



Virginia Cooperative Extension  
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**2025 VA State 4-H Hippology and Horse Judging Contests**

**Contest Date: April 4 -5<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**Contest Location: Rockbridge County High School, Lexington, VA  
 Virginia Horse Center, Lexington, VA**

**Contest Superintendents**

Hunter Liles 540-231-6345  
 Extension Youth Animal Science Program Associate  
 Katherine Carter 540-231-2257  
 Extension Youth Animal Science Specialist

A complete entry for this contest must include the following:

- Submitted online entry of all contestant information completed
- Entry Summary Form emailed to huntl97@vt.edu
- Payment or proof of payment processing brought the day of the contest
- \$10.00 entry fee per individual registered for Hippology, \$15.00 entry fee per individual registered for Horse Judging – Payable to: Treasurer of Virginia Tech

**Entries Must Be Submitted Online at <https://tinyurl.com/25HippandJudge> by **Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm****

**Payment or Proof of Payment Processing should be delivered during check-in/registration the morning of the contest.**

- \*Personal or Business/School Checks Made Payable to: Treasurer of Virginia Tech**
- \*VT HokieMart Check Made Payable to: Treasurer of Virginia Tech**
- \*Copy of your VT HokieMart PO Paperwork**
- \*Copy of your Virginia 4-H Foundation PO Request**

**TENTATIVE Hippology CONTEST SCHEDULE: Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

Registration:	4:15 – 5:00 PM, RCHS
Contest Begins	5:10 PM
Tentative Contest End	7:30 – 8:00 PM
Awards	Saturday Afternoon

**TENTATIVE Horse Judging CONTEST SCHEDULE: Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup> 2025**

Registration:	8 – 8:45 AM, VHC
Contest Begins	8:50 AM
Bus Contestants to High School	12:00 PM
Reasons Begin	1:00 PM
Officials and Awards	4:00 PM

### **CONTEST RULES:**

1. **Youth who have competed in their respective organization's national contest are not eligible to compete in that division.**
2. Each contestant must be an enrolled, eligible member of Virginia 4-H, and enrolled via the 4HOnline enrollment system. This will be verified.
3. For Teams and Individuals in the FFA Divisions, please see the Virginia FFA CDE for your perspective contest for eligibility, age division, and team number rules: [Career & Leadership Development Events \(CDE/LDE\)](#)
4. Each Unit will be eligible to enter all interested junior and senior 4-H members from their unit. A team is comprised of at least 3 members. One or two individuals from a unit may compete as individuals if a team of 3 or 4 cannot be assembled. Teams may NOT be a mix of Juniors and Seniors.
  - a. In teams of 4, the member receiving the lowest score in each division and overall will automatically be dropped for scoring purposes. All scores will be utilized for individual awards.
5. Team members must be enrolled in 4HOnline in the Unit they represent in the contest. Different Units may not combine to create a team.
6. **Contestants will be divided into the Junior and Senior Divisions based on BIRTH DATE:**
  - Junior contestants will be those who are 13 years old or younger by January 1, 2025 and will reach their 9<sup>th</sup> birthday by September 30, 2025.
  - Senior contestants will be those who are at least 14 years old by or on January 1, 2025 and have not had their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday before January 1, 2025. **This rule aligns with National 4-H Hippology requirements.**
7. **Contestants MAY dual enter and compete in both 4-H and FFA Divisions. Contestants must be enrolled, eligible members of both organizations to dual enter. Contestants must be pre-entered for both contests.**
8. Only youth who are pre-entered during the online entry process and verified eligible (age and organization enrollment) are allowed to compete.
9. The Superintendents of the contest will oversee the contest and conduct it in compliance with these rules and regulations. They shall have the authority for the interpretation of the rules

### **NATIONAL ELIGIBILITY**

- The Champion Team in the 4-H Senior Hippology Contest will be invited to represent Virginia at the Southern Regional 4-H Championships and the Eastern National 4-H Round Up. Once youth compete at the Eastern National 4-H Round Up, they are ineligible for further 4-H Hippology Competition.
- The top 8 Senior Individuals in the 4-H Horse Judging Contest will be invited to be members of the State 4-H All Star Horse Judging Team. Four of these members will be invited to represent Virginia at the Eastern National 4-H Horse Round Up. After members have competed at the Eastern National 4-H Horse Round Up, they are ineligible to compete in any further 4-H Horse Judging Contests.

## **CONDUCT OF CONTEST - Hippology**

1. All ties overall, individual, and team will be broken using the following sequence:

- a. Examination Scores
- b. Station Scores
- c. Judging Scores

Ties within any phase are to be broken using the overall score first and then the same sequence as above. If further tiebreaking is needed, the scores at each station, in order, may be used.

