



Rockwalls in a Small Town Show Series Rule Book



The purpose of the Rockwalls in a Small Town Show Series is to promote education for horse and rider of all disciplines and all experience levels, to promote good sportsmanship in the equine industry, as well as to promote good, safe horsemanship practices in an affordable and fun show experience.

Any rules not covered by the Small Town Show Series Rule Book will refer back to the AQHA show rules and/or the general rules of the United States Equestrian Federation. In the case of a rule that may not be found in AQHA or USEF, the show committee will have the final say on decision making.

General Show Rules

Liability Disclaimer

Rockwalls in a Small Town Show Series and all related committees, partners, and team members will **not** be held responsible for any loss, injury, damage, or debts related to any show or event. Exhibitors participate at their own risk.

Sportsmanship

Rockwalls in a Small Town Show Series has a strong focus on good sportsmanship. Respect and ethical behavior is expected and required from all exhibitors toward other competitors as well as to all equines. Poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated at our horse shows.

1. Expected Conduct: Good sportsmanship is not only encouraged, but required of all exhibitors and members of the Rockwalls in a Small Town Show Series. All exhibitors are expected to act in a respectful manner toward all persons and equines at the horse show(s).
2. Consequences of Poor Sportsmanship: If an exhibitor or associated person behaves disrespectfully or aggressively toward show staff, other exhibitors or any equines while at the horse show, they will be subject to significant consequences.
 - a. Any points or awards earned during that show day, can be forfeited as a result of inappropriate conduct.
 - b. No refunds will be given to any exhibitor if they present with poor sportsmanship and are excused from the class or horse show.
 - c. Poor sportsmanship is decided by the judge and/or the show committee.

- d. If a member or exhibitor shows poor sportsmanship during a horse show for any reason, you may be excused from that show as well as may not be welcomed back to other horse shows.

Animal Welfare & Abuse Policy

Rockwalls in a Small Town Show Series has a strict policy against the abuse of animals, particularly horses competing in any of our shows. The safety and well-being of horses is our number one priority. Abuse is defined as any cruel or inhumane treatment of a horse or other equine, and it is subject to strict penalties.

Exhibitors or associated persons found guilty of abusing a horse may face disciplinary actions, including revocation of membership. This ensures Rockwalls in a Small Town Show Series maintains its commitment to humane and ethical treatment of animals in all of its shows.

Show Year

The show year for Rockwalls in a Small Town will begin from first show of the season (for 2026; 6/28/2026) & will end at the last show of year (for 2026; 10/18/2026).

Membership & Fees

Memberships are an annual fee and apply to each rider individually, not the horse(s). Memberships must be paid at the time of registration and will only apply to the shows competed in AFTER membership is complete & paid for. This show series will not go back and give points to members from shows competed in prior to their membership being paid and completed. Current members will be eligible for year end awards.

The 2026 Membership Fee: \$25.00

You do NOT need to be a member of the Rockwalls in a Small Town Show Series to show at the competitions. You will not be eligible for year end awards if you compete and are not a current member.

Horse Participation

Horses do NOT need to be registered with any official breed or national registration to show at the horse shows. If you are entering a class that goes toward other breed or association points, the horse(s) need to have registration numbers for the appropriate associations and those numbers can be provided on the entry form.

Payment & Entries

Entries must be completed and submitted prior to or at the beginning of the show day. All classes at Rockwalls in a Small Town Show Series must be paid for at the time of entry or end of the show day, no later. Classes may be added or scratched

throughout the show day, but any added classes must be paid for no later than the end of that show day.

Entries may be payable via check or cash. Please ask the secretary at the show booth how to make out your check.

Class Eligibility & Commonly Asked Questions

Walk/Trot/Jog VS Walk/Trot/Jog/Canter/Lope

Eligibility for WT or WJ classes vs the WTC or WJL classes are as followed:

This will be based on the horse **not** the rider. If a horse has never cantered or loped in a horse show prior to this show, they are eligible for the walk/trot or walk/jog classes. If a horse has cantered or loped in a horse show, they are **not** eligible for the walk/trot or walk/jog classes.

