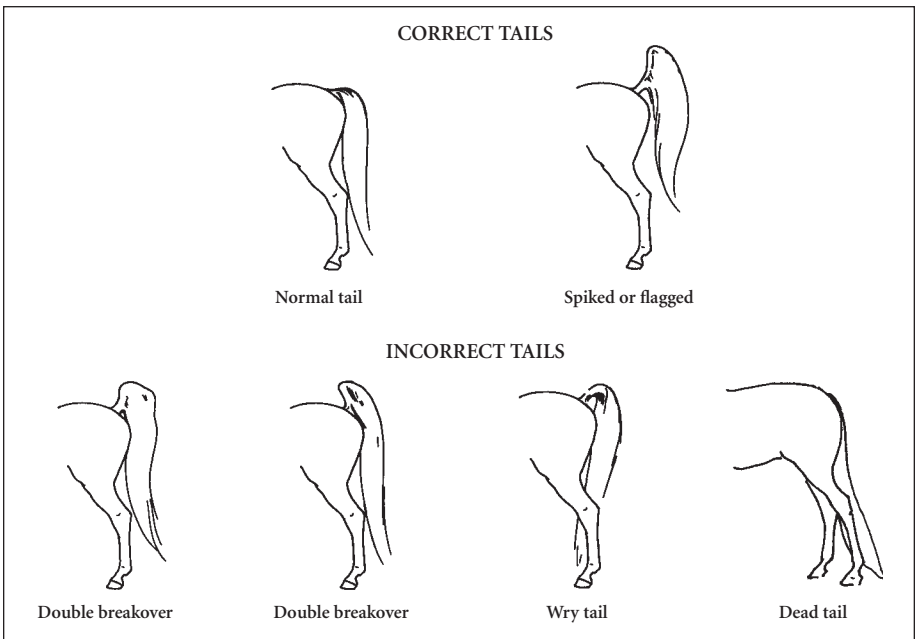
## LEGS AND FEET:

Each of the below faults, blemishes, and unsoundnesses interferes with the normal function and/or appearance of a horse. The degree of severity should be considered and penalized accordingly by the judge.

1. Evidence of severe founder
2. Bone spavin
3. Ring bone
4. String halt
5. Off-set knees
6. Calf knees
7. Over at the knees
8. Bow legs—front or rear



9. Tied in below the knees
10. Long cannons
11. Round bones
12. Straight pasterns
13. Splay footed or pigeon toed
14. Contracted heels
15. Side bone
16. Stands base-wide or base-narrow
17. Sickle hocked (curby conformation)
18. Cow hocked
19. Coarse hocks
20. Bog spavin
21. Curb
22. Capped hocks
23. Shoe boil
24. Thorough-pin
25. Wind puff
26. Dish foot
27. Coon footed
28. Club footed
29. Splint



**MANE, TAIL AND COAT:**

A full, natural mane and tail and a smooth glossy coat enhance the appearance of the animal. Judges shall penalize unnatural tail carriage. Unnatural tail carriage includes evidence of tail settings and/or breakover, dead tail and wry tail (wry tail is defined as twisted, carried askew or distorted). Judges have an obligation to see that tails carried vertically with an abrupt breakover are severely penalized.

1. Rat tail
2. Wry tail
3. Severe breakover of the tail
4. Mane and/or tail rubbed out
5. Rough coat

## II. GENERAL JUDGING PROVISIONS

The American Morgan Horse Association recommends and expects that all persons will conduct themselves in an honest, forthright, ethical and sportsmanlike manner in their relationship with each other at any time they are involved in Morgan competition and endorses the principles as stated in the USEF sportsmanship charter.

The Morgan Show Horse displays excellence of type, conformation, presence, attitude and training for specific qualifications of the class.

**Judging Criteria**—Most Morgan classes call for type and conformation to be considered 40% and performance 60% in the qualifying classes; and type, conformation, and performance 50% in the championship classes. At all-Morgan competitions, stripping of horses is mandatory in Open and Junior Horse Championship classes under saddle. Exceptions: One horse and Parade classes. **Ideal Morgan type and conformation is the same in all classes and all sections of the Morgan division.**

The other performance criteria considered are quality, manners, presence, performance, cadence and balance, and suitability of horse to rider/driver.

The specific kind of class being judged determines the importance of each criteria in the final judging outcome. The order in which each is listed in the class specifications determines where the emphasis should be placed.

For example: A horse placed first in a class judged on performance, cadence and balance, quality, and manners could justifiably not be placed first against the same horses if the class were judged on manners, quality, and performance, cadence and balance.

AMHA endorses the concepts regarding protective headgear expressed in the USEF Rule Book. Riders must not be penalized for the wearing of protective headgear in any class.

All Junior Exhibitor classes call for manners and suitability as primary criteria. Judges must select their Junior Exhibitor winners from those horses that clearly portray the attributes of a well-mannered, safe, pleasant horse. **If the rider is overmounted or if the horse is not suitable to that rider, it must result in a severe penalty.**

In several places in the following sections there may be minor conflict in terminology with existing USEF, Morgan Division rules. When conflict exists, USEF Rules will take precedence.

### IN-HAND CRITERIA

#### A. CORRECT WAY OF GOING FOR IN-HAND CLASSES

**It is imperative that height of action should not take precedence over correct way of going.** Emphasis shall be on type and conformation with consideration given to horse's ability to move correctly on the lead.

1. The walk should be rapid, flat-footed, elastic, with a four-beat cadence and with the accent on flexion in the pastern.
2. The trot should be a two-beat diagonal gait, animated, elastic, square, and collected. The rear action should be in balance with the front.

3. Emphasis should be on the horse's ability to perform as described in 1 and 2 above, regardless of the type of shoeing or training the horse has received.
4. All horses should exhibit good manners in the ring. The way of going and presence are equally as distinctive as the type itself.
5. Stress should be placed on an orderly presentation of the horse. He should stand stationary and move straight and true on the line, without a tendency to break gait or resist the handler.
6. Each qualified individual should be worked at a walk and at a trot on the line.

## **B. SUGGESTED PROCEDURES FOR JUDGING IN-HAND CLASSES**

1. Horses enter the ring and line up at the discretion of the judge.
2. Not more than two handlers, each of whom may have one whip, shall be allowed in the ring to show each horse in "In-Hand" classes.
3. Horses are to be judged standing individually, then at a walk and trot on the line along the rail, and must be serviceably sound.
4. Horses must stand squarely on all four feet with the front legs perpendicular to the ground. Rear legs may be placed slightly back.
5. The Champion and Reserve Champion shall be selected from horses that have placed first or second in their qualifying class. All qualified horses are considered to be equal at the start of the championship class.
6. Each individual in championship classes should be worked at a walk and a trot on the line.

## **PARK CLASS CRITERIA**

Open, Mare, Gelding, Stallion, 15-Hand and Over, and Under 15-Hand Park Classes are all judged on performance, presence, quality, and manners, in that order. The Open Park Horse should present an overall picture of beauty, brilliance, animation, and elegance.

Maiden, Novice, Limit, and Junior Park Classes are all judged on quality, performance, cadence and balance, presence, and manners, in that order. These are the future champions and should show promise of things to come. Minor mistakes receive lighter penalties than in Open classes.

Ladies, Amateur, and Junior Exhibitor Classes are all judged on manners, suitability, quality, and performance, cadence and balance, in that order. Manners are paramount in all three of these classes, but there is a distinct difference in the way each is judged.

A Ladies Park Horse should be outstanding in refinement and elegance with suitability of horse to rider taken into consideration. Expression is paramount and quality is a prime consideration. The execution of the gaits should be performed with brilliance on command. The horse should walk and stand quietly.

An Amateur Park Horse can be a bit stronger and perform in a bolder manner. More action and animation are desired and less emphasis may be put on manners than in Ladies and Junior Exhibitor Park Classes. However, suitability of horse to rider must be

considered and manners are still the primary consideration.

A Junior Exhibitor Park Horse should be mannerly, willing, expressive, and exhibit balanced action. The execution of gaits should be performed with brilliance on command. The horse should walk and stand quietly. Suitability of horse to rider is of particular importance and manners are still the primary consideration.

A Youth Park Horse is judged on the same criteria as an Open Park Horse. See Youth Class criteria.

## **GENERAL PLEASURE & PLEASURE DRIVING CLASS CRITERIA**

Although all Morgan Pleasure classes require that manners be considered as the primary requirement, the particular class must be considered when determining the required manners and most desirable attitude.

The Junior Exhibitor Pleasure Horse must be safe, pleasant, mild mannered, and show complete cooperation. All signs of resistance, resentment, or aggression must be severely penalized. **Suitability of horse to rider/driver is of paramount importance.**

The Ladies Pleasure Horse must display an elegant, refined, and cooperative way of going with absolute acceptance of regimentation of speed and exhibit a light mouth at all times. Misconduct, resistance, or unpleasantness of any kind must be severely penalized. Transition of gaits must be effortless, smooth, and accurate.

The Amateur Pleasure Horse must show all of the tractability and willingness of the fully trained Pleasure horse. He may be somewhat bolder than the Ladies or Junior Exhibitor horse but must be completely cooperative and absolutely agreeable at all times. A light mouth and a willing nature are paramount to the Amateur Pleasure horse.

The Junior, Maiden, Novice, and Limit Pleasure Horses must display an agreeable nature and a willingness to accept direction and regimentation, but occasional errors should receive a lighter penalty than they would in classes for finished horses.

The English Pleasure and Pleasure Driving Open, Mare, Gelding, Stallion, 15-Hand & Over, and Under 15-Hand Pleasure Horses must display a bright and willing attitude. While they may be a bit more aggressive, they must exhibit impeccable manners and a tractable nature at all times.

Hunter Pleasure, Western Pleasure, and Classic Pleasure Horses must display mild manners and be completely cooperative. Judges must be extremely conscious of manners and attitude while taking into consideration the provisions outlined above.

## **YOUTH CLASS CRITERIA**

Youth classes are limited to riders or drivers 21 years of age or under and are judged as open classes with specifications calling for performance, cadence and balance, quality, presence, and manners. The class is designed as an opportunity to acquaint the youthful rider/driver with the open classes and should be judged accordingly.

AMHA endorses the concepts regarding protective headgear expressed in the USEF Rule Book. Riders must never be penalized for the wearing of protective headgear in any class.

### III. PARK HORSE SECTION

The Park Morgan is expected to present a picture of great beauty, brilliance, animation, and elegance, either under saddle or in harness. The performance of the Park Horse should reflect the innate vitality and distinctly energetic character of the breed, enhanced and accentuated by a systematic training program designed to improve and perfect the horse's natural way of going through the use of biting, shoeing, physical development, and showing techniques.

In appearance, the Park Morgan should be as much a thing of beauty standing still as he is in motion. He must have quality, refinement, elegance, and definite Morgan character. All classes in this section are judged at least 40% on type and conformation, and championships are judged 50% on these qualifications. Other important attributes are performance, cadence and balance, presence, manners, and suitability. The order in which these points are listed in the class specifications indicates their relative importance in the class at hand. There should be a difference in emphasis in different types of Park classes. More stress is placed on quality and potential in classes for younger horses while manners and suitability are more important in ladies, amateur, and junior exhibitor classes. Performance and presence head the list in open classes.

