

Score _____



2025 Horse Project Record Book

Due May 1st, 2025

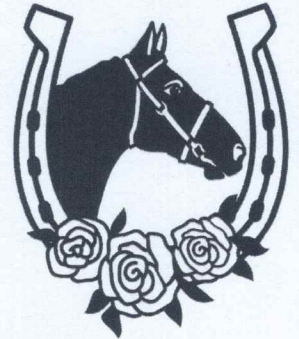
Exhibitor Name _____

Club Name _____

Age _____ as of Jan 1st, 2025

(This is the Age Division you will show at fair.)

Are You in the Horseless Horse Program _____



Attach Project Photo Here

**Exhibitor
Signature** _____

Parents Signature _____

OR

Leaders Signature _____

7 Points / _____

Horse Project Record Book Requirements

4-H Horse Project Members may elect to participate in 4-h Winter achievement with a Horse Science Project (See WA events catalog for details) **INSTEAD** of completing the Require Project Record Book.

1. Resources to be used to complete this record book to be **Scored**: "4-H & Horse and Horsemanship, Horse Science, Horseless Horse, State 4-H Horse Show Rules and Regulations, SCC 4-h & Youth Fair Book, SCC Miniature Horse Show Guidelines and the other resources directly provided in record book **ONLY**.
2. All Books Must be **Signed** by Exhibitor and Parent or Leader.
3. **ALL PAGES** that are listed as required for your division **MUST BE COMPLETED** regardless of incorrect answers. **DO NOT LEAVE ANY BLANK ANSWERS**. If the line does not apply to you, please put N/A. **N/A** will only be acceptable for answers that are not found in books above or within the project record book itself. If answers are left blank that is considered **INCOMPLETE PAGE**. Two or more **INCOMPLETE PAGES** it **WILL** be considered an **INCOMPLETE BOOK**.
4. **INCOMPLETE** or **LATE BOOKS** will **NOT** be eligible for **Championship classes during FAIR**. This is all Horse Project classes. Project Record Book is a **REQUIREMENT**.
5. **INCOMPLETE** Books will **NOT BE SCORED** and will automatically receive "C" rating.
6. Books that contain obvious adult contribution or inappropriate content will not be scored. This will make it an **INCOMPLETE BOOK**. If you have a special need, please let the Project Record Book Committee know. Please Complete the book to the best of your ability
7. Coloring Is allowed and encouraged. As well as completing pages from other age divisions. **NO EXTRA CREDIT POINTS** will be given for this. **HOWEVER**, Extra contribution could be used to determine top awards if needed. Such as a Tie.
8. Creativity, effort, correctness, and completeness will all be used in judging this record book.
9. **ALL PROJECT RECORD BOOKS MUST BE TURNED IN MAY 1st**.
10. Books will be judged and the top 10 scores in each division will receive placing, with Grand and Reserve if warranted.

Start Date of Book ____/____/____

Please Sign below saying I have read all the above requirements and I understand all of them.

Exhibitor _____

_____/2 points

Project Record Book

All Pages will need to Be completed for this to be Graded. Project record book is a requirement for their horse project. **If Not Completed exhibitor will not be allowed to participate in any Grand and Reserve Classes at Fair.** See horse project record book requirements page for other options.

This Year all age groups will complete the whole book.

<u>Names of Pages</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Your Score</u>
Front Cover	7	_____
HPRB Requirements	2	_____
General Info	22	_____
Horse Color	11	_____
English Saddle Parts	13	_____
Hoof Parts	9	_____
Hoof Care	21	_____
Horse Grooming	10	_____
Horse Parts	23	_____
Mini Horse	25	_____
Mini horse cont	25	_____
Western Saddle Parts	17	_____
Vocab words	25	_____
Bits	21	_____
Leads	13	_____
Leads cont	9	_____
Color contest	1	_____
Total	254	_____

General Information

Name of horse _____ Age _____

Breed _____ Reg. or grade _____

Sex _____ Height _____ Color _____

Marking _____

Pedigree

Horse is owned by? Me My Family Leased

Name of breed association _____

How long have you owned your horse? _____ was he raised by you? _____

Who feeds your horse? _____

Do any others ride him other than you? _____ If Yes, Why? _____

What is your horse trained to do? _____

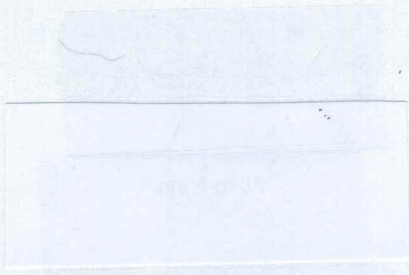
What have you taught or plan to teach him this year? _____