Riders riding in the walk/trot or walk/jog classes may have cantered on other horses previously in other horse shows, but **not** on the horse they are showing in the walk/trot or walk/jog classes.

Can we cross enter?

No, horses who are cantering or loping during our horse shows, may not ride in the walk/trot or walk/jog classes. Once you have cantered that horse at our horse show(s), you may **not** go back to the walk/trot or walk/jog classes.

Can we ride multiple horses?

Yes, you may ride one horse in the walk/trot/jog classes and a different horse in the walk/trot/jog/canter/lope classes. They must follow the eligibility requirements above.

You may also ride multiple horses in the same pattern/individual classes. They must also follow the eligibility requirements above.

Can we cross enter from western, ranch and/or hunt seat?

Yes, the same horse & rider combo can cross enter between different disciplines. You must follow the same eligibility requirements as above.

Green Horses may cross enter into the **Open** divisions ONLY!!!

Divisions:

Adult: An individual who has reached their 18th birthday as of January 1 of the current competition year.

Youth 13 & under: An individual who has reached their 13th birthday as of January 1 of the current competition year.

Youth 14 - 18: An individual who has reached their 14th birthday as of January 1 of the current competition year.

Leadline 8 & under: An individual who has reached their 8th birthday as of January 1 of the current competition year.

Level Up Leadline 10 & Under: An individual who may be able to ride more independently, but would like to be accompanied by an adult. The adult may have a lead rope in hand, but will only use it if necessary. The rider must be able to walk, trot, stop, steer, and back independently. Only eligible for Level Up Leadline if it is their FIRST year showing & they are under 10 years old. This class is designed to be a stepping stone from Leadline to Walk Trot/Walk Jog classes.

Open: Open to any rider regardless of age, status, or prior winnings.

Non Pro: Intended for non-professional exhibitors. The exhibitor has not received payment directly or indirectly for riding, training, assisting in training or showing horses at any time in the last 5 years. The rider has not received payment directly or indirectly for instructing another person or conducting a seminar in 5 riding, training, or showing a horse at any time in the last 5 years. There is no age requirement for this division.

Novice: The Novice rider division is reserved for individuals with limited riding and showing experience who wish to learn more about showing at a beginner level. The rider must meet all Non Pro eligibility requirements listed above, PLUS be in their first 2 years of showing.

Green: Horse must be in its first 2 years of showing undersaddle and have not earned more than 10 points in any breed or national association for ANY discipline. Green is the ONLY division who may cross enter & may ONLY cross enter into the OPEN division.

Attire & Tack

Discipline Specific Attire

The Rockwalls in a Small Town Show Series rules for attire and tack ensure that exhibitors present themselves neatly and appropriately according to the discipline being shown.

In Hand:

- **Required:** Exhibitors should wear attire appropriate for the breed or class, following western, hunt seat, including footwear and head covering.
- **Optional:** Gloves
- **Prohibited:** Spurs, chaps, whips are not allowed

Western/Ranch:

- **Required:** Long sleeve collared shirt, long pants or jeans, boots, western hat or helmet (required for riders under 18)
- **Optional:** Chaps, gloves, spurs
- **Prohibited:** Crops, bats are not allowed

Hunt Seat

- **Required:** Hunt coats of any color except red or maroon. Traditional colors include navy, dark green, black, brown and gray. Breeches/jodhpurs of traditional colors. English boots or paddock boots of traditional colors (brown or black). Shirts must be a traditional long or short sleeve with a tie or choker. Collared shirts are allowed. Helmets are required.
- **Optional:** Gloves, unrowelled spurs, half chaps, crops/bats.
- **Prohibited:** Rowelled spurs are prohibited.

Tack

The Rockwalls in a Small Town Show Series tack rules are crucial for maintaining fairness, safety, and discipline integrity across all events. These rules outline the permissible and prohibited equipment for different types of classes and disciplines.

General Tack

All tack must be in appropriate safe working order. Leather must not be cracked, broken or breaking.