The performance of the Park Morgan should be collected, balanced, rhythmic, and precise at all times. While animation and presence are prerequisites, the Park Morgan should display a "poetry of motion" that is achieved by a combination of athletic ability and a willing attitude. At all gaits, the Park Morgan should be airy, elastic, elegant, cadenced, balanced, and obedient. It is essential that the horse move without a forced appearance.

**Judges must severely penalize any horse that is laboring, pounding, landing on the heel, winging, or paddling, whether due to faulty conformation, extremes of length and/or angle of the hoof, weight, and/or balance of the shoe.**

#### GAITS

The Park Trot is conceded to be the most important qualifying gait. It is a lofty, diagonal, two-beat gait with emphasis on enhanced natural action and precise cadence. The trot should be executed so that the flight of the foot approaches the arc of a circle. The action and stride should be of a height and length that can be performed with rapidity, elasticity, and precision, and continued consistently all the way around the ring. Considerable shoulder movement is desired and rear action should be balanced with front. The feet should move lightly and land squarely. The overall graceful appearance of the horse in motion is more important than any single component such as height of action alone.

Form is the most important factor in the Park Trot. Individual entries may travel at somewhat different speeds in order to achieve their best potential. Speed should never be confused with brilliance, and no advantage should be given to a faster moving horse on the basis of speed alone.

Extreme action achieved at the expense of balance, cadence, and fluidity of motion is

not desirable. Specifically, uneven or unnatural movement characteristically produced by excessive or inept use of shackles, elastics, over-riding, or unconventional training methods should be penalized. Similarly, horses that labor, pound, wing, paddle, or go unevenly, whether because of excessive shoeing or for other reasons, should be seriously faulted.

The Animated Park Walk is notably different from the relaxed, flat-footed walk of the Pleasure horse. It is performed with great style, collection, elegance, and airiness of motion. In its preferred form, however, it is still a true walk with a four-beat cadence, although a two-beat cadence may be acceptable. It should be snappy, collected, animated, elastic, and on a straight line.

Judges must give extra credit to horses that walk particularly well and should penalize (but not necessarily disqualify) entries that do not walk at all. Entries must at all times display a complete acceptance of regimentation of speed and at no time exceed the speed of a rapid four-beat walk.

Additional emphasis should be given to the walk in classes such as Junior Exhibitor, Ladies, and Amateur where manners are paramount.

The canter of the Park Saddle Horse should be smooth, collected, relatively slow, and straight on both leads. It should have a definite three-beat cadence. The transition from the walk to the canter should be directly from the walk, without evidence of a trot, and it should be prompt, true, and smooth. Correct leads are required both ways of the ring.

The Park Harness Horse is similar to the Park Saddle Horse. Both are high headed, bold, and airy moving and both look through the bridle with attitude and presence. The ideal Park Harness Horse has a longer stride and his trot is stronger going than the Park Saddle Horse. Extreme elegance, balance, precision, and cadence are required. Speed should not be confused with brilliance.

In all Park Harness classes, horses execute a Park Walk and Park Trot. The Park Trot is a brilliant, animated, square, collected, and balanced gait, with emphasis on collection. It should be bold but not fast. In classes other than Ladies, Amateur, and Junior Exhibitor, drivers will also be asked to "Show Your Horse." At this command, the driver should show his or her horse to its best advantage. Some increase or decrease in speed is permitted, but not required, and excessive speed should be penalized.

In harness classes, one attendant without a whip is required to head each horse. The attendant may stand the entry on its feet and, thereafter, should step back from the horse's head while the judge is inspecting the horse. In classes other than ladies, junior exhibitor, and amateur, horses may be unchecked while in the lineup when not being individually inspected by the judge. Attendants should remain in the ring during a work-off portion of the class but must take no action that will affect the performance of any horse in any way. Judges may penalize horses that will not stand reasonably quiet in the lineup. Any entry that seems likely to endanger other horses should be excused.



## FAULTS OF THE PARK MORGAN

Not in order of importance:

1. Lack of Morgan type and conformation
2. Unsoundness
3. Sour ears
4. Nose out
5. Head too low
6. Fighting the bit
7. Boring on the bit
8. Tossing the head
9. Head to one side
10. Mouth open
11. Tongue lolling
12. leeding at the mouth
13. Tail to one side
14. Heavy on the forehand
15. Winging or paddling
16. Shackled way of moving
17. Laboring or pounding
18. Landing on heels
19. Hitching
20. Mixed gaited
21. Pacing
22. Cross cantering
23. Unequal motion of front feet
24. Going wide at knees or hocks
25. Leaving hocks behind
26. Strung out
27. Too choppy
28. Four-beat canter
29. Forging
30. Balking
31. Bucking, rearing, bolting, and kicking at other horses – Elimination

## **IV. ENGLISH/CLASSIC PLEASURE HORSE SECTION**

### **ENGLISH PLEASURE**

The English Pleasure Saddle Horse is just as much a show horse as a Park Horse. Ideal conformation may lead to high action in some English Pleasure horses, but the high action in itself must never be used as a criteria for selecting winners in English Pleasure classes. The English Pleasure Morgan displays presence with an absolutely agreeable attitude, and his gait must be collected and balanced.

The English Pleasure horse should exhibit good manners and a quiet, deliberate, and willing performance on a light rein. Judges should penalize the horse that is heavy on the bit or gapes at the mouth. The English Pleasure horse shall, at all times, give the appearance that he enjoys the work he is doing and that he is, indeed, a pleasure to ride.

### **CLASSIC PLEASURE**

The Classic Pleasure Horse should be a calm, mild-mannered, safe, pleasure horse. He should demonstrate flawless manners and be absolutely agreeable to the commands and directions of the rider. He should at all times work on a very light rein without resistance and with only light contact on the bit. Although he should be athletic and may be energetic, he should at all times demonstrate a quiet, calm, and extremely tractable attitude. Horses exhibiting aggressiveness, over-collection, or excess animation must be severely penalized.

**The flight path of the foot should be that of a relaxed, pleasure horse. Any motion or action resulting from shoeing is to be penalized. The judge may penalize excessive use of aids or appliances such as severe bits, etc.**

### **GAITS OF THE ENGLISH PLEASURE AND CLASSIC PLEASURE HORSE**

The walk should be flat-footed, free, elastic, ground covering, with a four-beat balanced cadence. Horses must show purpose and intent to travel from one point to another and a willingness to perform a true flat-footed walk without undue restraint.

The pleasure trot should be a pleasant, easy going trot with elasticity and freedom of movement. There should be light contact with the mouth and flexion at the poll without evidence of undue restraint.

The road trot should be a balanced trot maintaining free forward impulsion with sufficient speed to be ground covering. It should exhibit enough collection to allow the horse to maintain the gait at speed for an extended period of time. Form should not be sacrificed for speed, and excessive speed at the expense of form or balance should be penalized.

The canter should be slow, smooth, collected, straight on both leads, and with a definite three-beat cadence. Transition from one gait to another should be smooth and effortless at the will of the rider without anticipation on the part of the horse.

### **PLEASURE DRIVING**

The Pleasure Driving Horse should have the same qualifications as the English Pleasure

Saddle Horse. This horse should be high headed and have a free way of moving. The check rein should not interfere with the relaxed and free way of going. Light contact with the mouth should be maintained without evidence of undue restraint.

The Pleasure Driving Horse should exhibit good manners and a quiet, deliberate, and willing performance on a light rein. Judges should penalize the horse that is heavy on the bit or gapes at the mouth. The Pleasure Driving Horse shall, at all times, give the appearance that he enjoys the work he is doing and that he is, indeed, a pleasure to drive.

## **CLASSIC PLEASURE DRIVING**

The Classic Pleasure Driving Horse should have the same qualifications as the Classic Pleasure Saddle Horse. The horse should be relatively high headed and have a free way of moving. The check rein should not interfere with the relaxed and free way of going. Light contact with the mouth should be maintained without evidence of undue restraint.

The Classic Pleasure Driving Horse must exhibit good manners and a quiet, deliberate, and willing performance on a light rein. Judges must penalize the horse that is heavy on the bit or gapes at the mouth. The Classic Pleasure Driving Horse shall, at all times, give the appearance that he enjoys the work he is doing and that he is, indeed, a pleasure to drive.

## **GAITS OF THE PLEASURE DRIVING AND CLASSIC PLEASURE DRIVING HORSE**

The walk should be flat-footed, free, elastic, ground covering, with a four-beat cadence. Horses must show purpose and intent to travel from one point to another. He must show a willingness to perform a true flat-footed walk without undue restraint.

The pleasure trot should be a pleasant, easy going trot with elasticity and freedom of movement. There should be light contact with the mouth and flexion at the poll, without evidence of undue restraint.

The road trot should be a cadenced, balanced trot maintaining free forward impulsion with sufficient speed to be ground covering, but with enough collection to allow the horse to maintain the gait at speed for an extended period of time. Form should not be sacrificed for speed and excessive speed at the expense of form or balance should be penalized.

One attendant without a whip is required to head each horse. The attendant may stand an entry on its feet and, thereafter, he should step back away from the horse's head when the judge is inspecting the horse.

## **FAULTS OF THE PLEASURE DRIVING AND CLASSIC PLEASURE DRIVING HORSE ARE:**

- |                                      |                       |              |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1. Short, thick neck                 | 4. Low withers        | 8. Sour ears |
| 2. Straight necked<br>and low headed | 5. Mouth open         | 9. Hitching  |
| 3. Straight shoulder                 | 6. Boring on the bit  |              |
|                                      | 7. Heavy way of going |              |

# V. WESTERN/HUNTER PLEASURE SECTION

## WESTERN PLEASURE

The Western Pleasure Horse should have the same characteristics of the ideal Morgan horse. Type and conformation must be judged in strict accordance with the Type and Conformation Section of these Standards. **When considering “type,” care must be taken to see that “Morgan type” is the criteria being considered.**

The Morgan Western head carriage should be naturally comfortable, alert, proud, and harmonious with the neck and shoulder of the individual horse. Light, calm contact with the rein is absolutely paramount in the presentation. A judge must **severely penalize** presentations which include: long, loose, draped reins; heavy contact; snatching and jerking; sawing; pulling; intimidation. The Western presentation should be one of symmetry with balance in the arrangement of the parts relative to the conformation.

Correct Morgan conformation dictates that the Morgan have a neck which appears to grow out of the top of the withers rather than from the front of the torso. The head carriage of the Morgan Western Pleasure Horse is the result of the horse carrying his entire body in balance. The head carriage will vary from individual to individual. It should never be exaggerated in a position too low or too high to allow the perfect body balance necessary for the correct Morgan Western Pleasure Horse.

Judges should severely penalize any horse that carries its head below the withers or behind the vertical. Pulling, jiggling, gapping, teeth grinding, and any other behavior that indicates an attitude that is not happy should be severely penalized.

The Western Pleasure Horse backs promptly, willingly, and pleasantly. Proper backing requires a two-beat diagonal gait.

## GAITS

The Walk should be elastic and ground-covering, with a four-beat balanced cadence. The Jog Trot is a two-beat gait that is free, slow and with cadence and balance, without mixing gaits.

The Lope should be smooth, slow and straight, with a three-beat cadence.