How do you plan to become a better horseman? _____

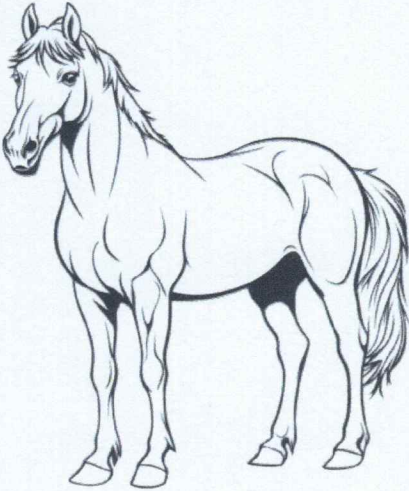
What major goal do you plan to attain or what skill do you plan to develop during the course of this project? _____

What 4-H horse activities do you plan to participate in this year? _____

How do you plan to help others appreciate and enjoy horses? _____



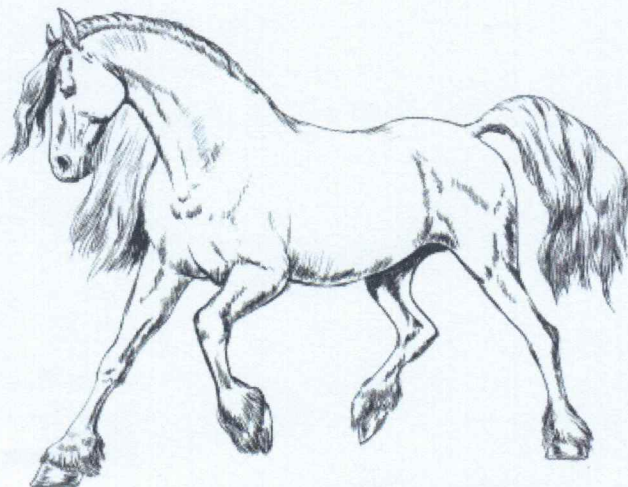
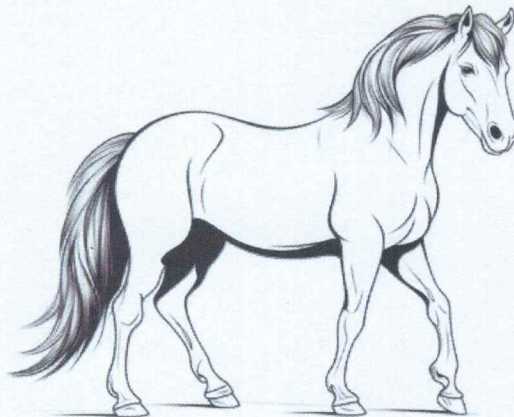
Color Each horse like the description next to them.



This horse is a Bay with 4 white Socks and a Star on his forehead.



This horse is a black and white leopard appaloosa. With one large heart shaped spot on his barrel.



This horse is a dabble Grey. With a brand that says LUCKY on his neck. Hoofs are black in color.



Hoof Care & Problems

References are pages 47-50 of the Horse and Horsemanship Book and the Disease Reference page.

1. Healthy hooves can grow how many inches per month?
2. Trimming the horses feet so they stand _____ will alleviate strain on the tendons and also help prevent _____, _____, and _____.
3. What are the 3 main functions of the hoof?
4. What are some common hoof problems that can be corrected by trimming?
5. Why would you want to shoe your horse?
6. What is laminitis?
7. **True or False:** Lameness results when a horse travels in a consistent manner with its natural movement.
8. **True or False:** Ringbone is new bone growth on the long pastern bone, short pastern bone or coffin bone.
9. Pigeon toe means the _____ are turned in and the heels are turned _____. This can be helped or _____ by trimming the _____ of the foot.
10. What is thrush and how do you treat it?
11. What is Navicular Disease and how do you treat it?

21 points/ _____

Parts of the Hoof

References are the **Horse and Horsemanship Book Pages 47-50.**

Label each part of the hoof.

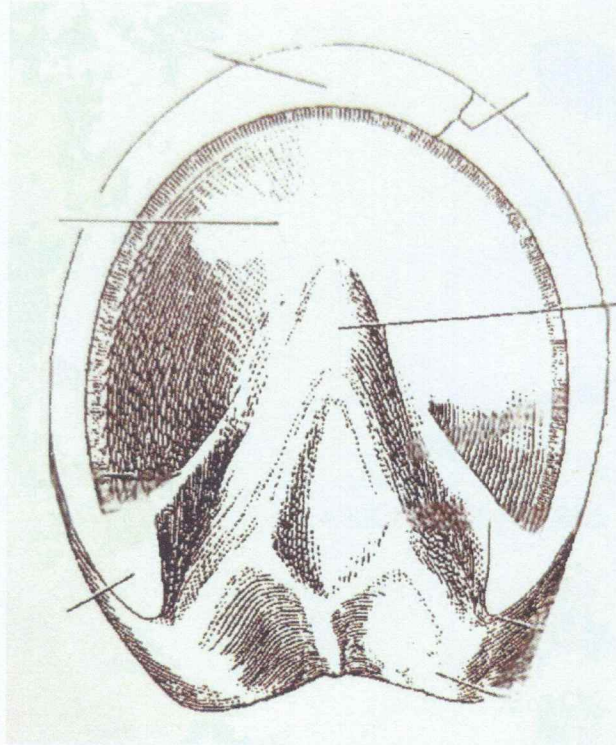
Point of Frog

Sole

Toe

Wall

Heel



Hoof Problems

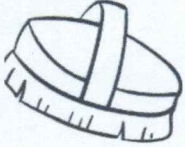

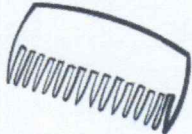

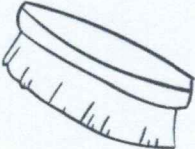
Answer the questions accordingly.