Prohibited Tack & Equipment

- No draw reins or training forks in any judged classes
- No caustic chemicals (mustard oil, ginger, kerosene, etc.) may be used on horses
- No weighted shoes, boots or wraps
- No metal should touch the horse underneath the leather, nylon or rope halter or bridle (e.g., no tack pins, wire or barb wire)
- No live animals used as obstacles or for maneuvers in any class

Discipline-Specific Tack Rules

In Hand

- Spurs and whips are prohibited in any in-hand class
- Halters can be made of leather (with or without silver)
 - **Ranch:** Halters can be made of leather or rope
 - **Hunt Seat:** A bridle may be used
- Lead ropes with a chain are allowed, but the chain can only go under the chin or over the nose, not through the mouth

Western

- Bridle must not have a cavesson or noseband
- **Bits:** Any standard western bit from a ring snaffle to a spade bit, including non-leverage (snaffle) and leverage (curb) bits are allowed on ANY aged horse
- Bitless bridles such as side pulls, and bosals (hackamore) with mecate reins are also permitted
- Leverage bits must have a curb chain or curb strap at least ½ inch wide, and these must be flat leather or chain (single or double)
- Gag bits and mechanical hackamore are not allowed in judge classes, but are allowed in timed events
- Riders can use one or two hands with non-leverage bits and bosals and one hand with leverage bits
- Reins must be split reins or romals in judged classes. Single barrel or roping reins are not allowed in any event that is **not** timed.
- Western saddles are required (leather or synthetic)
- Martingales, draw reins, tiedowns, and training forks are prohibited in all judged classes but tiedowns are allowed in timed events.
- Horse boots are only allowed in ranch riding and timed events
- **Ranch:** silver should be kept to a minimum and may be penalized up to the judge's discretion

Hunt Seat

- Bridle with a cavesson is required
- Figure 8 and flash cavessons are allowed
- **Bits:** Any standard hunt seat bit from a ring snaffle to a spade bit is allowed. Double bridles (Pelham or Weymouth with bradoon) are allowed with two reins.
- Crops are permitted but can only be used on the shoulder or behind it. Misuse may lead to penalties or disqualification.
- **Saddle:** Traditional forward seat, all purpose, close contact or jumping hunt seat saddles (leather or synthetic) are required. Dressage saddles are allowed in flat classes.
- Saddle pads of any color are allowed, shaped, rounded or squared

Judging & Class Procedure(s)

Conformation (Halter) Classes

In Conformation classes, the emphasis is on judging a horse's structure, body, and overall appearance based on breed standards and general equine anatomy. These classes assess how closely a horse aligns with the ideal physical traits for its breed, as well as its overall quality and muscling.

Key Elements when Judging

- **Balance:** A balanced horse has proportions where the size of each body part is harmonious in relation to the others. For example, the length of the back should complement the size of the legs, the depth of the body, and the length of the neck. A well-balanced horse will appear visually pleasing and proportionate.
- **Muscling:** Muscling refers to the horse's development of muscle mass. The ideal horse should have adequate muscling for its breed and discipline, especially in areas such as the hindquarters, shoulders, and neck. Muscling indicates the horse's fitness and suitability for performance, as well as the horse's overall health.
- **Quality:** Quality refers to the refinement of the horse's conformation and general appearance. A high-quality horse will have a smooth, clean coat, well-defined features, and a wellshaped body. Horses should be free of any faults or deformities and exhibit a graceful, attractive presence.
- **Type:** The horse's type should correspond to the breed's ideal standard. Breed standards are very specific to each breed, and the horse should exhibit traits that are typical for its breed type. Additionally, gender type is also important. For instance, mares may have different physical expectations than stallions, and geldings may exhibit some characteristics differently from intact horses.
- **Structural Correctness:** A horse's structural correctness is crucial for its overall soundness and ability to perform. Judges will evaluate aspects such as the straightness of the legs, the alignment of the joints, and the angles of the hooves and pasterns. This also includes assessing the body's ability to carry weight and move efficiently.
- **Travel:** Although conformation judging primarily evaluates structure and appearance, the horse's movement is also assessed. A well-conformed horse should move smoothly and correctly, with balanced gaits that demonstrate good structural alignment and freedom of motion.