The Extended Jog should be energetic, balanced, and ground covering with a definite lengthening of stride, resulting in an increase of speed without a sense of racing or straining. The mouth must remain light and the horse must demonstrate a complete acceptance of control at all times without resistance.

The Extended Lope should be ground-covering, free-moving and smooth. The extended lope should show a definite lengthening of stride while still being controlled and mannerly. Extreme speed **SHALL** be penalized.

Note: Check your USEF Rule Book carefully regarding dress, tack, appointments, and order of performance judging criteria.

## HUNTER PLEASURE

The Morgan Hunter Pleasure horse is a Morgan Pleasure horse shown in Hunter attire and equipment. The Morgan Hunter Pleasure Horse should be judged following the

Morgan Standards. He should be a mild mannered individual who works with a light rein and only light contact on the bit. The overall presentation should be one of soft, flexible control that is easily maintained in both regular and extended gaits. He should have impeccable manners, must clearly enjoy his work, and give the appearance of being able to sustain his gaits comfortably over extended periods of time.

The Morgan Hunter Pleasure horse shall demonstrate proper Morgan type and conformation but should exhibit a lower, more relaxed head carriage than the English Pleasure horse. The Hunter Pleasure horse may travel with his nose slightly ahead of the vertical and should give a long, ground covering impression. He should never carry his head behind the vertical. The height of the head carriage will vary from individual to individual, but should be where the horse is comfortable and relaxed. The head carriage should be maintained with only light contact on the bit and judges should penalize horses that appear to be held in position with undue restraint. Judges should penalize non-traditional mouth controls such as flash, drop-nose and figure eight nose bands and gag bits and curb bits with shanks longer than five inches etc.

The Morgan Hunter Pleasure horse should have ground covering gaits that would be comfortable for horse and rider over extended periods of time. His movement at the trot should be balanced and elliptical, with the length of the stride being twice as long as it is high. This elliptical motion should be maintained at both the regular and extended trot. The horse that exhibits height of motion without an elliptical ground-covering stride should be penalized.

## GAITS

The Walk should be flat-footed and free moving. The horse should exhibit the ability to cover ground with ease and should require minimal restraint. Any indication of jiggling or nervousness should be severely penalized.

The Trot should be easy going and relaxed and must demonstrate a balanced, cadenced, and elliptical way of going with flexion at the poll and a pleasant interested attitude. Horses should work with light contact on the bit.

The Extended Trot should be bold, energetic, balanced, cadenced and elliptical with a definite lengthening of stride that results in an increase of speed without a sense of racing or straining. The mouth must remain light, and the horse must demonstrate a complete acceptance of control without resistance at all times.

The Canter should be smooth, comfortable, ground covering, and straight on both leads with a definite three-beat cadence. Transitions must be clean and effortless without anticipation on the part of the horse.

The Extended Canter should be ground-covering, free-moving and smooth. It should show a definite lengthening of stride while being controlled and mannerly. It is still a three-beat cadence and extreme speed **MUST** be penalized.

# SOME FAULTS OF THE ENGLISH, WESTERN, CLASSIC, AND HUNTER PLEASURE SADDLE HORSE

Not in order of importance:

1. Lack of Morgan type and conformation
2. Lack of elasticity in movement
3. Lack of flexion
4. Tail switching
5. Turning sideways
6. Forging
7. Four-beat canter
8. Too choppy
9. Strung out
10. Leaving hocks behind
11. Going wide at knees or hocks
12. Unequal motion of front feet
13. Cross cantering
14. Mixed gaited
15. Hitching
16. Landing on heels
17. Laboring
18. Paddling
19. Winging
20. Heavy on the forehand
21. Tail to one side
22. Tongue lolling
23. Mouth open
24. Head to one side
25. Tossing the head
26. Wrong lead
27. Resisting the bit
28. Head too low
29. Nose out
30. Sour ears

## VI. ROADSTER SECTION (UNDER SADDLE AND TO BIKE)

When considering type in Morgan Roadster classes, care must be taken to see that Morgan type is the criteria being considered.

### JUDGING PROCEDURE

Roadsters shall enter the ring clockwise at a jog trot; show at a road gait; turn counter-clockwise at a jog-trot, show at a road gait and then trot at speed. Horses should be shown on the rail at all times, except when passing. They should go to the far end of every corner without side reining. They should be light mouthed, capable of being taken up at any time and willing to walk. They should stand while being judged in the lineup. Headers are permitted only in Amateur, Ladies, and Junior Exhibitor Roadster classes. The header must not touch the entry except for safety reasons.

During a workout, the header may uncheck and hold the entry. However, when the workout is over, the horse must be rechecked and the header must move away from the horse. The header must take no action that would affect the performance of any animal. During a workout, drivers of entries remaining in the lineup may not leave their vehicles.



## GAITS

Roadsters shall be asked to trot at three distinctive speeds; the slow jog trot, the fast road gait, and then at full speed. Judges may ask a Roadster to walk. At all speeds, they shall work in form with their heads set and their legs working beneath them. The trot should demonstrate proper cadence and balance. Long sprawling action in front, dragging or trailing hind legs and spraddle-gaited behind makes a balanced trot impossible. Animation, action, brilliance, and show ring presence should characterize the Roadster when working at a jog trot or road gait. When asked to drive on, the horse must show speed and go in form. Although speed is of great importance, horses that pace, break, or run on the turns must be severely penalized.

## EQUIPMENT AND ATTIRE

**HARNESS:** Blinkers of square pattern, snaffle bit, overhead check, and a running martingale. Horses to be shown to a road bike with stirrups, but without boot or basket. Quarter boots or bell boots are allowed.

**UNDER SADDLE:** Horses are shown under English saddle, running martingale, open bridle with snaffle bit, single or double rein, and quarter boots or bell boots.

**ATTIRE:** See USEF rules for attire.

## VII. ROAD HACK SECTION

The Road Hack is a speedy road horse used under saddle at a flat-footed walk, a trot, road trot, canter, and hand gallop. At any time during the class, judges may ask entries to halt and walk off on a loose rein. At the hand gallop, the horse should demonstrate his ability to move out of a rolling three-beat canter by lengthening his stride to a controlled gallop. The resulting increase in speed should be equally consistent on the straightaways and on the turns. Excessive speed shall be penalized. The Road Hack must stand quietly and back readily.

## FAULTS

1. Failure to respond immediately to judge's commands
2. Working on a tight rein
3. Mixed gaits
4. Lack of form when working at speed

## VIII. PARADE HORSE SECTION

The Parade Horse must be a beautiful, stylish animal that displays refinement and personality and presents eye-appeal of horse and rider. Good manners are essential, both in executing gaits and while lined up in the ring. Horses must be serviceably sound and in good condition. Since beauty is important, blemishes will be considered.

### JUDGING PROCEDURE

Horses shall enter the ring at a parade gait. Horses shall show at an animated walk and parade gait. Reverse at an animated walk and again are shown at both gaits with martial music where possible. Horses must halt and stand quietly at both the walk and parade gait both ways of the ring.

### GAITS

The Parade Horse is shown at an animated walk and at a parade gait. The animated walk shall be a graceful, two- or four-beat straight, brisk movement, but not a jog trot, and slow enough to differentiate between the animated walk and the parade gait.

The parade gait shall be a true, straight, high-prancing movement. It shall be square, collected, and balanced with hocks well under with the maximum speed being 5 mph. To check the speed, it is recommended that a 50-foot stretch be marked off and a horse covering it in less than seven seconds be faulted.

### FAULTS

1. Excessive speed
2. Bad manners
3. Switching tail
4. Exaggerated opening of mouth
5. Hard mouth
6. Lugging on bridle and fighting bit
7. Halting or hesitating
8. Zig-zagging or sideways movement
9. Carrying sour ears

## IX. TRAIL HORSE SECTION

Type and conformation are not considered in the trail section. Emphasis will be upon the horse's ability to perform the job at hand. His attitude is one of controlled eagerness, complete obedience, stability, and tractability. He must display flawless manners and immediate response to the aids. Refer to USEF Chapter WS.

### ENGLISH TRAIL HORSE

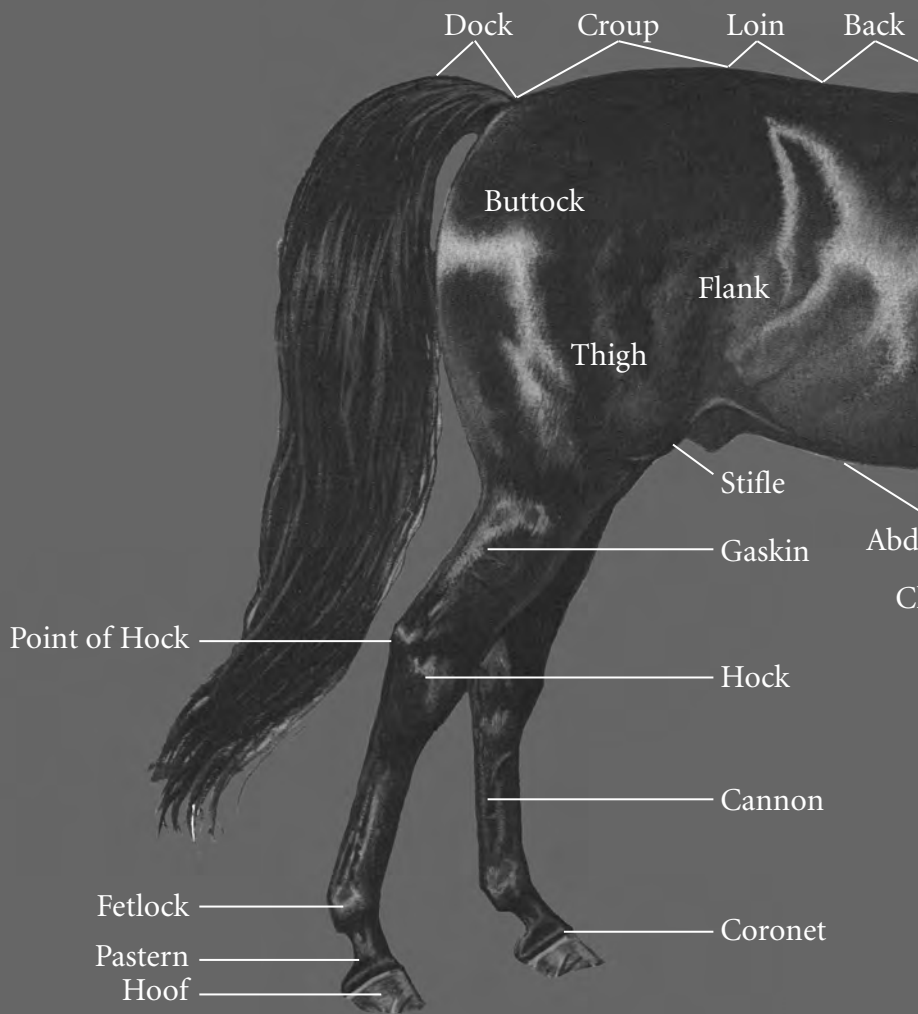
To be shown at a walk, trot, and canter with emphasis on the walk, trot, and mental attitude of the horse while being tested over obstacles.