1. Name 2 hoof problems and what they are.
2. Founder is a serious ailment of the sensitive laminae possibly caused by overeating grain or lush pasture. What is another name for founder?
3. What is lameness?
4. Thrush is a disease that is found in what part of the horse's hoof?

9 points/ _____

Horse Grooming Tools & Functions

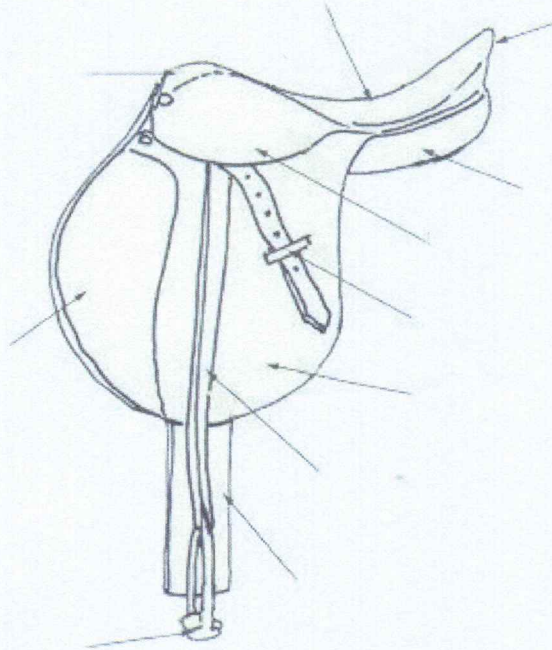
Label the name and fill in the description of each grooming tool using the 4H Horses and Horsemanship Book.

PICTURE	NAME	DESCRIPTION
		
		
		
		
		

10 points/ _____

English Saddle Parts

Label the parts of the saddle using the 4-H Horses & Horsemanship book.



- A. Pommel
- B. Flap
- C. Stirrup Iron
- D. Skirt
- E. Rear Panel
- F. Cantle
- G. Stirrup Leather
- H. Girth
- I. Keeper
- J. Knee Roll
- K. Seat

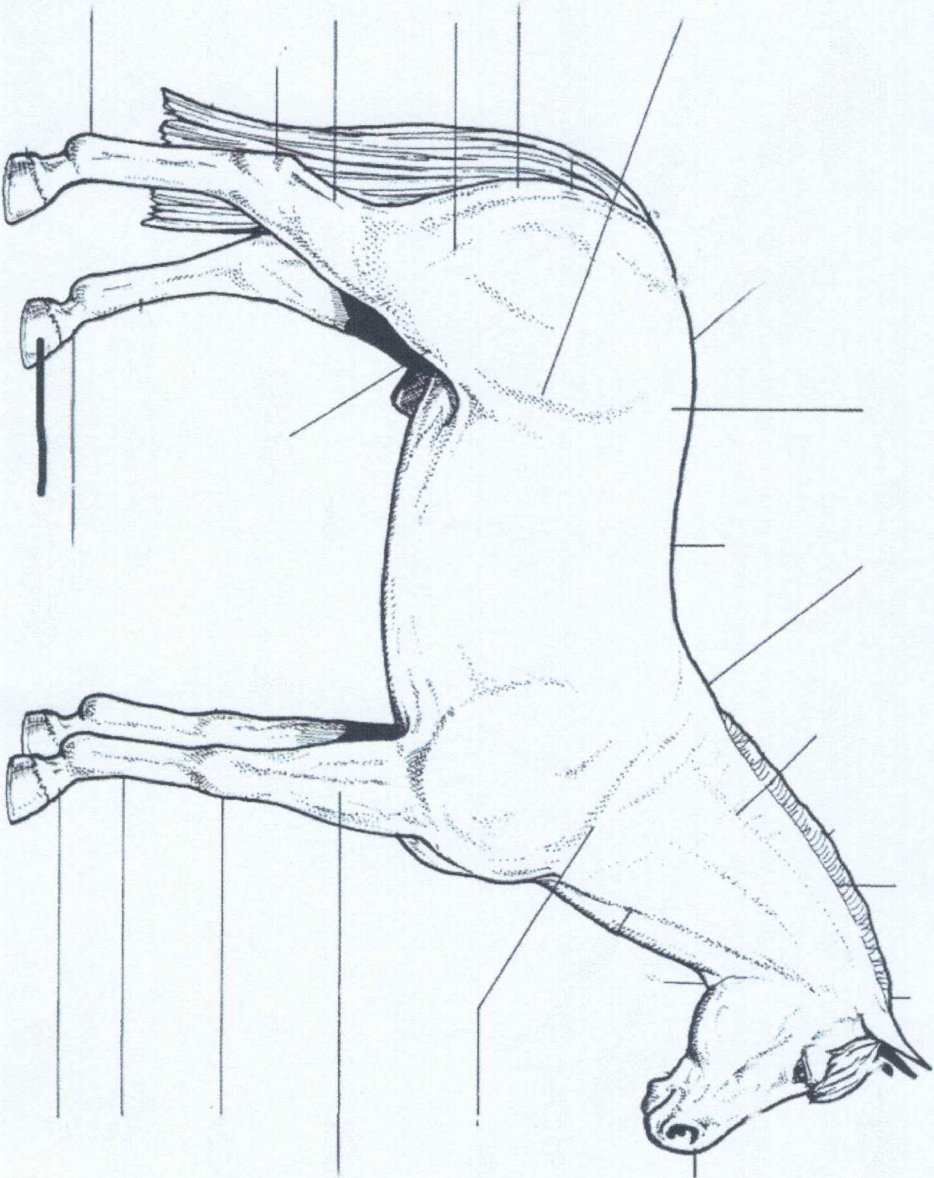
1. Why was the saddle seat developed?