Showmanship

Showmanship is a class that primarily evaluates the exhibitor's skill in presenting and handling their horse at halter. Unlike a conformation class, the horse's conformation is not judged in this class; instead, the focus is on the exhibitor's ability to fit and show the horse, as well as the execution of maneuvers with precision and smoothness. The class is about demonstrating exhibitor-horse teamwork, along with the exhibitor's poise, confidence, and overall presentation.

1. Exhibitor's Body Position

Balance & Alignment:

The exhibitor must maintain a balanced and functional body position. They should stand with their shoulders squared, feet evenly placed, and posture upright, reflecting confidence and professionalism.

Control & Connection:

The exhibitor's ability to manage the horse while keeping proper distance between them and the horse is crucial. The exhibitor should appear in control, ensuring the horse is properly positioned at all times during the pattern.

2. Exhibitor - Horse Teamwork

Smooth Maneuver Execution: Showmanship requires that both the exhibitor and the horse work as a team to complete a set pattern with accuracy. The exhibitor must lead, show, and guide the horse through a prescribed sequence of movements. These maneuvers include halting, backing, trotting, and other specific actions that the judge calls for.

Timing & Precision: Both the exhibitor and the horse must move in unison, with precision and fluidity. The exhibitor should execute the pattern smoothly without hesitation or erratic movements.

3. Poise & Confidence

Poise and Confidence: The exhibitor must demonstrate poise and confidence at all times. This includes maintaining a calm, assertive demeanor and handling the horse with a controlled and confident approach. The exhibitor should appear comfortable and capable, without unnecessary nervousness or distraction.

Communication with the Horse: The exhibitor must show clear communication with the horse through body language, lead, and verbal cues, as necessary. The ability to keep the horse calm and responsive is an important aspect of the exhibitor's skill.

4. Horse Presentation (Fitting & Grooming)

Presentation: While conformation isn't directly judged, the horse should be presented neatly, cleanly, and appropriately for the breed and class. The horse must be properly groomed, with clean hooves, coat, mane, and tail.

Halter Positioning: The exhibitor must ensure that the horse's halter is correctly positioned and that the horse is standing squarely. The horse's stance should be such that the judge can assess its overall build, even though it's not a conformation class.

5. Pattern Execution

Pattern: The pattern is a key component of showmanship classes. The judge will provide specific instructions for the pattern, which usually involves a sequence of steps such as halting, pivoting, backing up, and trotting. The exhibitor must demonstrate their ability to guide the horse through the pattern with fluidity and accuracy.

Attention to Detail: Details such as the horse's position, the exhibitor's handling, and the timing of each movement are evaluated. The exhibitor should make sure that the horse remains calm, collected, and in the correct position for each maneuver.

6. Overall Presentation

Appropriate Attire: The exhibitor must wear attire suitable for showmanship. The attire should contribute to the exhibitor's professional appearance and their ability to effectively communicate with the horse.

Ranch Ground Handling

This class tests the handler's ability to communicate with the horse from the ground by judging a series of maneuvers that require the horse to yield to pressure – forward, backward, and laterally. Exhibitor movements should be workmanlike and efficient and the horse should be obedient and cooperative. It is permissible to touch horses to perform lateral movements and when lowering head.

Leadline

All leadline classes are to be ridden by kids 8 years & under. They must have a handler dressed in clean, neat clothes. Preferably the handler will be dressed in the same discipline attire as the rider. Riders may ride either English or Western and must be dressed in discipline appropriate attire.

Each class (Pleasure, Equitation, Versatility) will be ridden & judged based on the definitions in their perspective sections of this rule book. Please see those sections for reference.

Western Pleasure (WJ & WJL)

The horse should be a pleasure to ride. A free flowing stride, natural lift and carriage, smooth gaits and transitions should be exhibited. Credit is given to those under light control without intimidation, moves forward freely, and has a balanced fluid stride with even cadence. Resistance should be penalized. Gaits should be true.

Headset must be natural to the horse's conformation and should be level, with the ears no lower than the withers. Nose should be vertical or just in front of the vertical.

