



Maryland 4-H State Hippology Contest Procedures & Regulations

Objectives of the Hippology Contest

The primary objective of the Maryland 4-H Hippology Contest is to provide an opportunity for youth enrolled in 4-H to demonstrate the breadth of their knowledge and understanding of equine science and management in a competitive setting where attitudes of friendliness and fairness prevail. The practical application of the contestants' knowledge and skills is emphasized. These contests should provide an educational experience for participants and spectators as well as an opportunity for the creation of new friendships.

General

1. **Contest date and time: Saturday, June 13, 2026 at the Howard County Fairgrounds, 2210 Fairgrounds Rd, West Friendship MD 21794.**
2. This is a contest in which individuals compete. There will be a \$7.00 entry fee for each contestant.
3. Schedule

Saturday June 13, 2026: Howard County Fairgrounds	
8:00-8:30 am	Contest Check-in – Horse Judging & Hippology
8:45 am	Welcome and Contest Overview
9:00-9:45 am	Examination Phase of Hippology Contest
10:00 am	Horse Judging Contest / Judging Phase of Hippology
12:30 pm	Lunch Break
1:00 pm	Judging Contest Reasons, followed by Hippology Contest Station Phase
5:00 pm	Awards Ceremony

4. Lunch will NOT be provided for contestants or coaches. All participants and spectators should bring their own lunch, drinks and snacks. A bottle of water and a snack will be provided to contestants during a break within the judging portion of the event.

NOTE: Contestant lunches will be placed in a holding area designated prior to the contest, where they will be made available during the lunch break. Please make sure the lunch container is labeled with the contestant's name. Contestants will not eat lunch with parents and coaches.

5. There is no limit to the number of individuals that each UME Unit may enter in this contest. Only registered 4-H members may participate in the contest. Individuals participating in the statewide contest must be enrolled as a Maryland 4-H member for 2026 in 4-H Online by **June 1, 2026**. All contest participants must be registered for the event in 4-H Online by **June 1, 2026**. 4-H members not registered by the deadline will not be allowed to participate in the contest.
6. Contestants must request accommodation for participation in advance, when they register for the contest. Contestants requesting accommodation will be contacted by a Contest Manager to discuss reasonable accommodation. Accommodation requests cannot be accepted or modified on the day of the contest.

7. Statewide competition will be governed by the prescribed procedures and regulations. Additional rules may be promulgated for specific purposes. Contestants not complying with the rules will be disqualified. Coaches and/or spectators not complying with the applicable Procedures and Regulations will be dismissed from the contest area.

Contestants and Eligibility

1. All Contestants must be enrolled in 4-H online by the contest entry deadline and approved by the 4-H Extension Educator of their respective UME unit.
2. Maryland 4-H members must be between the ages of 8 - 18 as of January 1 of the current year. Juniors are ages 8 - 10; Intermediates are ages 11 - 13; and Seniors are ages 14 - 18.
3. Contestants must not have previously competed in the Hippology contest at Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup or Western National 4-H Horse Roundup.
4. Senior contestants receiving college or vocational training beyond high school in areas relative to horses are restricted from competing in the Maryland 4-H Hippology Contest.
5. **Attire:** Recommended judging attire should consist of slacks or jeans, shirt with a collar and a lightweight jacket or vest if needed due to weather conditions. **Hard-soled, closed-toed boots or shoes are required for safety.** Articles of clothing that identify the contestant's 4-H county/city may not be worn. Contestants should be prepared for being outdoors in inclement weather. For safety reasons, umbrellas and rain ponchos will not be allowed near the judging ring if it rains.
6. **Contestants shall not talk with anyone other than a contest official during the contest. No cell phones or electronic devices are permitted during any phase of the contest.** Contestants will be under the direct supervision of the group leader at all times.

Liability Release and Informed Consent

Participation in this event requires the 4-H member and his/her parent/guardian to agree to the terms and conditions of the Maryland 4-H Event Liability Release and Informed Consent Agreement. The agreement will be signed electronically when the contestant registers for the event in 4-H Online.

Judges

1. Official judges shall place the class while the contestants are judging, make the official placing, indicate the cuts to be made, and file the official card with the Contest Supt.
2. When the contestant has concluded their reasons and answered any questions, the judge will write their reason score on the contestants placing card and turn it in for tabulation.

Contest Procedures

1. The **Examination Phase** of the contest will include the following:
 - a. A Written Exam
 - b. Projected slides may be used to have contestants identify items (see topics below) if appropriate facilities are available.
2. The **Stations Phase** of the will consist of a series of stations or tables where contestants will respond to the requirements of the stations.

3. **Examination Phase and Stations Phase Topics** may include, but are not limited to, the following items:
 - a. Identification of:
 - i. Various types of saddles (actual or pictured) and parts of saddles.
 - ii. Tack, bits, bridles, horseshoes and parts of shoes.
 - iii. Tools and equipment, assembly of specific parts of various pieces of equipment.
 - iv. Grains/forages used in equine rations including various forms or methods of preparation.
 - v. Internal and external parasites based on actual samples, pictures, life cycle charts and/or damage caused.
 - vi. Blemishes and unsoundness.
 - vii. Ages of equine based on teeth.
 - viii. Horse breed, color, color pattern activity, proper appointments, etc.
 - ix. Anatomy items may include external, skeletal, internal organs, parts of gastrointestinal tract, male and female reproductive organs, detailed anatomy of the foot and detailed anatomy of the lower limbs.
 - b. Use of pulse rate, respiration rate, temperature, dehydration, anemia, etc. to assess horse health.
 - c. Measurements, such as, but not limited to: wither height, shoe size, girth, collar size, gullet width, seat length of saddle, etc.
4. In the **Judging Phase** of the contest, contestants will be required to place at least four (4) classes consisting of conformation and performance classes. Every effort will be made to use the same horses as are being used in the Judging Contest, with placings, to be simultaneous with contestants in the judging contest. In extreme emergency, pictorial, video and/or movie classes may be used, in which case they would be specially prepared for the event.