2. What types of riding is the hunt or forward seat saddle used for?

13 points/ _____

Parts of the Horse

Label the parts below using the 4-H Horses & Horsemanship book.



23 points/ _____

MINIATURE HORSE

Use the Michigan 4-H Miniature Horse Show Guidelines 2019 to complete this page – found on Horse Leaders Website

Answer True or False to the following.

Horses need to be registered to show at Michigan 4H shows _____
or the Michigan 4H State Miniature Horse Shows. _____

Any exhibitor may wear protective headgear in any division _____
or class without penalty from the judge(s). _____

A hunter/jumper miniature horse must be 3 years or under. _____

A miniature horse is 38 inches or over when measured _____
at the last few hairs of the mane. _____

An exhibitor's outfit should not be the dividing factor in _____
placings. _____

Fill-In the Blanks on the following

Jumper In-Hand class is designed to test the _____
of the horse. The class is judged on _____ and _____.

Color class is judged _____ on color. The classes should be _____
into _____ color and _____.

In-Hand Trail / Obstacle class is judged on the performance of the horse over the _____
_____, with emphasis on _____, response to the _____
and _____.

There are a _____ of different styles of _____
and the driver's _____ should coordinate with the driving _____
_____. Driving _____ and gloves are _____
_____ but optional. Attire should be _____.

MINIATURE HORSE

All Ages Complete

Use the Michigan 4-H Miniature Horse Show Guidelines 2019 to complete this page – found on Horse Leaders Website

Answer True or False to the following.

Miniature horses are 38 inches or under when measured at the last few hairs of the mane. _____

Miniature horses can be shown body clipped or shown in full coat. _____

A driving miniature horse must be 3 years or under. _____

The height of a miniature horse is the vertical distance from the last hairs of the mane to the ground when the animal is standing squarely on a level area. _____

An exhibitor's outfit should be the dividing factor in placings. _____

Fill-In the Blanks on the following

The Miniature Horse is to be shown to its best _____ with a preference that the horse stand _____. Horses may be shown with or without _____ hooves.

Color class is judged _____ on color. The classes should be divided into _____ color and _____ - _____.

Showmanship is designed to evaluate the _____ ability to execute, in concert with a _____ and conditioned horse, a set of maneuvers prescribed by the judge with precision and smoothness while exhibiting poise and _____ and maintaining a balanced appearance.