Western Horsemanship (WJ & WJL)

This class evaluates the riders' ability to perform a set of maneuvers with precision, balance, and smoothness along with confidence. The rider's equitation is judged on overall appearance, position, and use of aids. Rider should have a calm easy seat that moves with the horse, lower heels, straight from heel to shoulder with balance and function.

Western Versatility (WJ & WJL)

This class is to demonstrate the versatility of the western performance horse in a pattern of 10-15 different maneuvers. Required maneuvers will include walk, jog, and lope in both directions; extended jog, stop, back, turns up to 360 in either direction, change of lead (simple or flying) either direction, and walk, jog, or lope over a set of no more than (4) poles with no elevation. Judging is focused on the horse, not necessarily the position of the rider.

Ranch Rail (WT & WTL)

Horse should be functional for use on a ranch in addition to being a pleasure to ride. Performance should simulate a horse riding outside the confines of an arena and one of a working ranch horse. The horse should be well-broke, relaxed, quiet, soft, and cadenced at all gaits. Horse should be responsive to the rider, yield to contact, and make required transitions smoothly, timely, and correctly. Free flowing stride, natural lift and carriage, smooth gaits and transitions should be exhibited.

Ranch Riding (WT & WTL)

Horse should be functional for use on a ranch in addition to being a pleasure to ride and respond to the rider to perform the maneuvers required. Performance should simulate a horse riding outside the confines of an arena and one of a working ranch horse. The horse should be well-broke, relaxed, quiet, soft, and cadenced at all gaits. Horse should be responsive to the rider, yield to contact, and make required transitions smoothly, timely, and correctly. Free flowing stride, natural lift and carriage, smooth gaits and transitions should be exhibited.

Ranchmanship (WT & WTL)

The purpose of this class is to bring forth the versatility in both the ranch horse and exhibitor, constructed of maneuvers from Ranch Riding, Ranch Trail and Ranch Reining.

Green Horse Pleasure (WT & WTC)

This class can be ridden either in Hunt Seat or Western tack and will be judged based on the individual seat. Please see Western Pleasure and/or Hunter Under Saddle for reference.

Green horse(s) must be in their first 2 years of showing and will also follow the same rules as the WT/WJ or WTC/WJL rules.

Green Horse Horsemanship (WT & WTC)

This class can be ridden either in Hunt Seat or Western tack and will be judged based on the individual seat. Please see Western Horsemanship and/or Hunt Seat Equitation for reference.

Green horse(s) must be in their first 2 years of showing and will also follow the same rules as the WT/WJ or WTC/WJL rules.

Green Horse Versatility (WT & WTC)

This class can be ridden either in Hunt Seat or Western tack and will be judged based on the individual seat. This class will still have 1 pattern that must be ridden, but will be judged based on the seat of your choosing. Please see Western Versatility and/or Hunt Seat Versatility for reference.

Green horse(s) must be in their first 2 years of showing and will also follow the same rules as the WT/WJ or WTC/WJL rules.

Hunter Under Saddle (WT & WTC)

The horse should be a pleasure to ride. A free flowing stride, natural lift and carriage, smooth gaits and transitions should be exhibited. Credit is given to those under showing no intimidation, moves forward freely, and has a balanced fluid stride with even cadence. Resistance should be penalized. Gaits should be true. Headset must be natural to the horse's conformation and should be level with or just above the withers. Nose should be vertical or just in front of the vertical.

Hunt Seat Equitation (WT & WTC)

Judging is based on the ability of the rider to perform various maneuvers in harmony with their horse. Communication should be through subtle cues and aids and should not be obvious. The rider's equitation is judged on overall appearance, position, and use of aids. Rider should have a calm easy seat that moves with the horse, lower heels, straight from heel to shoulder with balance and function.

Hunt Seat Versatility (WT & WTC)

This class requires horses to demonstrate skills from hunter under saddle and over-fences disciplines within one pattern. It emphasizes a versatile, responsive horse,

exhibiting transitions, hand gallops, and obedience through tasks like maneuvering poles, backing, and lead changes, often serving as a foundation for working hunter prospects.