

## Obstacle Course Exam

**General Description and Emphasis:** Examinees will demonstrate working through an obstacle course first in-hand using a traditional rope halter and lead. Then they will navigate the same course under-saddle. Participants will be judged on the quality of the execution of each element. Good horsemanship in respects to how the participant handles their horse's reactions will be rewarded. A training strategy that introduces and guides the horse through the obstacles that is tactful and systematically builds the horse's relaxation and confidence will receive the highest marks.

**Procedures:** There will be a total of 8 obstacles with two from each of the following categories: Obstacles the horse must cross over, obstacles the horse must go under, obstacles the horse must pass between or next to, and obstacles involving body control/maneuverability. Exact specifications and dimensions of the obstacles will be determined by the judges the day before the exam, based on what is available at the testing location. Within each category there should be an easier and a more difficult obstacle. The horse used will not have been exposed to any of the specific obstacles prior to the test.

Examinees will have a maximum of 15 minutes to complete the course in hand and 10 minutes to complete the course under saddle. Time frames for the in hand and ridden segments may be adjusted by the judges depending on the choice of obstacles and arena set up. Participants may complete the obstacles in whatever order they deem most appropriate for their horse, which they can alter between the in-hand and the ridden section.

### EXAMPLE OBSTACLES:

Note: These are examples meant to illustrate the categories, and while many of the obstacles may draw from this list, obstacle choice is at the discretion of the judge and can include obstacles not listed here.

Obstacles the horse must cross over

- Tarp
- Platform
- Bridge
- Step through tires
- Water obstacle
- Trot over ground poles or cavaletti
- Small jump over a cross rail or two barrels
- "Litter labyrinth" box or arena with random objects the horse must navigate through

- Seesaw/teeter totter

Obstacles the horse must go under

- Rain jacket/coat/poncho picked up and carried
- Under a poodle noodle curtain
- Under a shower curtain (curtain cut in strips)
- Carry a flag or plastic bag on a stick
- Pick up, carry, and drop off a pretend larger object such as a large stuffed animal from point A to point B

Obstacles the horse must pass between or next to

- Mail out of mailbox
- Pool noodle pass through
- Balloons
- Lead the horse while the riding walks over a object that is up off the ground
- Back or pass between two barrels
- Drag an object behind the horse
- Navigate a narrow gap between to obstacles

Obstacles involving body control/maneuverability

- Open and close a gate
- Back through an L of ground poles
- Side pass over a ground pole
- Ground tie in circle of sawdust
- Turn on the haunches or forehand with front or hind feet in round obstacle or sawdust circle
- Tolt or trot slalom through poles or around barrels
- Mount or dismount the horse from an obstacle or onto an obstacle
- Canter from point A to point B or between/around two obstacles
- Ride a pattern without touching the reins or with one hand on the reins
- Keep tension on a lead rope attached to a pole as you ride around in a circle with one hand on the reins
- Garrocha

**Equipment:** For the in hand section the horse will be led through the obstacle course in a rope halter and long lead rope. For the ridden portion the horse will be ridden with the typical tack of a riding horse. Only snaffle bits are allowed.

**Location:** Test can be carried out either inside or outside in a field, outdoor arena, indoor arena or the interior of an oval track.

Section	Description	Notes	Score
Obstacle 1)  Obstacle the horse crosses over	Obstacle name and description:	<input type="checkbox"/> Quality of execution <input type="checkbox"/> Horsemanship and tactful approach <input type="checkbox"/> Horse is relaxed, confident, and willing OR methods used lessened horse's fear or reluctance and increased confidence <input type="checkbox"/> Seat and aids	
Obstacle 2)  Obstacle the horse crosses over	Obstacle name and description:	<input type="checkbox"/> Quality of execution <input type="checkbox"/> Horsemanship and tactful approach <input type="checkbox"/> Horse is relaxed, confident, and willing OR methods used lessened horse's fear or reluctance and increased confidence <input type="checkbox"/> Seat and aids	

<p>Obstacle 3)</p> <p>Obstacle the horse goes under</p>	<p>Obstacle name and description:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quality of execution</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horsemanship and tactful approach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horse is relaxed, confident, and willing OR methods used lessened horse's fear or reluctance and increased confidence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Seat and aids</li> </ul>		
<p>Obstacle 4)</p> <p>Obstacle the horse goes under</p>	<p>Obstacle name and description:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quality of execution</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horsemanship and tactful approach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horse is relaxed, confident, and willing OR methods used lessened horse's fear or reluctance and increased confidence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Seat and aids</li> </ul>		
<p>Obstacle 5)</p> <p>Obstacle the horse goes next to or passes between</p>	<p>Obstacle name and description:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quality of execution</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horsemanship and tactful approach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horse is relaxed, confident, and willing OR methods used lessened horse's fear or reluctance and increased confidence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Seat and aids</li> </ul>		

<p>Obstacle 6)</p> <p>Obstacle the horse goes next to or passes between</p>	<p>Obstacle name and description:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quality of execution</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horsemanship and tactful approach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horse is relaxed, confident, and willing OR methods used lessened horse's fear or reluctance and increased confidence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Seat and aids</li> </ul>		
<p>Obstacle 7)</p> <p>Body control / maneuverability obstacle</p>	<p>Obstacle name and description:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quality of execution</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horsemanship and tactful approach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horse is relaxed, confident, and willing OR methods used lessened horse's fear or reluctance and increased confidence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Seat and aids</li> </ul>		
<p>Obstacle 8)</p> <p>Body control / maneuverability obstacle</p>	<p>Obstacle name and description:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Quality of execution</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horsemanship and tactful approach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horse is relaxed, confident, and willing OR methods used lessened horse's fear or reluctance and increased confidence</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Seat and aids</li> </ul>		