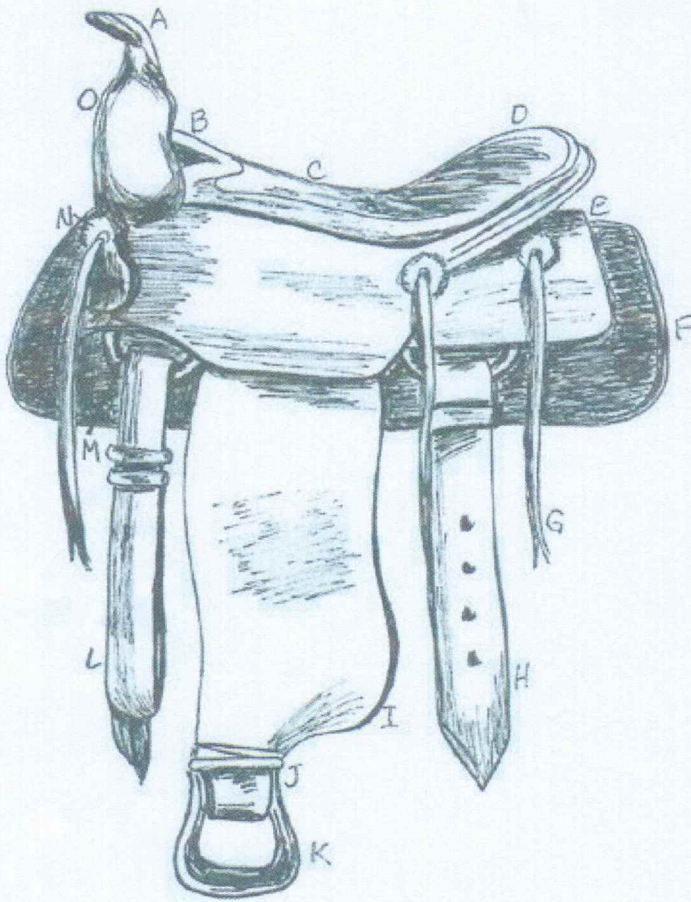
Liberty is demonstrating the natural _____ of the horse. Horses are to be judged on _____, grace, animation, gaits, presence and ease of _____. The liberty animal is expected to perform at both a canter and _____.

The Jumper In-Hand class is designed to _____ the athletic ability of the horse. The class is judged on _____ and accuracy.

The In-Hand Hunter class is judged on _____, manners and way of going. Preference is given to those _____ that cover the course at an even pace, with _____ strides, such as a brisk trot or _____, must maintain the same gait throughout the entire course.

Western Saddle Parts

Label the parts of the saddle and answer the questions below using the 4-H Horses & Horsemanship book.



- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____
- G. _____
- H. _____
- I. _____
- J. _____
- K. _____
- L. _____
- M. _____
- N. _____
- O. _____

1. What were western saddles originally developed for?

2. What are all the uses of a western saddle?

VOCABULARY WORDS

Fill-In the Blank with the word or words that fit the description.

- _____ Mane, tail and legs black or darker than the rest of the horse.
- _____ A straw yellow or dirty white. It is normally caused by a mixture of dark hair in with the white.
- _____ Too much belly.
- _____ Heavy contact with ground instead of desired light, springy movements.
- _____ Controlled gait; a correct coordinated action.
- _____ The distance from imprint to imprint by a horse's foot when completing one step.
- _____ Art of riding the horse and understanding its needs.
- _____ A noseband on a bridle.
- _____ The part of the mouthpiece of a bit curving up over the tongue.
- _____ Usually refers to hair that is clean and glossy, denoting a healthy appearance.
- _____ Is a poor substitute for regular grooming, since it removes the protective oil of the hair and skin.
- _____ One who rides a horse without control, letting the horse go as it wishes.
- _____ A disease of the foot characterized by a pungent odor.
- _____ Are a bruise of the sole at the angle of the wall and the bar of the hoof.
- _____ The male parent (father).
- _____ A horse that refuses to leave a group of other horses.
- _____ Difficult breathing, lung damage.
- _____ Any mark or blemish that impairs usefulness, unsoundness.
- _____ The small teeth that may appear in front of the upper molars, generally found in male horses.
- _____ A female foal up to three years.
- _____ Is a ration that contains all of the digestible nutrients that will properly nourish an animal for 24 hours.
- _____ Is required for eye functions, bone development and the proper formation of cells.
- _____ Are important for active horses and may serve as the only feed for idle horses.
- _____ May be transmitted from one animal to another by direct or indirect contact.
- _____ Is an abdominal pain.

25 points/ _____

What is the best horse bit to use? Short answer: it depends.

There's no denying the fact that the world of bits can be complicated! We'll try to simplify things by reviewing how bits work and discussing the important factors that may influence your choice. Then, we'll run through some common bits ranked from least to most harsh.

How Do Horse Bits Work?

Horse bits rest inside the horse's mouth between a natural gap in the horse's teeth, called the "bar." A rider moves the bit by moving the reins. Depending on the bit's design, rein movement will apply pressure to the horse's lower jaw, sides of the mouth, tongue, or roof of the mouth. Some bits also pull on the bridle so that pressure is applied to the top of the head (called the poll). Others are paired with chin straps, which tighten under the horse's chin. *The purpose of a bit is not to inflict pain or "muscle a horse around" to force it to do what we want.*

Through a proper training program, horses can learn how to respond to distinct movements of the bit, and riders with soft hands don't need to do much more than close their fingers around the reins to elicit the correct response from a horse. Such a **training program** usually begins by teaching a horse to "yield to pressure," which is another way of saying "move into the pressure to release it." We don't want horses to lean into pressure to resist it; we're not strong enough to win such a tug-of-war. With that said, some bits do help horses behave in a particular way, which can make it easier to teach them what we want them to do. For example, some bits encourage horses to lick and chew, which naturally softens their jaw and helps them relax. Others discourage horses from sticking their noses into the air like giraffes.