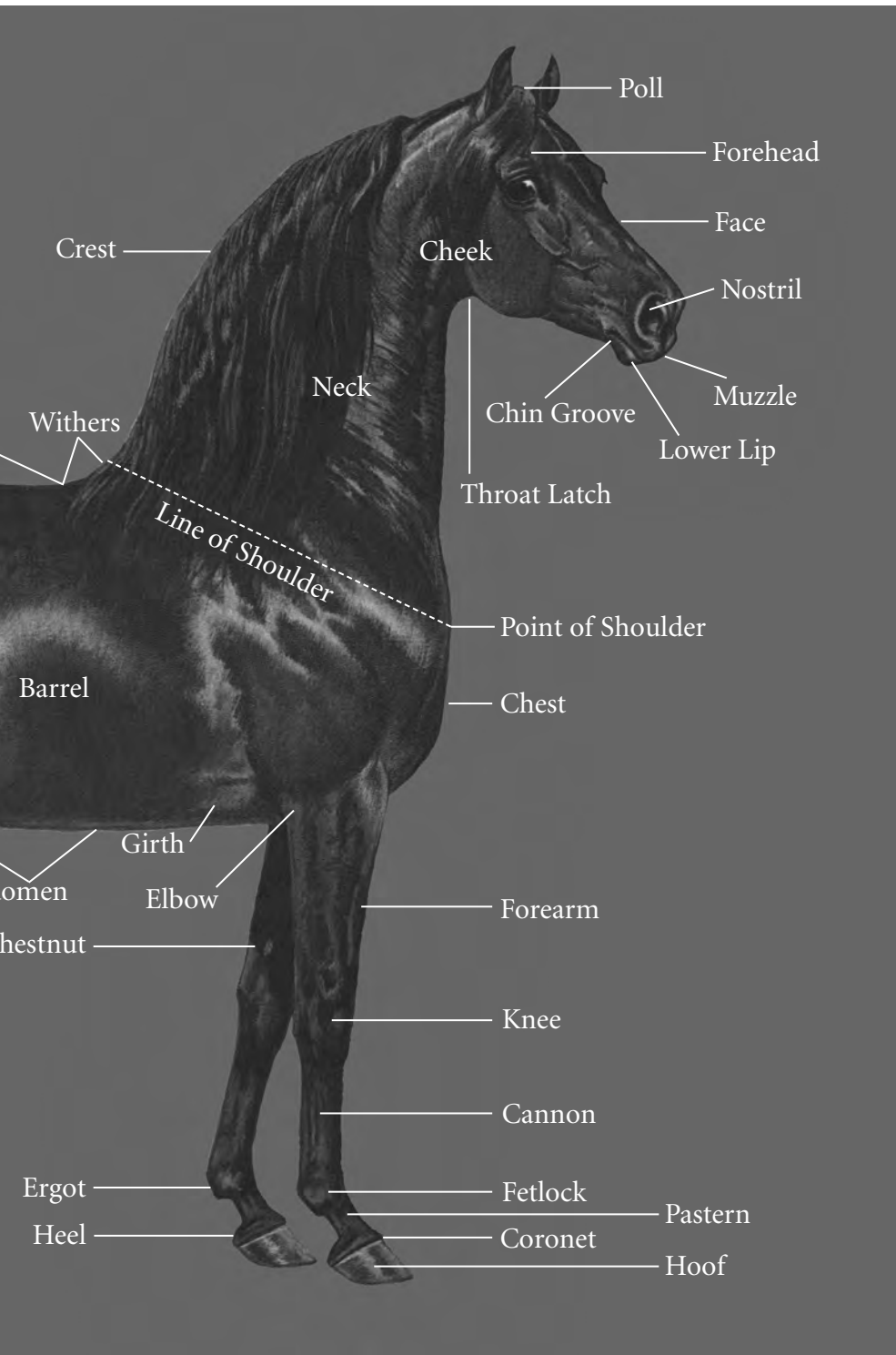
### GAITS

The Walk is rapid, flat-footed, elastic, and ground covering.

An anatomical chart of  
**THE MORGAN HORSE**

American Morgan Horse Association Inc.





The Trot is easy, ground covering, and at a uniform rate that can be maintained over a long distance. Light mouth contact should be maintained.

The Canter is smooth, free, and ground covering, with a definite three-beat cadence.

## **WESTERN TRAIL HORSE**

To be shown at a walk, jog trot, and lope with emphasis on the walk and mental attitude of the horse while being tested over obstacles.

### **GAITS**

The Walk is rapid, flat-footed, elastic, and ground covering.

The Jog Trot is easy, smooth, ground covering, and at a uniform rate that can be maintained over a long distance. Light contact with the mouth should be maintained.

The Lope is smooth, free, and steady in good form and balance with a three-beat cadence.

## **X. REINING HORSE SECTION**

Type and conformation are not considered in the Reining Horse Section.

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. After deducting all fault against execution of the pattern and the horse's overall performance, credit should be given for smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness, and authority of performing various maneuvers, while using controlled speed which raises the difficulty level and makes him more exciting and pleasing to watch to an audience. The official guideline for the application for the rules for judging shall be as specified in the NRHA Judges Guide. National Reining Horse Association, 3000 NW 10th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73107, (405) 946-7400, [www.nrha.com](http://www.nrha.com).

## **XI. CUTTING HORSE SECTION**

Type and conformation are not considered in the Cutting Horse Section.

The Morgan Cutting Horse should be very responsive and light on his feet. He should be shown with a LOOSE rein. His ability to out-think and control cattle is being tested; therefore he should work with a minimum of aids and assistance from the rider. He should be quiet and interested when approaching the job at hand. National Cutting Horse Association, 260 Bailey Ave., Fort Worth, TX 76107. (817) 244-6188, [www.nhacutting.com](http://www.nhacutting.com).

## **XII. HUNTER, JUMPER, AND HUNTER SEAT EQUITATION OVER FENCES SECTION**

The Hunter, Jumper and Hunter Seat Equitation Sections at Morgan shows are judged on performance of the horse and rider. There is no component of Morgan type in judging criteria. Proper equine conformation may be used in Hunters as specified in the Hunter Section (HU123). See USEF Rule Book.

It is recommended that all Morgan judges that will be officiating in the Hunter, Jumper, or Hunter Seat Equitation Over Fences sections at Morgan shows familiarize themselves with the rules and guidelines set forth in the current USEF Rule book, found in the Morgan Working Hunter Section (MO-15), Equitation Section (MO-12), and Morgan Jumper in the Additional Classes Section (MO-15). Where indicated in the Morgan Working Hunter, Equitation, or Jumper sections, please refer to the Hunter Division (HU), Jumper Division (JP), and Equitation Division (EQ) of the Rule Book. The AMHA Hunter Seat Over Fences Medal Class specifications can be found in the Equitation Section (MO-12).

The material which follows is intended as a quick reference for those Morgan judges who may be judging these divisions. Judges are expected to be familiar with the rules set forth by the USEF in the most current Rule Book.

### **PART 1: CLASS PROCEDURES**

#### **1. THERE ARE THREE SEPARATE INGREDIENTS TO JUDGING THESE DIVISIONS:**

- a. RULES AND CLASS PROCEDURES–USEF Rule Book
  1. Morgan Working Hunter, Jumper, Equitation Sections (MO-10,-12,-15)
  2. Hunter Division (HU)
  3. Jumper Division (JP)
  4. Equitation Division (EQ)
- b. BOOKKEEPING SYSTEM
- c. KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

#### **2. DEFINITIONS**

- a. HUNTER: Show ring approximation of a horse galloping and jumping cross country, originally behind a pack of hounds chasing a fox.
- b. JUMPER: Test of the horse's athletic ability: fitness, agility, power, and intelligence.
- c. EQUITATION: That riding technique which produces the maximum effectiveness from the horse with a minimum of visible aids while placing the rider over his center of balance and the horse's center of balance.
- d. STRIDE: A typical stride is approximately 12 feet.

### 3. FACTORS IN JUDGING THESE THREE DIVISIONS

- a. HUNTERS: Pace, stride, manners, style of jumping, way of going, performance, equipment, fitness, and soundness. Each of these factors relates to the horse's ability to gallop in a group cross country for long periods of time.
- b. JUMPERS: Judged on faults and time.
- c. HUNTER SEAT EQUITATION: Judged on the rider's hands, position, technique, and effectiveness. The horse is not to be considered as long as it can do the required work. Faults by the horse are not penalized unless they are caused by bad riding (position and technique errors by the rider), in which case the rider is penalized.

## PART II: BOOKKEEPING

### 1. OVER FENCES CLASSES

#### a. GENERAL

1. The obligation of a judge is to have a system that accurately places each horse/rider in position relative to the entire class.
2. Although the choice of system used is personal and the judge is giving his or her subjective opinion as to the relative placings, it is important that the judge record specific reasons to support his/her opinion.
3. A good bookkeeping system accurately describes everything a horse does from the time judging starts until judging stops and the card is turned in.
4. The only time the type of scoring system should be used in which each fence is given a numerical score and the scores are added to produce a final score is in judging jumpers. In judging hunters and hunter seat equitation, a shorthand should be developed which describes each fence and what happens between fences.

#### b. JUMPERS

The scoring of jumpers is objective. That is, the points or faults that a horse incurs from hitting a fence, knocking one down, refusing, or committing some other error are automatic. Judging jumper classes may not be easy. Factors which complicate judging jumpers include: the clock, the technicalities of the rules, and the judgment calls. Because of these factors, an assistant should be provided so that a judge can keep his/her eyes on the horse during the whole performance.

##### 1. The clock

In classes in which time is a factor, the horse usually travels rather fast and turns abruptly. Sometime a horse will stop and disturb the fence at the same time so that it must be reset before the horse can start again.

The judge must be up on all the possible situations regarding the stopping and starting of the clock/stop watch and make sure that the timers are briefed properly on the signals. The most common scoring tables are for time and faults. A first round is scored using faults and penalties for going over the Time Allowed. A second round, utilizing time may be needed to determine placings. See USEF Rule Book for appropriate time tables. For example: JP145-3 Table II, Sec 2(a); Table II Sec 2(b); Table II, Sec 2(c); and Table V.

## 2. The technicalities

### a. Courses must have:

1. A minimum of eight obstacles, each obstacle of a combination counts as a separate jumping attempt
2. Start lines must be set at least 12' from first obstacle, and at least 24' from last obstacle
3. Must be at least one change of direction in every course, including jump-offs
4. Been set in such a way that a judge can adequately see all of the fences
5. Correct distances between fences

### b. Equipment and personnel:

1. Timing devices (stop watches, automatic timers)
2. Knowledgeable people to run the timing devices
3. Audible signal (whistle, bell, buzzer, etc)
4. Recorder or assistant, AKA scribe
5. Communication between judge, timers, and announcer
6. Ring crew

### 3. Examples of judgment calls; see USEF Rule Book (JP) for full list of faults and numerical values












- a. Loss of forward motion
- b. Crossing one's track
- c. Circling
- d. Stopping and knockdown vs. knockdown only

### c. HUNTERS




The scorecard basically consists of two parts: the numbered boxes that describe each fence with the notes or comments section and the numerical score. The fence boxes should contain the symbols that you develop which describe the horse's performance.