Scoring

1. The maximum score for each phase of the contest is approximately 200 points. Contestants will be ranked according to their total overall score in each age division.
2. Ties in the overall contest will be broken in the following order:
 - a. Highest score in the Examination Phase; if still tied then,
 - b. Highest score in the Station Phase; if still tied then,
 - c. Highest score in the Judging Phase.
3. Ties within any phase of the contest are to be broken using the overall score first and then the same sequence as above. If further tie breaking is needed, the scores at each station, in order may be used.

Awards

1. Individual awards will be presented using the Danish system to all contestants in each age division.
2. A trophy will be awarded to the highest placing individual in each age division.
3. The top 10 individual seniors at the Maryland 4-H State Hippology Contest will be invited to participate in the process led by the state Hippology coach to select the State 4-H Horse Hippology Team. More information about the selection process will be provided to 4-H members who are eligible to try out for the State 4-H Horse Hippology Team based on their placing in the State Hippology Contest.

NOTE: The selection of a State 4-H Horse Hippology Team and the Team's participation in the National 4-H Hippology Contest at the Eastern National 4-H Horse Round-Up are contingent upon the event being held and applicable UME travel guidelines.

Contest Resources

The information covered in this contest may be found in one or more of the following references:

NOTE: In an instance where there is a conflict of information between sources, the most recent source (publication date) will prevail. For example, if there is a conflict between *Equine Science and Horse Smarts*, *Horse Smarts* would be considered correct as it is a newer publication.

Resources - Junior Division

- HH** - *Horse and Horsemanship*, 2001 edition. National 4-H Council. <https://shop4-h.org/collections/animal-agricultural-science-curriculum>
- H1** - *Horse 1-Giddy Up and Go*, **2015 edition**. National 4-H Council. <https://shop4-h.org/collections/animal-agricultural-science-curriculum>
- H2** - *Horse 2-Head, Heart & Hooves*, **2015 edition**. National 4-H Council. <https://shop4-h.org/collections/animal-agricultural-science-curriculum>
- H3** - *Horse 3-Stable Relationships*, **2015 edition**. National 4-H Council <https://shop4-h.org/collections/animal-agricultural-science-curriculum>
- H4** - *Horse 4-Riding the Range*, **2015 edition**. National 4-H Council. <https://shop4-h.org/collections/animal-agricultural-science-curriculum>
- H5** - *Horse 5-Jumping to New Heights*, **2015 edition**. National 4-H Council. <https://shop4-h.org/collections/animal-agricultural-science-curriculum>
- HRS** - *Horse Science*, 2001 edition. National 4-H Council. <https://shop4-h.org/collections/animal-agricultural-science-curriculum>
- HSM** – **Horse Smarts: An Equine Reference and Youth Activity Guide**, American Youth Horse Council. <https://www.ayhc.com/shop>
- NA** - *The Normal Animal*. Veterinary Science Unit 1
- AD** - *Animal Diseases*. Veterinary Science Unit 2
- ES** - *Equine Science – Basic Knowledge for Horse People of All Ages*, by Jean T. Griffiths. ISBN # 978-1-929164-42-4. Available at: <https://www.ayhc.com/shop>

Resources – Intermediate Division

Junior Division references listed above, PLUS:

- ID** - *Illustrated Dictionary of Equine Terms*. New Horizons Education Center, Inc. Alpine Publications, PO Box 7027, Loveland CO 80537. Ph:1-800-777-7257.
- HSM** – **Horse Smarts: An Equine Reference and Youth Activity Guide**, American Youth Horse Council. <https://www.ayhc.com/shop>

Resources – Senior Division

The following references should be used for the Senior Division.

- HSM** – **Horse Smarts: An Equine Reference and Youth Activity Guide**, American Youth Horse Council. <https://www.ayhc.com/shop>
- ID** - *Illustrated Dictionary of Equine Terms*. New Horizons Education Center, Inc. Alpine Publications, PO Box 7027, Loveland CO 80537. Ph:1-800-777-7257.
- HIH** – *Horse Industry Handbook*, The American Youth Horse Council. 4093 Iron Works Pike, Lexington, KY 40511- Ph: 800-879-2942
- LEWIS** - *Feeding And Care Of The Horse*, 2nd edition, by Lon D. Lewis Williams and Wilkens, P. O. Box 1496, Baltimore MD 21298-9724 Ph: (800) 638-0672
- CAHA** - *Coloring Atlas of Horse Anatomy*, by Robert Rainer and Thomas O. McCracken. Order from Alpine Blue Ribbon Books, P.O. Box 7027, Loveland, CO 80537-0027
- ES** - *Equine Science – Basic Knowledge for Horse People of All Ages*, by Jean T. Griffiths. ISBN # 978-1-929164-42-4. Available at: <https://www.ayhc.com/shop>
- NEW in 2026! EVANS** - *The Horse*, Third edition, by Evans, Borton, Hintz, Van Vleck. W. H. Freeman and Company.

(Note: Grains, forages and feed preparations used in this contest will be representative of feeds utilized in horse rations.)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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