How Do I Choose the Right Bit for My Horse?

There is no "right" bit for every horse in existence. Choosing the right bit for your horse might require some trial and error. Think about:

- **Which discipline you ride:** While there are certainly some all-purpose bits, what's appropriate for a reiner probably won't work for a Saddlebred because they have different movements (low versus high head carriage, for example).
- **Whether or not you attend shows:** You can ride your horse in any bit at home, but you may not be able to use it at a show depending on the association's guidelines.
- **What problems you're having with your horse:** Certain bits can help you tune-up your horse when it's having a problem.
- **Whether you sometimes rely on the reins for balance:** You'll want to stick with mild bits, for now, so you don't poke your horse in the mouth on accident.
- **What your horse is already used to:** A horse that expects you to communicate by applying pressure to his tongue and jaw might feel confused when the pressure is suddenly applied to other parts of his mouth or head.

Horse Bits in Order of Harshness.

Gentle Horse Bits

Mullen Mouth With O-Rings

A **Mullen mouth bit** features a smooth, flat mouthpiece with no joints, twists, or rollers. It may be slightly curved. It can be combined with any cheekpiece, but O-rings provide the mildest action.

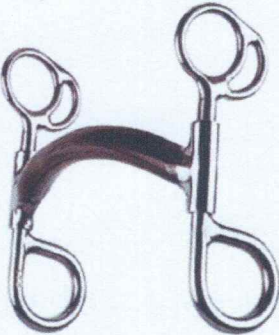


What you should know:

- Applies mild, evenly-distributed pressure to the jaw and tongue. Take care to ensure the mouthpiece is not too thick for your horse's mouth
- **Best suited for:**
- Green horses
- Beginner riders
- Trail rides

Colt Bit

A colt bit looks a lot like a **Mullen mouth**, but always has short shanks, giving it a mild curb action. A grazing bit's mouthpiece often has a slight curve in it to lift pressure off the tongue when at rest.



What you should know:

- Applies mild, evenly-distributed pressure across tongue and jaw. Also called a colt-starting bit. The more curved the shanks, the milder the bit. Can still be severe, if used roughly

Best suited for:

- Green horses
- Beginner riders
- Western disciplines
- Trail rides

Loose Ring French Link Snaffle

A **French link snaffle** has two joints connected via a "lozenge" in the center of the mouthpiece. Considered one of the mildest snaffle bits. Pair it with the most forgiving cheekpiece (O-ring or loose ring) for the gentlest action.



Best suited for:

- Horses of all levels
- Riders of all levels
- Any discipline

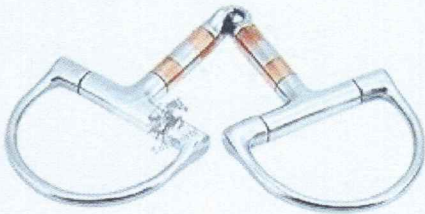
What you should know:

- Applies mild pressure to jaw, tongue, and roof of mouth. Slight variations exist in terms of the width of the mouthpiece and size of the lozenge. Lozenge may be copper to promote salivation and a softer jaw. For slightly clearer or more prompt communication, pair with a D-ring or eggbutt cheekpiece instead

Intermediate Horse Bits

Single Joint Snaffles

A **single joint snaffle** can apply significant pressure to the jaw thanks to its nutcracker action. Therefore, it's not ideal for heavy-handed riders or horses who don't stop well.



What you should know:

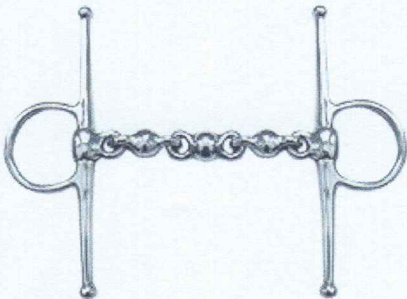
- Available in many different widths; this is considered more severe. Can be paired with any kind of cheekpiece, including shanks. Applies pressure to jaw and bars of the mouth, as well as tongue and roof of the mouth

Best suited for:

- Riders with light hands
- Horses with some foundational training

Waterford Snaffles

Waterford mouthpieces feature a "ball and chain" design with multiple joints. Pair with loose rings for the mildest action.



What you should know:

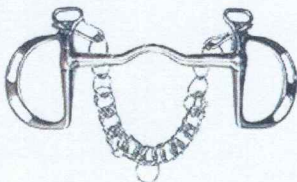
- Distributes pressure evenly across the tongue and jaw. Considered mild due to lack of nutcracker action. Can be severe if rider "saws" with their hands

Best suited for:

- Horses who lean on the bit
- Horses who cross their jaw to grab the bit
- Riders with soft, independent hands

Kimberwick

A **Kimberwick** is a type of curb bit. They feature two slots for reins and can have many different mouthpieces, but often have an unjointed bar with a hump (port) in the middle.