1. Examples of some symbols are as follows:

-  Good fence
-  Horse popped
-  Shortened in front, jumped ok
-  Dives at fences
-  Hollow backed in air
- TW* Twists
-  Crash or dangerous fence
- R* Refusal or run out
-  Rail down
-  Jumps flat
- H* Hangs front legs
-  Hard rap
- Q* Quick
- TNS* Tense
- STG* Strong
-  Over-checking by rider
- X* Extra stride
- W* Weaving between fences
-  Inverted

2. These symbols are often used in combinations as follows:

-  Good fence, but hard front rap
-  Under fence and hard rap behind
- TWOM* Twisted and front rail down
-  Shortened, then jumped flat
- WX^* Weaving, then extra stride and popped

3. In addition, under notes, there can be three kinds of comments easily referred to: one for general impressions, one for way of moving, and one for style of fencing:

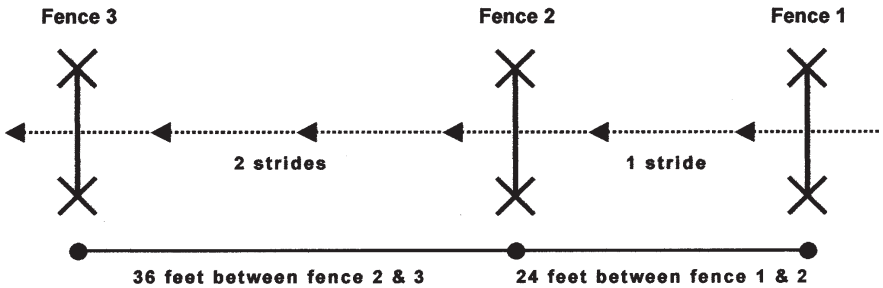
- |                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. (tns) Tense horse   | 7. (gm) Good mover   |
| 2. (scp) No scope      | 8. (fm) Fair mover   |
| 3. (tns) Tense horse   | 9. (bm) Bad mover    |
| 4. (scp) No scope      | 10. (gj) Good jumper |
| 5. (str) Strong        | 11. (fj) Fair jumper |
| 6. (ch) Choppy strided | 12. (bj) Bad jumper  |

## STRIDES

**Strides are important in order to achieve an even hunting pace over the course.**

**Example:** 12-foot increments between fences. 12-foot jump stride over fence.  
1 stride, 24 feet; 2 strides, 36 feet; 3 strides, 48 feet; and so on

**Major Faults:** Adding strides  
Leaving out strides  
Two strides in a one-stride 'in and out'



4. When one first starts judging hunters, the eyes are not usually fast enough to catch multiple problems that occur at a fence, so a judge will usually just put one or two major things down in each box. At first, because of this, a judge need not have very many symbols that he or she uses. But as he or she judges more, he or she will develop his or her eye to see more faults at a fence and will need more symbols to describe them quickly.
5. Once a judge has written down the description of the horse's performance at each fence and between fences, he or she lists general comments and rates the entry as to moving and jumping style, then gives the total round a numerical "grade." Below are suggestions for a system for the numerical score.

0—not completed or eliminated

40—two or more major faults (rail down or stop)

50—one major fault

60-69—poor performance (D)

70-79—average performance (C)

80-89—good performance (B)

90-100—excellent performance (A)

A list of faults may be found in USEF HU127.

As for lead changes on course, the ideal demonstrates flying changes throughout the course. This is followed by the horse that does not

change leads, followed by the horse that executes simple changes of leads, followed by a horse that cross canters.

6. Although a judge should try to have an objective standard of what he or she thinks a particular round should be, it is necessary to place the horses relative to each other. Therefore, if a particular round deserves an 82, but after comparing it with the other rounds, the judge may give it an 81 or 83. This is where the written symbols and comments become invaluable, since a judge cannot always remember every horse's performance.
7. There are two other things that one can do as a procedural matter to facilitate the bookkeeping process. One is to write the type of fence above the boxes containing the fence numbers. This makes it easier to describe to an exhibitor at which fence his horse made a mistake. It also is a better memory jogger when comparing rounds of two close horses.

The second thing is to keep a running order of the high-scoring rounds that seem likely to be in the ribbons at the top of the card. Then the judge can avoid delays from the time the last horse leaves the ring until turning in his card. Exhibitors and management both appreciate an efficient judge who does not delay the show with his bookkeeping procedures.

Be sure to jog back, for soundness, all horses being considered for a ribbon. If the number of entries allows, jog back 2 more than the number of ribbons.

- d. HUNT SEAT EQUITATION—OVER FENCES, see USEF Rule Book (MO-12, Equitation Division EQ).
  1. Regarding a bookkeeping system for equitation over fences, the procedure for marking a card is the same as for hunters, with a number of exceptions.
    - a. The main one is that the judge is now judging the rider, not the horse. Although the horse's performance is irrelevant (unless caused by fault of the rider), it goes without saying that a smoother, more seasoned horse will cover many equitation problems that a rider might have. We must then look at the rider and pay careful attention to his hands, position, technique, and effectiveness, and particularly how obvious the rider's aids are to obtain that effectiveness.
    - b. We do not need the column for the horse's way of moving because the horse is not being judged in this division.
    - c. We do not need the column for the horse's style of jumping because that too is not judged in equitation classes.
    - d. We need to use a set of symbols that are rider-oriented, not horse-oriented.

Possibly some of the hunter symbols would apply, but definitely the rider symbols would be more important than the horse symbols in

general, with the exception of the horse symbols that reflect a serious omission or commission of the rider.

e. Examples of some equitation symbols that can be used are as follows:

Good fence	No release
Fair fence	Jumped loose
Rider jumped ahead of horse	Under fence
Rider left behind	Sits in air
Rider caught behind, but not badly	Passenger
Looks down	Rail down (only if it is the rider's fault)
Ducks to one side	Refusal
Loose leg	

f. Some general comments that can be used are as follows:

- |                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Loose                     | 9. Looks down              |
| 2. Unsympathetic hands       | 10. Stiff                  |
| 3. Hands flat                | 11. No release             |
| 4. Bad eyes                  | 12. Rounds back            |
| 5. Elbows out                | 13. Throws body            |
| 6. Hands too high or too low | 14. Inflexible heels       |
| 7. Lost stirrup              | 15. Loose knees            |
| 8. Ducks                     | 16. Toes in too far or out |

## PART III: TACK & EQUIPMENT

### 1. HUNTER DIVISION

- a. BRIDLES should be plain hunting style, with biting to include snaffles, pelhams or full bridles (excessive length of curb to be penalized). Plain cavesson nosebands are recommended (flash, figure-eight, dropped and decorated nosebands and browbands are not traditional in the Hunter Division). The judge may penalize for non-conventional types of bits and nosebands. Competitors may be refused an award unless they return for jogging soundness in the same bridle in which they performed.
- b. SADDLES must be of hunting or forward-seat style with workmanlike fittings and with or without a shaped pad. Large blanket or square quilted pads are not appropriate in the Hunter Division.
- c. BREASTPLATES are permitted, with or without martingale attachment (running or standing), but are not required. Martingales are allowed over fences, but are prohibited in Under Saddle Classes, Hack and tie-breaking Under Saddle classes.

- d. REINS should be of hunting style, and should be appropriate to the bit, kind of class and the size of the rider's hands. For snaffles, it is appropriate to use plain width leather, woven, laced web or rubber. Pelham and full bridles traditionally utilize plain leather with the wider rein on the snaffle. Workmanlike sizes generally consist of 1/2 inch width and larger. Brightly colored rubber is considered appropriate for combined training and open jumpers only.
- e. ATTIRE (informal) should consist of a traditional conservative hunter style jacket (navy, hunter green, black are appropriate colors, with the same color or contrasting buttons). Rust or soft hue breeches (e.g. fawn, beige) worn with tall boots. Jodhpurs and Jodhpur boots are appropriate for young riders. ASTM approved helmets are required for juniors, recommended for all. Formal attire consists of a conservative traditional shadbelly with matching buttons, buff or canary breeches, canary vest, and hunting top hat (ASTM approved helmets for juniors).

Horses are expected to appear neat, with braided forelocks, manes, and tails. Boots or bandages for the horse are not permitted.

## 2. JUMPER DIVISION

- a. All MARTINGALES are allowed in classes offering less than \$1,000. Only standing or running martingales are allowed in classes offering \$1,000 or more.
- b. ATTIRE in jumper classes is not as regulated. Management may allow competitors to compete without the traditional hunt coats. In that case, the competitor is expected to compete in a shirt with a collar or choker, neatly tucked into breeches. Windbreaker or raincoat may be worn if weather conditions require.

ASTM approved helmets are required for juniors, recommended for all competitors.

Horses are expected to appear neat, but braiding is not required.

- c. Protective legwear for the horse is permitted.

## 3. EQUITATION OVER FENCES DIVISION

- a. BRIDLES should have Hunter cavesson nosebands, and regulation snaffles, pelhams, kimberwicks, or full bridles are recommended.
- b. SADDLES should be of hunting or forward seats, cutback saddles are inappropriate.
- c. MARTINGALES and BREASTPLATES are permitted. Protective legwear for the horse, including boots and conservative-colored bandages are permitted.
- d. ATTIRE should be conservative, black or navy traditional hunt coats with matching buttons are appropriate. Light colored breeches with tall boots should be worn. ASTM approved helmets are required for junior riders.

## **XIII. DRESSAGE SECTION**

The object of Dressage is the harmonious development of the physique and ability of the horse.

As a result it makes the horse calm, supple, loose and flexible but also confident, attentive and keen thus achieving perfect understanding with his rider.

See current USEF Rule Book, Chapter DR for competition specifications. See current USEF Rule Book, Chapter MO for rules specific to Morgan competitions.

## **XIV. CARRIAGE DRIVING SECTION**

### **A. MORGAN CARRIAGE DRIVING**

The term Carriage Pleasure Driving is used to encompass an exciting and beautiful equine art form. Carriage Pleasure Driving can provide a marvelous opportunity for the Morgan to prove himself as one of America's premier driving horses. It is very important that a Morgan judge understand the spirit and philosophy of the horsemanship involved; he should also understand the distinctions between these classes and regular Morgan show pleasure classes. Carriage Pleasure Driving classes may be operated under the rules of the American Driving Society (ADS) and the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) Carriage Pleasure Driving Rules. The exceptions are the Cavalcade American Class, which is judged under local rules and the Morgan Heritage Class, a creation within the Morgan breed. Judges and individuals seriously interested in the sport should obtain the ADS Handbook which will convey more completely the spirit, philosophy and competition specifications than these few paragraphs. The ADS address is: The American Driving Society, Inc., 1837 Ludden Dr. Ste. 120, Cross Plains, WI 53528; (608) 237-7382; fax: (608) 237-6468. The ADS website is [www.american-drivingsociety.org](http://www.american-drivingsociety.org).

