

English Versatility Class Rules

For classes held at AQHA-approved events

For horses three years of age and older. This class may be offered in the Open and Non-Pro (exhibitors holding a current AQHYA or AQHA Amateur membership) divisions.

1. English Attire and Tack are required as per SHW310 and SHW320, if raised rails or jumps are included in the pattern, an ASTM/SEI-certified helmet is required as per SHW320.2.
2. The purpose of this class is to demonstrate the versatility of the English horse. The horse should reflect the versatility, attitude, and movement of an English horse. The horse should be well-trained, relaxed, quiet, soft and cadenced at all gaits. The ideal English horse will travel with forward movement and demonstrate an obvious lengthening of stride at extended gaits. The horse will be ridden with contact without undue restraint. Quality of movement, expression, attitude, correctness of maneuvers, overall manners, responsiveness, and the ability to transition in a smooth and correct manner are the primary considerations in scoring.
3. CLASS REQUIREMENTS
 1. Each horse will work individually, performing both required and optional maneuvers. Horses will perform at the walk, trot, and canter. Gaits should be ground covering with forward motion while demonstrating self-carriage.
 2. REQUIRED MANEUVERS:
 - Walk, trot, and canter in both directions
 - Hand gallop
 - Stop
 - Back
 - Change of lead, it may be designated as a simple change, or the exhibitor has the option to perform either a simple or flying lead change
 - Trot or canter over ground poles. A maximum of 5 poles may be used per trot maneuver and a maximum of 3 poles may be used per canter maneuver. Trot over poles to be placed 3'6" – 4' apart and canter over poles to be placed 8' – 10' apart.
 3. OPTIONAL MANEUVERS:
 - Walk over ground poles. A maximum of 5 poles may be used per walk maneuver. Walk over poles to be placed 30" apart.
 - Extending the walk, trot, or canter
 - Leg yield
 - Turns on the forehand or haunches of at least 180 degrees
 - Trot through or around cones or chute,
 - Trot or canter over raised rails (up to 8")
 - Open Division Only: trot or canter over a jump or cross rail (up to 18")
4. The maneuvers may be arranged in various combinations with final approval by the judge.
5. Gaits will be judged according to SHW332 Gaits – English Classes emphasizing correctness and quality. Expression, cadence, and balance are of utmost importance.

6. The poll should be level with, or slightly above, the withers to allow proper impulsion behind. The head position should be slightly in front of, or on, the vertical.
 7. Patterns should consist of 10 to 15 maneuvers.
 8. One of the five suggested patterns may be used, however a judge may utilize a different pattern as long as all required maneuvers are included.
 9. The judge must walk the course and has the right and duty to alter the course in any manner. The judge may remove or change any obstacle he deems unsafe or non-negotiable.
4. SCORING: Horses will be scored on a basis of 0-100 points with 70 denoting an average performance. Points will be added or subtracted from the maneuvers on the following bases, ranging from plus 1 1/2 to minus 1 1/2: -1 1/2 extremely poor, -1 very poor, -1/2 poor, 0 average, +1/2 good, +1 very good, +1 1/2 excellent.
5. PENALTIES: Maneuver evaluations and penalty applications are to be determined independently. The following penalties will be applied to each occurrence and be deducted from the final score:
- a. One-point penalties
 - Over-bridled (per maneuver)
 - Out of frame (per maneuver)
 - Break of gait at walk or trot for 2 strides or less
 - Each hit or stepping on a log, pole, cone, plant or any component of the obstacle.
 - Both front or hind feet in a single-strided slot or space at a walk or trot
 - Skipping over or failing to step into required space
 - Splitting a pole
 - Adding two or more strides in trot and canter-over obstacles
 - b. Three-point penalties
 - Break of gait at walk or trot for more than two strides
 - Break of gait at canter, except when correcting an incorrect lead
 - Wrong lead or out of lead
 - a. For patterns that require cantering over pole(s), no penalty will be incurred for horses that change leads over the pole(s) or between the poles. In order to avoid penalty, the horse must be on the designed lead prior to the conclusion of the maneuver or beginning a turn. Deductions may be made in the maneuver score.
 - Knocking down an elevated pole, cone, plant, standard, obstacle or severely disturbing an obstacle
 - Out of lead or cross-cantering more than two strides when changing leads, trotting more than three strides when making a simple lead change,
 - Trotting three or more strides in a canter departure from a stop or walk.
 - Stepping outside the confines of a pole with one foot once the foot has entered obstacle, including missing one element of an obstacle on a line of travel with one foot.
 - c. Five-point penalties
 - Blatant disobedience (kick, bite, buck, rear, etc)
 - Each refusal of a maneuver or obstacle

- Spurring in front of the girth
- Stepping outside the confines of a pole with more than one foot once the foot has entered obstacle, including missing one element of an obstacle on a line of travel with more than one foot.
- Knocking down a jump

d. Disqualifications

- Eliminating or adding maneuver
- Incomplete maneuver
- Breaking pattern
- Repeated blatant disobedience
- Third cumulative refusal, balk, or evading an obstacle
- Failure to ever demonstrate correct lead and/or gait as designated, including failure to ever demonstrate the correct diagonal, if designated
- Failure to complete obstacle
- Fall of horse or exhibitor
- Excessive schooling
- Equipment failure that delays completion of pattern
- Failure to enter, exit or work obstacle in any manner other than how it's described, including overturns of more than $\frac{1}{4}$ turn
- Failure to follow the correct line of travel between obstacles
- Illegal equipment
- Abuse
- Lameness