Best suited for:

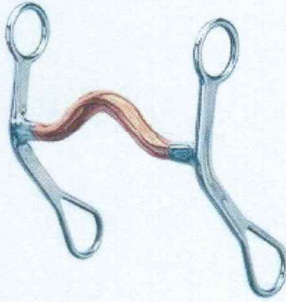
- Horses that don't stop well
- Horses that like to lift their heads
- Horses with some training
- Riders with independent hands

What you should know:

- A low port is considered milder than a high port. Use lower rein slot for more leverage. Use upper rein slot for more direct action. Horses may actually find this bit more comfortable because the port provides more space for the tongue. Must be used with a curb chain. Applies pressure to the jaw, tongue, roof of mouth, poll, and chin
- May incur a penalty at a hunter show
- May not be permissible in Western shows

Ported Curb Bit

A **ported curb bit** looks just like a colt bit, but has a port in the mouthpiece.



What you should know:

- A low port is considered milder than a high port. Some may include rollers on the port to help the horse soften its jaw. Longer shanks make this bit more severe. Shanks should be curved.

Best suited for:

- Western horses
- Beginner riders who have learned not to hang onto the horse's mouth
- Green horses already used to a colt bit

Advanced Horse Bits

Twisted and Double Twisted Wire Snaffles

These **thin jointed mouthpieces** work like a single-jointed or French link snaffle, but with a little extra "kick." Some trainers prefer to use them to prevent horses from becoming dull in the mouth, since it doesn't take much pressure to elicit a response.



What you should know:

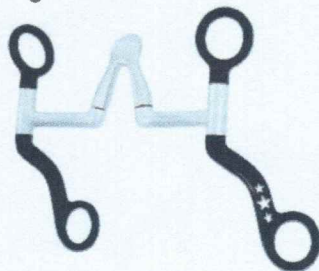
- Can be paired with any cheekpiece. Double twisted wire snaffles are more severe than single

Best suited for:

- Riders with independent hands - Horses that need a tune-up to become more responsive to a bit
- Young horses in the hands of a professional only

Cathedral, Spoon, Spade, and Correction Bits

These **curb bits** go by several different names, but feature a mouthpiece with a large, narrow port in the middle. The top of the port may flatten out to a small or significant degree.



What you should know:

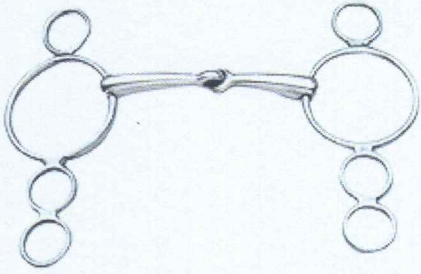
- Mouthpieces may be solid or swiveled. Larger ports are considered more severe. Many feature a roller under the port to help the horse relax its jaw. The horse is expected to pick up and hold this bit in his mouth.

Best suited for:

- Advanced riders
- Advanced horses
- Western disciplines

Elevator Bits and Gag Bits

These bits might look a little different, but they all rely on a significant amount of leverage. Some **elevator bits** have multiple rings that allow the rider to adapt it to different horses.



What you should know:

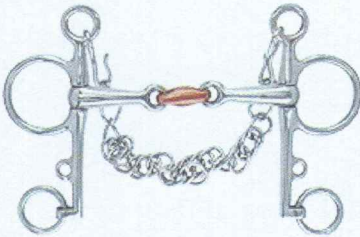
- Reins attached to the largest ring of an elevator bit allow it to work like a snaffle (no leverage). Placing the reins further away from the mouthpiece will result in stronger leverage

Best suited for:

- Advanced riders
- Advanced horses
- Horses who do not stop well

Pelhams or Double Bridles

Some disciplines, like dressage or saddleseat, favor the use of double bridles. A snaffle bit and a curb bit sit in the horse's mouth at the same time, and the rider holds two sets of reins in order to control each bit independently. A **pelham bit** mimics the function of a double bridle, but with just one mouthpiece.



What you should know:

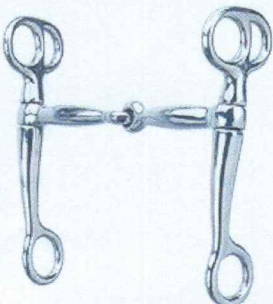
- Pelham can be used with two sets of reins, as only a snaffle, or as only a curb bit. Needs a curb chain if used as a curb bit. The longer the shanks, the more severe the curb action. Can feature any type of snaffle mouthpiece. Pelhams are allowed in hunter competitions but may not be allowed in dressage

Best suited for:

- Advanced riders
- Advanced horses
- Horses who lean on the forehand

Tom Thumb

Tom Thumbs are leverage bits with straight shanks. In other words, the shanks do not curve backward. This design makes them very severe, as any rein movement immediately transfers to the bit. (Curved shanks provide some "advanced warning" and allow the horse to respond quickly before any further pressure is required.)