2. Contest

a. Examination Phase –

- i. Written Exam – 50 questions, may be multiple choice, true/false, or matching.
- ii. Projected Slides – 25 questions, to identify things such as breed, color, activity, tack and equipment, anatomy, etc.

b. Stations Phase-

i. General

1. Seniors – 10 stations with 10 questions each (3 min)
2. Juniors – 10 stations with 5 – 8 questions each (3 min)

ii. May Include, but are not limited to

1. Saddle/Equipment ID
2. Tool and Equipment ID
3. Grain and Forages
4. Parasites
5. Blemishes and Unsoundnesses
6. Ages of Equine Based on Teeth
7. Measurements such as height, shoe size, girth size, etc.

c. Judging Phase –

- i. Usually 2 – 4 classes
- ii. Contestants will be required to place 2 – 4 classes consisting of conformation and/or performance classes. For the 4-H Contest, youth will utilize classes from Saturday's judging contests, while FFA members will complete a judging station on Friday evening.

d. Team Problem

i. General Guidelines

1. Juniors – 1 written team problem
2. Seniors – 1 written and 1 oral team problem
  - a. Oral team problem may be impromptu or prepared. For the prepared team problem, teams will have 10 minutes to prepare and 7 minutes to present. For impromptu problems, teams will have 3 minutes to prepare and 7 minutes to present.
3. Evaluation will be based on understanding of the problem, accuracy, group delivery, and completeness of logic when making the presentation. Judges may ask questions.

- ii. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Balancing Rations
  - 2. Farm management or design
  - 3. Recommendations for selection of horses
  - 4. Behavior problems, causes, and management
  - 5. Breeding or leasing contracts
  - 6. Explanation or use of specific equipment
  - 7. Teaching lessons in horse management
- iii. Team problem scores will not be included in determining rank of individuals in the contest, but will be added to team scores to determine overall standing.

**CONDUCT OF CONTEST – Horse Judging**

- 1. The use of Rulebooks, Scorecards, and other preprinted materials is allowable.
- 2. Judging Classes
  - a. 3-5 Halter and 3-5 Performance classes will be used in the contest. Halter horses are judged as sound of limb, eye, wind, mouth, and reproductive organs. Performance horses are judged as they go. All tack and attire is legal.
  - b. Officials will utilize respective Breed Standard rules or the USEF rules.
  - c. Possible Halter Classes (not limited to)

Saddlebred	Hunter Ponies
Plantation Horses	Hunter in Hand
Morgans	Miniature
Quarter Horse	Horses
Appaloosa	Walking
Stock Horses	Horses
Draft Horses	Sport Horse in
Ponies of America	Hand
Friesians	Hackney
Connemara	Ponies
	Mules

- d. Possible Performance Classes (not limited to)

English Pleasure	Hunter Pleasure
Western Pleasure	Country English
Plantation Pleasure	Pleasure
Hunter Under Saddle	Mountain Pleasure
Driving	Trail Racking
Horsemanship	Ranch Riding
Racking	Reining
	Hunter hack
	Equitation

3. Reasons

- a. Seniors will give 3 sets of reasons, and Juniors will give 2 sets of reasons. Juniors competing in the FFA Contest will only give 1 set of reasons.
- b. Reasons will not be timed and penalties not assessed.
- c. Youth will have a minimum of 20 minutes/set to prepare each set of reasons.
- d. Official placings and comments will be given at the conclusion of the contest.

4. Tabulation and Tie Breaks

- a. The lowest scoring member from each division will be dropped from tabulations in teams of 4.
- b. Halter Division

i. Tie Breaks

1. Highest reasons score in halter division
2. Lowest placing scores for halter reasons classes
3. Highest performance total score
4. Highest reasons score in performance division
5. Lowest placing scores for performance reasons classes

c. Performance Division

i. Tie Breaks

1. Highest reasons score in performance division
2. Lowest placing scores for performance reasons classes
3. Highest halter total score
4. Highest reasons score in halter division
5. Lowest placing scores for halter reasons classes

d. Reasons Division

i. Tie Breaks

1. Lowest placing in all reasons classes
2. Highest placing score for all non reasons classes
3. Highest reasons score in performance division
4. Lowest placing in performance reasons classes

e. Overall Awards

i. Tie Breaks

1. Highest overall reasons scores
2. Lowest placing in reasons classes
3. Highest placing score for all non reasons classes
4. Highest reasons score in performance division
5. Lowest placing in performance reasons classes