At all gaits, the Morgan Carriage Horse should be relaxed and supple and yet move forward energetically without rushing. On the straight line, he should move powerfully without wavering with the haunches following the shoulders directly and with no lateral bend to the head, neck, or body. On circles and in the corners, the horse's neck and body should be laterally bent evenly from the poll to the tail so as to conform to the arc of the path it is on, and the hind feet should follow the front feet with no side-stepping or falling in over the inside shoulder. The frame, the outline of the horse, should be such that his face is perpendicular, or just in front of the perpendicular, and such that his neck is flexed evenly with the poll the highest point. At the more collected gaits, the neck should be higher and more flexed, the motion should be more elevated with all the joints of the legs more articulated, the stride should be shorter, and the haunches should be somewhat lowered.

### **GAITS - CARRIAGE PLEASURE DRIVING SECTION**

The standard gait descriptions are a walk, slow trot, working trot, strong trot (trot on), halt and rein back.

1. The WALK is a free, regular and unconstrained gait of moderate extension. The horse(s) should walk energetically, but calmly, with even and determined pace showing direction and purpose. A walk is always a four-beat gait. Rein contact should be light but in no case loose. Depending on his conformation, the horse's hind feet should at least step into the prints of the fore-feet or moderately over.
2. The SLOW TROT should be maintained with forward impulsion while showing submission to the bit. The trot is slower and more collected, but not to the degree required in the Dressage collected trot. However, the horse should indicate willingness to be driven on the bit while maintaining a steady cadence. The slow trot should not be the result of a pulling or holding back of the reins but rather of the horse working himself up to the bit. The slow trot is a two-beat gait.
3. The WORKING TROT is the pace between the slow trot and the strong trot. It is the relaxed horse's natural trot and as such may be individual to each horse in terms of rhythm and length of stride. It should be a trot in which the horse is balanced and in self carriage and which the horse can maintain comfortably for long periods of time. The horse(s) move forward easily and straight with freely swinging hind legs and freely reaching shoulders: on a taut, but light rein. The position should be balanced and unconstrained. The steps should be as even as possible. The hind feet touch the ground in the footprints of the forefeet. The degree of energy and impulsion displayed at the working trot denotes clearly the degree of suppleness and balance of the horse(s). The working trot is a two-beat gait.
4. The STRONG TROT is a clear, but not excessive, increase in pace and lengthening of stride while remaining well-balanced and showing appropriate lateral flexion on turns. Light contact to be maintained. Excessive speed will be penalized. The term "trot on" should be used to call the gait.
5. The HALT: Horse and vehicle should be brought to a complete square stop without abruptness or veering. At the halt, horse(s) should stand attentive, motionless and straight with the weight evenly distributed over all four legs and be ready to move off at the slightest indication from the driver.
6. REIN BACK is defined as a backward movement in which the legs are raised and set down simultaneously in diagonal pairs with the hind legs remaining well in line. Rein back is performed in two parts:
  - a. The horse must move backward at least four steps in an unhurried manner with head flexed and straight, pushing the carriage back evenly in a straight line. The driver should use quiet aids and light contact.
  - b. Move forward willingly to former position using quiet aids and light contact.
  - c. A horse should not be penalized for the cocking of a carriage as long as he himself is moving straight back and without resistance and did not cause the cocking by a wrong move.

## **B. BITS**

Proper, comfortable biting of the carriage horse is of paramount importance. In carriage competitions, snaffle bits and other types of traditional driving bits are allowed. Burr, gag, and twisted wire bits of any type are not permitted. The use of conforming but non-traditional driving bits should not be penalized, provided the horse delivers a good performance. Bits may be covered with leather or rubber.

## **C. STYLE OF DRIVING**

1. The driver should be seated comfortably on the box so as to be relaxed and effective. Either the one- or two-handed method of driving is acceptable. Common to both methods, the elbows and arms should be close to the body with an allowing, but steady hand enabling a consistent “feel” with the horse’s mouth. Drivers should not be penalized or rewarded for using one style over another.
2. When there are passengers, the driver should sit on the right-hand side of the carriage.

**D. DRESS OF DRIVER:** See USEF rules for proper dress of driver.

## **E. STYLE OF VEHICLE**

Drivers should strive to present an appropriate turnout. “Appropriate” indicates the balance and pleasing appearance of the combination of horse and vehicle. The way of going of the horse may also affect the overall appearance, i.e. a high-action horse is more suitable for a formal vehicle; the low-going, ground-covering horse presents a more pleasing appearance for a country or road type vehicle.

## **F. STYLE OF HARNESS**

It is the driver’s responsibility to see the harness is in good condition, is clean and fits properly. Bridles must have a throatlatch and a noseband or cavesson.

Black harness is considered appropriate for painted vehicles and natural vehicles having black trim (i.e. shaft coverings, iron work, dash, and upholstery).

Brown or russet harness is considered appropriate with natural wood finished trimmed in brown. All metal fittings should match.

Breast collars are appropriate with lightweight vehicles. Full collars are suggested for heavy vehicles such as coaches, brakes, phaetons, dog carts, etc.

A correctly fitted harness is important to the comfort of the horse. A wide harness saddle is suggested for two-wheeled vehicles as more weight rests on the horse’s back. Narrow saddles are more appropriate for four-wheeled vehicles.

Martingales are permitted only if appropriate for the vehicle being used.

Martingales and overchecks are prohibited in Dressage and obstacle classes for all vehicles.

Failure to comply will incur elimination. Sidechecks are optional.



## **G. PLEASURE DRIVING**

Pleasure driving consists of Turnout, Working and Reinsmanship classes. Rules can be found in the USEF and ADS Rule Books. Rules are subject to change and should be verified before competitions.

## **H. OBSTACLE DRIVING**

Obstacle classes commonly held at Morgan competitions are Time competitions, Scurry Obstacle, Double Jeopardy, Pick Your Own Route, Fault and Out, Gambler's Choice, Progressive, Cross Country and Fault Obstacle. Complete rules are found in USEF and ADS Rule Books.

Drivers should dress appropriately when competing in any Pleasure Driving Class including obstacles. This should be the recommended show attire unless otherwise specified.

## **I. MARATHONS**

Marathons commonly held at Morgan competitions are Turnout Marathon, Timed Marathon and the Marathon Pace. Complete rules are found in the USEF and ADS Rule Books.

## **J. CARRIAGE DRIVING DRESSAGE CLASSES**

Many shows now include Carriage Driving Dressage classes in which competitors drive individual tests and are asked to execute various gaits, transitions, and figures. The gaits are similar to those described for the Carriage Pleasure Driving classes with the Slow Trot becoming the Collected Trot and the Strong Trot becoming the Extended Trot. Ideally in Dressage all three trots should be at the same tempo and the changes of speed should be the result of lengthening and shortening of the stride. The Collected Trot should have more elevation of the poll and forehand lowering of the haunches than the Working Trot with resulting higher action. On the other hand the Extended Trot will have a slight lowering of the poll and an increase of energetic drive from behind without an increase in tempo which leads to a flatter lengthened floating trot compared to the Working Trot.

## **XV. SHOEING — ALL SECTIONS**

Each horse is an individual and, as such, may require different shoeing techniques to enable him to perform to the best of his ability regardless of classes or divisions entered.

Good training requires that the natural gaits and muscular coordination be developed to the full potential of each horse's capacity for the particular work to be done. The natural gaits of the horse are enhanced by the artful trimming of the horse's hoof, the proper weight and balance (distribution of the weight) of the shoe, and the best angle of the foot to the ground. Shoes should be fitted to the horse's hoof and not give the appearance that the hoof has been trimmed to fit the shoe.

Judges must severely penalize any horse that is laboring, pounding, landing on the heel, winging, or paddling, whether due to faulty conformation, extremes of length and/or angle of the hoof, weight, and/or balance of the shoe.

See USEF Rule Book for USEF Shoeing regulations.

## **XVI. TRADITIONS**

Protective headgear with harness is optional in all Morgan sections and classes and must not be discriminated against by the judge.

Neatness and proper fit are prerequisites regarding appointments. Rider's attire should be suitable to the saddle being ridden. See USEF Rule Book.

1. Provocative clothing on exhibitors is not appropriate in the show ring and should not be rewarded.
2. While dress may be more casual in the morning, blue jeans are inappropriate for all classes except where specifically noted as in WESTERN.
3. In IN-HAND CLASSES clothing should always be neat, clean and appropriate to the job.

### **FITTING AND GROOMING SECTION**

The well-groomed horse not only brings pride to his owner, but also is an asset to the breed. Many methods are used to enhance the beauty of the Morgan for the show ring. Among the most traditional are:

1. Trimming. The bridlepath is traditionally trimmed from 2 to 6 inches behind the poll according to the conformation and length of neck. The hair on the fetlocks, back of cannons, in the ears, under the jowls, and on the muzzle is trimmed to provide a neat appearance.
2. Hooves should be clean and smooth. A "non-sticky" hoof dressing may be used for a more polished overall appearance. They should be picked clean.
3. The coat should be clean, glossy, and of good texture. Daily grooming, a good diet, and peak physical condition will produce a natural, high luster.
4. The mane and tail should be clean, soft and shiny, full-bodied and of good texture. The mane may be pulled to correct any unevenness or to facilitate braiding in hunter classes. Any evidence of rubbed out hair will be faulted. The mane is normally trained to the off (right) side.

Braiding is permitted in Hunter, Jumper, Dressage, and Carriage classes or in classes when under proper Hunter or Dressage tack and attire.

Under some conditions, commercial grooming oils may be used to enhance the coat and/or the dark skin of the horse.

### **BITS**

Morgans may be shown in any of the many types of snaffle, pelham, or curb bits available. However, judges should penalize any horse which is over-bitted, and shall severely penalize any signs of tongue lolling or bleeding at the mouth.

### **IN-HAND CLASSES**

1. Weanlings are shown in halters and must be barefooted.

2. Yearlings may be shown in halters or appropriate bridles, and must be bare-footed.
3. The use of an appropriate bridle with a snaffle, curb, or stallion bit is recommended for all others. A show halter is acceptable.
4. Neatness of exhibitors' and attendants' attire adds greatly to the overall decorum of the show ring. Handlers should always strive to be neat and clean with well-fitted, conservative clothes.
5. Horses should be well-groomed, all tack cleaned, and metal polished. (See Section XVI.)

## **PARK SADDLE, ENGLISH PLEASURE AND CLASSIC**

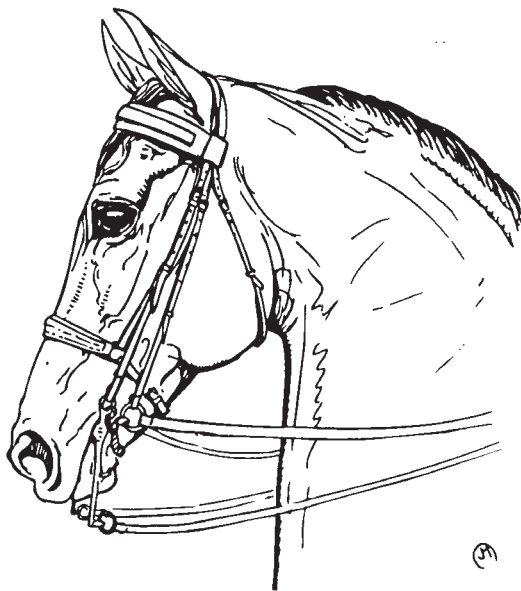
**TACK.** Traditionally, the Park, English Pleasure, and Classic Pleasure horses are shown with a flat English saddle. The girth, web, or patent leather is generally white or white with colored trim. Stirrups should be of a size to complement the foot. Traditionally these horses are shown with a full bridle consisting of a Weymouth (curb) and Bridoon (snaffle). Reins are generally finer than those of the hunter bridle and may be finely laced. The cavesson and browband may be patent leather with colors or plain and do not need to match. Spurs and whip are optional, but should reflect the elegance of Saddle Seat tradition. Martingales are not permitted.

