

PERFORMANCE HALTER FIELD GUIDE

SCORE SHEETS

- Horses will be judged using the Arabian Performance Halter Score Sheet, with the results based on the total scores. Shows must post the results no later than one hour after completion of the class.
- Score sheets have been updated for the 2026 competition year.
<https://www.arabianhorses.org/judges-stewards/patterns/>

GENERAL

- Performance Halter classes are governed by AR-1, AR-2 and AR-3/EC -B1502 # 7
- Horses with loss of sight in one eye may compete in Performance Halter classes.
- **NEW for 2026: Designated runner – see AR125.2a-3 for the complete rules. A designated runner can be used for an exhibitor in any youth or amateur Performance Halter class who is unable to perform the trot portion as determined by a physician. A designated runner exemption form along with a signed physician statement must be submitted to the competition at the time of check-in to the show office. [Designated Runner form](#) is in the Competitions area of the AHA website.**
- Controlled Paddock – see AR125.3-5
 - A Federation steward and/or the Show Commission must supervise this area.
 - In a controlled Performance Halter paddock, no one will school the horse in a manner representative of a hard stand up prior to entering the ring. Any rule violation occurring in or around the controlled paddock will result in a warning and/or yellow card in accordance with USEF rules.
 - No whips, schooling devices, “bagging” , shakers, noisemakers or aids of any kind are permitted in the controlled paddock or in the immediate vicinity of the ring.

- It is acceptable for the handler to raise hands or use their hand to get the horse’s attention.
- The handler cannot be intimidating to the horse nor cause intense reaction.
- Horses will be presented in a relaxed, dignified manner and may be expressive and attentive. No horse(s) will be shown in a manner deemed to be presented with a hard stance. On The Muscle/Hard Stand Up is defined as a shift of balance, withdrawing, or an increase in intensity due to any actions or cues from the handler.
- Horses should be positioned with their weight balanced on all four feet, not stretched. A horse is considered not stretched if all four feet are flat on the ground and at least one front and one rear cannon bone is perpendicular to the ground.

APPOINTMENTS

- Horses may be shown in a:
 - traditional style Arabian show halter,
 - Western style show halter, or
 - leather stable halter.
 - May be shown in a bridle appropriate to their performance divisions.
 - A bosal can be used on junior horses only.
- A modified caveson is permitted.
- Horse may be shown braided if braiding is appropriate for their performance division(s). Braiding is not required.
- Exhibitors may wear any clothing appropriate to the show ring that they feel best represents their horse, and allows them to show their horse to their best advantage. Suits or riding habits are not required.
- Chains through the mouth are not permitted. Use



of a chain or leather strap under the chin, or leather pieces connecting the

two sides of the halter under the chin, is permitted.

- Use of hoof polish is permitted.
- No whips, schooling devices, “bagging”, shakers, noisemakers or aids of any kind are permitted.



- breaks loose from the exhibitor; or
- is shanked by the handler
- 10-point penalty must be assessed for unnatural tail carriage
- A 10-point penalty must be assessed if the horse is deemed to be presented with a hard stance

ELIMINATION/PENALTIES

- A horse will be **eliminated and excused** if it is:
 - crouching,
 - cowering,
 - buckling at the knees,
 - sweating,
 - trembling,
 - racing backwards or sideways to escape their handlers or
 - exhibits other behavior indicating fear, stress or intimidation.
 - exhibits any welt or swelling that look like a whip mark, regardless of how this was caused;
 - is obviously limping or of impaired gait;
 - has fallen; or
 - for inhumane treatment and undue stress.
- A horse may be **disqualified, penalized and/or excused** for the following:
 - exhibits disruptive behavior such that it or other horses are unable to be inspected by the judge;
 - exhibits behavior such that the safety of it, the handler, an exhibitor, a judge, or another horse is in danger;
 - is not under the control of the exhibitor;

RESOURCES

- Performance Halter Notebook Chapter - https://www.arabianhorses.org/export/content.export/judges-stewards/js-docs/JS_NB_Performance_Halter.pdf
- AHA Performance Halter Scoresheets <https://www.arabianhorses.org/judges-stewards/patterns/>