**INFORMAL ATTIRE.** Clothing generally follows the Saddle Seat traditions and styles, but may be modified by the time of day, type of show and weather. An informal saddle suit of conservative hues is always appropriate for any class at any time or place. This style of suit should be complemented with a matching or coordinating derby or soft hat for the ladies, and a derby or snap brim hat (felt or straw) for the gentlemen. Protective headgear is optional and must never be discriminated against by the judge.

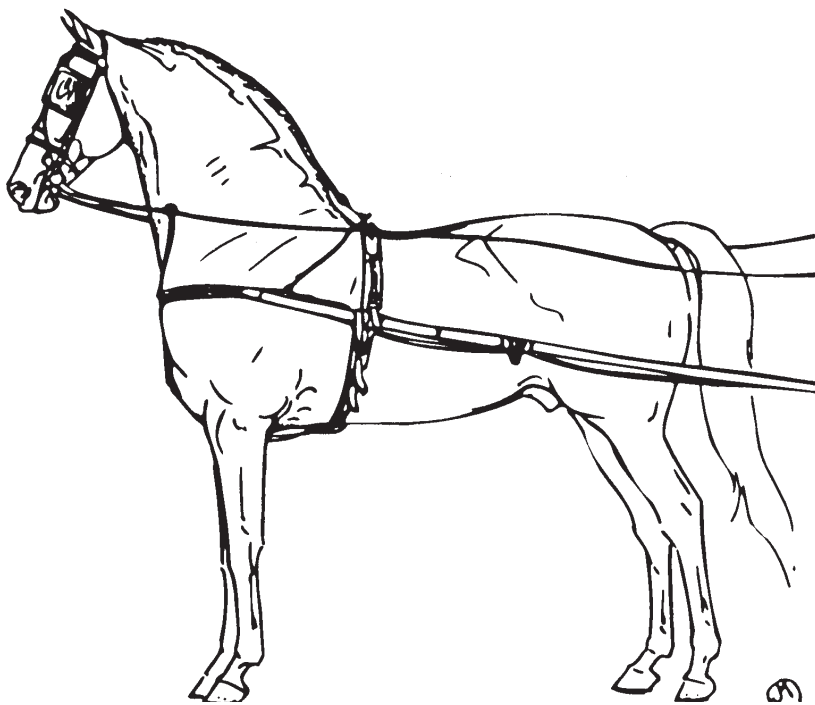
Shirts and ties, four-in-hand or bow, are required and a vest of any color might be added for further effect. Boots are generally black, brown, or dark blue and may be patent or plain leather. Gloves, small boutonnieres, and pocket handkerchiefs are optional. It is recommended that long hair be neatly pulled back and contained in a fashion that will permit the back number to be easily seen by the judge. Earrings of moderate size may be worn, but large floppy hair adornments and dangling earrings are considered to be in poor taste.

Day coats of any color or material may be worn with contrasting jodhpurs, vest, and headgear and are appropriate for day or evening events. The management may announce that coats are not required during very hot or humid weather.

**FORMAL ATTIRE** is only worn after 6 p.m. and may consist of a tuxedo-style Saddle Suit with matching or contrasting coat and jodhpurs, top hat or derby for the ladies and derby or homburg for the gentlemen. It is generally accepted that silk bow ties and cummerbunds, dark patent leather jodhpur boots and gloves are proper accessories. The style of collar is optional (wing or regular) as are shirt studs and small boutonnieres. Earrings may be worn. Floppy accoutrements are in poor



Weymouth Bridle



Park Harness

taste. A white whip or show stick would be considered proper with the most formal of evening outfits, i.e. matching tuxedo-style Saddle Suit, top hat (ladies), homburg (men), patent leather boots, wing collar shirt, white pique tie and vest (no cummerbund), and white gloves.

## **PARK HARNESS**

**HARNESS.** The traditional park harness is black leather with patent leather trim. Reins and traces should be round; reins are russett. Hardware should be brass. A snaffle bridle with overhead check, square blinkers, and a running martingale is conventional. However, an acceptable alternative is a side-check bridle. This bridle has round blinkers, a liverpool or Buxton bit, and a jointed checkbit. No martingale is allowed with a liverpool or Buxton bit. Horses should be bitted in the ring or half check. A whip and handholds are optional.

**BUGGY.** Horses are to be shown to a four-wheeled show buggy with wire wheels and without top. Buggy must be clean and chrome should be polished.

**MEN'S ATTIRE.** Business or saddle suit, sport jacket, and slacks with a derby or soft hat and gloves. Tuxedos are acceptable for evening wear.

**LADIES ATTIRE.** Most women prefer to wear an attractive dress with a driving apron and gloves; hats optional. When time does not permit, a saddle suit is acceptable.

**ATTENDANT.** An attendant without a whip should head each horse. The attendant should be neatly attired and wear a hat, jacket, and tie.

## **ROADSTER EQUIPMENT**

1. Driving. Horses to be shown to a sulky or jog cart with stirrups but without boot. Quarter boots are allowed. Horses are driven with a Kimbal Jackson check rein (overhead check) and snaffle bit with a running martingale.
2. Under Saddle. Horses are shown with a snaffle bridle and running martingale.

**ATTIRE.** Exhibitor shall wear silks (cap and jacket of stable colors). AMHA endorses the concepts regarding protective headgear expressed in the USEF Rule Book. Riders should not be penalized for the wearing of protective headgear in any class.

## **PARADE**

**TACK.** To be shown with a stock saddle with silver trim, of Mexican style, or other appropriate equipment. Equipment and rider must be suitable to the size of the horse.

**ATTIRE.** Riders shall wear attire which is both colorful and typical of the Old West, or of American, Mexican, or Spanish origin, consisting of fancy cowboy suit, hat, and boots. Spurs, guns, serapes, etc., are optional.

## PLEASURE DRIVING

**HARNESS.** The pleasure driving harness is traditionally black leather with square, patent leather blinkers, snaffle bridle, overhead check, and running martingale. Brass or chrome hardware is acceptable. A whip is optional.

**BUGGY.** Horse must be shown to an appropriate two-wheeled vehicle.

**ATTIRE.** Comparable to park harness.

**ATTENDANT.** Attendant without a whip should head each horse. He should be neatly attired and wear a jacket, and tie.

## WESTERN PLEASURE

**TACK.** Traditionally, the Western Pleasure Horse is shown with a stock saddle. Silver equipment will not be given preference. Any standard western bit may be used. However, if curb chains are used, they must be at least one-half inch in width and lie flat against the jaws of the horse. No wire, chain, or other metal device may be used in conjunction with the leather chin strap. Cavesson-type nosebands, martingales, and tie-downs are prohibited. Junior horses may be shown in a bosal hackamore or plain snaffle bit if so stated in the prize list.

See USEF Rule Book Morgan section for current western attire rules.

## ROAD HACK

The tack and attire are the same as for the English Pleasure Horse or the Hunter Pleasure horse.

## ENGLISH TRAIL

The tack and attire are the same as for the English Pleasure Horse or for the Hunter and Jumper.

## WESTERN TRAIL

The tack and attire are the same as for the Western Pleasure Horse.

## WORKING WESTERN

See USEF Rule Book for current Western rules.

## HUNTER PLEASURE, HUNTER & JUMPER

**TACK (for Hunter Hack also).** The usual appointments are a forward seat or jumping saddle with a folded leather girth, which may be cut out at the elbows to avoid chafing, or a lonsdale, balding, or string girth. The use of a breastplate is optional. Martingales are optional over fences, but prohibited in flat classes. Bridles may be of rolled or flat leather; browbands and cavessons may be of plain leather, flat, braided, raised, or rolled. Reins may be braided, laced, or plain, when used with a snaffle; with a pelham or double bridle, they are plain. The bit is usually a heavy hunting snaffle, which may be egg butt, barrel butt, D-ring, half-cheek, full-cheek, etc.; or a

Tom Thumb (short shanked) pelham. If a Weymouth bridle (full bridle) is used, the bridoon is thicker than in a show bridle and the curb has a short shank and low port. Excessive length of the curb shank shall be penalized. Kimberwicks are also allowed.

### INFORMAL ATTIRE

1. Hunter style jackets may be solid or plaid of conservative colors. Buttons should be of the same color or contrasting colors, but not brass which is for Dressage, Jumpers, Corinthian, or Hunt Staff.
2. Breeches or jodhpurs should be of soft hues or rust. White is appropriate only for Dressage, Corinthian, official Hunt Staff, or Jumpers. Breeches are worn with tall boots and jodhpurs are worn with the jodhpur boot. Garters (fastened below the knee) are worn with jodhpurs, which are especially ap-

## WESTERN/REINING SEAT EQUITATION

	GOOD	MINOR FAULTS
SEAT	keeping center of balance complete contact with saddle straight back	sitting off center sway back round back losing center of balance
HANDS	quiet, light hands maintaining consistent head position proper position (refer to USEF Rule Book)	unsteadiness incorrect position
LEGS	secure leg position proper weight in stirrups controlling motion weight evenly on ball of foot heels lower than toes	uneven stirrups motion in legs insufficient weight in stirrups incorrect position
CONTROL	maintaining horse in good form at consistent gaits ability to maintain horse under adverse conditions	breaking from walk to jog breaking from jog to lope not standing in lineup
OVERALL APPEARANCE	suitable well-fitted outfit well-groomed horse clean equipment	saddle not suited to rider's size unfitted outfit dirty boots ungroomed horse unclean equipment
GENERAL	good attitude toward horse & judge consistency of rider's form	equipment not fitting horse failure to use corners and rail suitability of horse and rider

propriate for young riders and are not inappropriate for any age.

3. Dark hunting caps, hunting bowlers with or without hat guards, or protective headgear are appropriate for adults. Junior Exhibitors must wear protective headgear per current USEF rules, except in Hunter Pleasure classes.
4. A conservative stock, choker or four-in-hand tie with any color shirt is appropriate.
5. Gloves are optional as is a hunting crop or bat of a short, workmanlike length. Spurs of the unrowelled type are optional. In the hunting world, spurs are worn well up on the heel, usually above a small leather hump called a spur rest. Clip-on spurs worn down near the heel are not considered workmanlike. Spurs should have straps.

MAJOR FAULTS	ELIMINATION
excessive body motion popping out of saddle	falling off horse (refer to USEF Rule Book)
horse's mouth gaping heavy hands constant bumping restrictions causing untrue gaits touching horse less than 16" of rein slack between hands touching saddle to prevent fall	two handing reins finger between romal reins more than one finger between split reins
excessive spurring loss of contact between legs & saddle/foot & stirrups loss of stirrup	touching in front of cinch
breaking from jog to walk breaking from lope to jog allowing horse to back crooked missing leads failure to back	
improper appointments	illegal equipment
excessive voice commands excessive circling major delays in transitions untrue gaits	schooling horse off pattern



## FORMAL ATTIRE – LADIES

1. Hunter shadbellies are traditionally black, dark blue, or charcoal and have short tails (no longer than mid-thigh). Buttons match the shadbelly color, brass being for Dressage and Corinthian (member of a hunt).
2. Breeches should be buff or canary, white being for Dressage only.
3. The hunting top hat is correct, with a hat guard optional. Junior Exhibitors must wear protective headgear, per current USEF rules, on Working Hunters, but may wear a top hat in Hunter Pleasure which is not considered a working hunter class.
4. Canary vest or vest points are worn along with tall black hunt boots and gloves which may be black, buff, or string (in inclement weather). Boutonnieres are inappropriate.
5. Whips may be a traditional hunt thong or a hunt bat and are optional.
6. Spurs are optional but must be of the unrowelled type and should have straps and sit well up on the heel.
7. String gloves under the flap, sewn in bits, and folded girths are optional.

## FORMAL ATTIRE – MEN

1. Black, navy, or charcoal-colored hunting style jackets with matching buttons are appropriate.
2. A conservative colored four-in-hand tie or white stock tie is appropriate.
3. Buff or canary breeches with tall black hunt boots, dark hunting cap, bowler or protective headgear, and black or buff gloves complete the male outfit. Protective headgear is always appropriate and junior exhibitors must wear protective headgear on working hunters per current USEF rules.

Brass browbands, white trimmed cavesson sets, square saddle pads, and brass buttons are acceptable for Dressage, but not in hunter, hunter pleasure, and Hunter Equitation Classes.

All juniors riding in Hunter, Jumper, and Hunter Seat Equitation sections must wear protective headgear, passing testing standards, while riding in the designated schooling and exercise areas, the show ring, and while jumping anywhere on the showgrounds. Harnesses must be secured. Any rider violating this rule, at anytime, must be prohibited immediately from further riding until his headgear is properly in place. Adults are encouraged to comply with this rule; however, it is not mandatory. Adults must wear hard hats when jumping anywhere on the showgrounds.

## XVII. AMHA MEDAL CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Please refer to the USEF Rule Book for current rules and regulations regarding the requirements for conducting and the class procedure of AMHA Medal classes.

# XVIII. JUDGING REQUIREMENTS

## FOR ALL SEATS

In equitation classes, only the rider is being judged; therefore, any horse which is suitable for a particular style of riding and is capable of performing the required class routine is acceptable. Stallions are prohibited.

In hunter seat, western seat, and reining seat classes the fall of horse or rider shall eliminate the entry. If the fall (or three disobediences in over fence classes) occurs during a ride-off, the contestant shall be placed last of those chosen for the ride-off. In saddle seat classes, the fall of horse or rider shall not necessarily eliminate the rider but may be penalized at the judge's discretion. For western and reining seat classes, see chart on pages 48-49.

Any rider not having his or her mount under sufficient control shall be dismissed from the ring and shall be disqualified from that class.

Riders must remain on the same mount throughout all phases of an equitation class until the judge requests a change.

No rider shall be asked to perform a test on another mount before he or she has performed the same test on his or her own.

No attendant shall be allowed in the ring except at the request of the judge.

Protective headgear with harness is mandatory in Hunter Seat equitation classes, but is optional in all other seats. Protective headgear **MUST** not be discriminated by any judge in any Morgan class.

# XIX. JUDGING TIPS

1. Horses must back in Western Pleasure classes, Classic Pleasure classes, and Classic Pleasure Driving classes. In all Western Seat Medal classes, exhibitors may be backed in the lineup.
2. Make sure to check the shoes on Classic English Pleasure and Classic Pleasure Driving Horses, before they are excused from the ring.
3. No time-outs can be given during Hunter Seat Equitation classes.
4. Tongue ties are legal in all divisions except Western, Carriage, Dressage, and Reining.
5. In Hunter Seat, Saddle Seat, and Western Seat Medal classes a minimum of four riders must do a minimum of two tests. These workouts shall be counted 50% of the class.
6. Protective headgear/hard hats cannot be penalized in any division.
7. Horses being considered for a ribbon in Hunter Over Fences classes must be jogged for soundness prior to the awarding of ribbons. Horses jog in the order

of potential placement. If sufficient entries, two more horses than the number of ribbons must be jogged.

8. In **Western Pleasure and Classic Pleasure** classes judges should give extra credit to horses that back particularly well and should penalize entries that do not back with correct diagonal foot pattern.

## XX. JUDGES' RESPONSIBILITIES

- If any horse casts a shoe in any class that designates a maximum weight for shoes, the shoe including pad, if used, but not including nails, must be immediately **weighed by the judge**. A competitor may not be excused from the ring until the judge is satisfied that the horse has not cast a shoe.
- Stallions are prohibited in Ladies, Junior Exhibitor and Leadline classes.
- Protective headgear with harness is optional in all Morgan sections and classes and must not be discriminated against by the judge.
- In Hunter Seat Equitation classes, conservative colored protective headgear in accordance with USEF General Rules is mandatory.
- In In-Hand classes, individuals who consistently break, jump, or buck when being shown on the line should be suspect of structural faults and often lack a balanced way of going. At the judge's discretion, they may be asked to "go again," however, judges should avoid placing horses unable to perform a trot on the line without repeated breaking, bucking, or lunging.
- In In-Hand classes, horses must stand squarely on all four feet with front legs perpendicular to the ground. Rear legs may be placed slightly back.
- In In-Hand classes, the Champion and Reserve Champion shall be selected from horses that have placed first or second in their qualifying classes. All qualified horses are considered to be equal at the start of the championship class.
- Youth classes, which are limited to riders or drivers 21 years of age or under, are judged as open classes with specifications calling for performance, cadence and balance, quality, presence, and manners. The class is designed as an opportunity to acquaint the youthful rider/driver with the open classes and should be judged accordingly.
- A Ladies horse should be outstanding in refinement and elegance with suitability of horse to rider/driver taken into consideration. Expression is paramount and quality is a prime consideration. Misconduct, resistance, or unpleasantness of any kind must be severely penalized. The horse should walk and stand quietly.
- Western Pleasure horses being considered for a ribbon must back. In Classic Pleasure classes, all horses must be asked to back.
- In Hunter Pleasure classes, the mane and tail may be braided; however, no discrimination will be made against a full, unbraided mane and tail.

- Type and conformation are not considered in the Morgan Trail Section.
- In Parade Horse classes the following shall be considered as faults and result in disqualifying entries: executing other than specified gaits (i.e. slow gait, Dressage steps, canter, pace, running walk, etc.); use of tie-downs, martingales, draw reins, boots, and other appliances; and any artificial change of color markings other than mane or tail.
- Hunter Seat Equitation Over Fences classes to be judged on the rider's hands, position, technique, and effectiveness. The horse is not to be considered as long as it can do the required work. Faults by the horse are not penalized unless they are caused by bad riding (position and technique errors by the rider), in which case the rider is penalized.
- Horses being considered for an award in Hunter Over Fences must be jogged for soundness with rider dismounted before they can be placed. Horses are jogged in the judge's order of preference. If sufficient entries, two more horses than the number of ribbons must be jogged.
- Unsafe jumping and bad form over fences must be penalized.
- In Carriage Driving classes, driver must carry a whip in hand.

## XXI. GLOSSARY

**BLEMISH VS. FAULT:** A blemish is an abnormality that does not affect the serviceability of the horse, including such things as wire cuts, rope burns, nail punctures, and capped hocks. A fault is a deficiency in conformation or a condition which will eventually affect serviceability.

**BOG SPAVIN:** A filling of the natural depression on the inside and front of the hock. A bog spavin is much larger than a blood spavin.

**BONE SPAVIN:** A bony enlargement that appears on the inside and front of the hind leg(s) below the hock at the point where the base of the hock tapers into the cannon bone.

**BROKEN WIND:** An inability to empty the lungs of air caused by the rupture of some alveoli and characterized by difficult breathing, a chronic cough and generally poor condition.

**CALF-KNEED:** Standing with knees too far back, directly opposite to buck-kneed or knee-sprung.

**CAPPED HOCK:** An inflammation of the bursa over the point of the hock caused by trauma.

**CONFORMATION:** The structural engineering of the skeleton.

**COW HOCKS:** A conformation fault in which the hocks are pointed inward when viewed from behind.

**EWNE NECK:** A neck like that of a sheep, with a dip between the poll and the withers. Also termed a “turkey-neck” and “upside-down neck.”

**FLAT BONE:** Flat bone indicates that the cannon and the back tendon are parallel, with the tendon well defined and standing very well away from the cannon bone. The word “flat” refers to the appearance of the cannon, which is wide and flat when viewed from the side although narrow from the front; it does not mean that the bone itself is flat.

**LATERAL FLEXION:** Lateral pertains to a side or outer surface, a portion further from the midline of the body or of a structure. Flexion is the act of bending.

**MUTTON WITHERS:** Low in the withers, with heavy shoulder muscling.

**RAT TAIL:** A tail with a short hair coat.

**REFINEMENT:** Fineness vs. coarseness

**ROACH BACKED:** A conformation fault in which the back is arched and convex. This fault predisposes a horse to forging and shortens the gait of the animal.

**STIFLE:** The counterpart of the knee joint in a person. The junction of the horse’s tibia and patella in the hind leg.

**SHOE BOIL:** A soft, flabby swelling over the point of the elbow.

**SICKLE HOCKS:** Deviations in the angle of the hock as seen from the side. The cannon slopes forward due to excessive angulation of the hock.

**SIDEBONES:** Ossification of the two lateral cartilages of the wings of the coffin bone.

**SPLAY-FOOTED:** A condition in which the feet turn outward because the legs turn out throughout their entire length.

**SPLINTS:** Abnormal body growths found on the cannon bone, usually on the inside surface, but occasionally on the outside. They are most common on the front legs. Considered not to be serious unless causing lameness or interfering with a joint.

**STRINGHALT:** A condition characterized by excessive flexing of the hind legs. It is most easily detected when backing a horse.

**TIED IN AT THE KNEE:** A condition occurring when the flexor tendons appear to be too close to the cannon bone just below the knee.

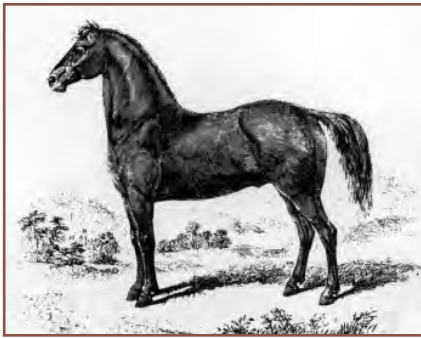
**WIND PUFF:** An enlargement of the fluid sac (bursa) located immediately above the pastern joints on the fore and rear legs. They are usually the result of too fast or too hard road work, especially on hard surfaces.

**WRY TAIL:** A tail that is bent to one side or twisted.

# NOTES



Artist's conception of the Morgan Stallion as developed and approved by the AMHA Judging Standards Committee and AMHA.



JUSTIN MORGAN—From the woodcut (1856) used in Volume I of the American Morgan Horse Register.



Artist's conception of the Morgan Mare as developed and approved by the AMHA Judging Standards Committee and AMHA.