What you should know:

- Can have any type of mouthpiece, but most often seen with a single joint. The longer the shanks, the more severe the bit.

Best suited for:

- Advanced riders who can communicate with their seat and voice before using the reins
- Strong horses

Horse Bit Severity Chart

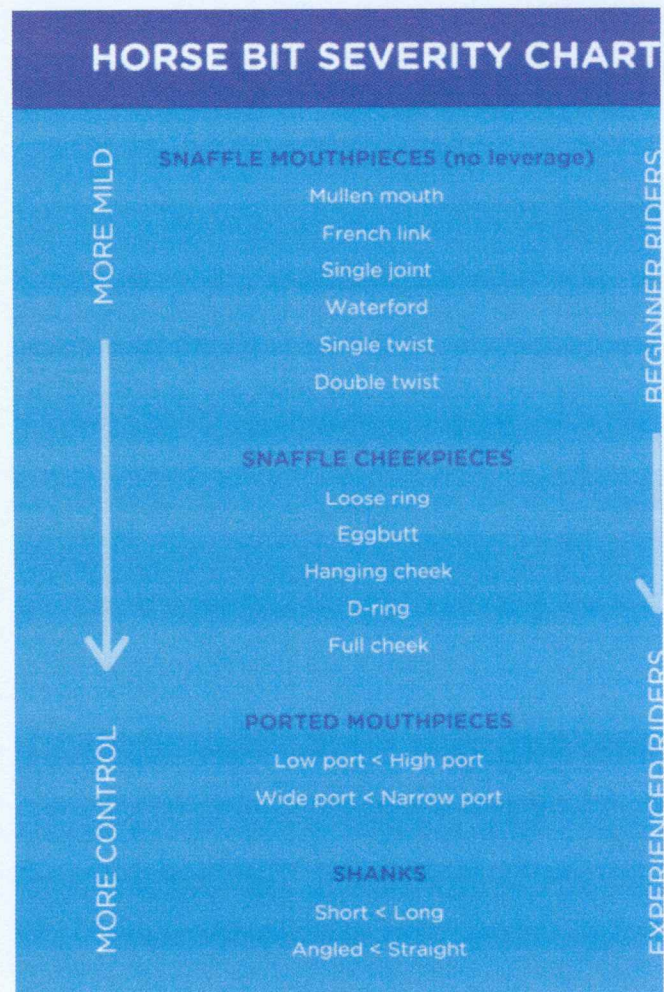
While the perfect horse/bit match is unique to each pair, the chart below shows how common bits rank from more mild to more control. Remember that all riders should learn to ride with quiet, kind hands. Bits with more control or leverage should only be

What is the best horse bit for trail riding?

Typically, you can use the same bit that a horse likes in the arena. Consider using a gentler bit for a more relaxing ride or a stronger bit if your horse needs a little reminder that you exist while out in open country.

What is the best horse bit for control?

The **best horse bit for control** will depend on the problem. A horse that doesn't like to stop, for example, may benefit from switching to a snaffle (direct



What is the best horse bit for beginner riders?

The **best horse bit for beginner riders** is the gentlest bit that still allows that rider to be taken seriously by the horse. For some, this might be a Mullen mouth snaffle. For others, it might be a low port kimberwick.

What is the best bit for a horse that pulls?

Try a **Waterford** paired with a loose ring. Also, make sure the bit isn't too high or too low in the horse's mouth.

What is the best bit for a green horse?

A green horse should wear a bit that doesn't send too many complicated signals. For that reason, trainers often choose a Mullen mouth snaffle. The horse can focus on learning what it means to feel pressure on the tongue and corners of the mouth.

Later, other types of pressure can be introduced with slightly more complicated bits.

Read the pages above and answer the questions

Fill in the blanks

1. Horse bits rest _____ the horse's mouth between a natural _____ in the horse's teeth, called the "bar." A rider moves the _____ by moving the reins.
2. Through a proper _____ program, horses can _____ how to respond to distinct movements of the bit, and riders with _____ hands don't need to do much more than close their fingers around the reins to elicit the _____ response from a horse.
3. There is _____ "right" bit for every horse in existence. Choosing the right bit for your horse might require some _____ and _____.
4. Typically, you can use the _____ bit that a horse likes in the arena.
5. The **best horse bit for control** will depend on the _____. A horse that doesn't like to stop, for example, may _____ from switching to a _____ (direct action) or to a _____ (leverage action).

Using the Horse Bit Severity Chart answer the questions

6. Is a French link bit a good bit to use for beginners? _____
7. Which bit has more control? Eggbutt or a Low ported mouthpiece?

8. A angle Shank bit should be used by what kind of rider? _____

Below tell me what kind of bit your horse uses. Do you think this bit is good for your horse? WHY? _____

How to Cue a Horse for the Correct Lead

Here are exercises to ensure you always pick up the correct lead at the canter.

The Canter: Explained

What does it mean to “canter”?

The canter is the horse's gait one speed faster than a trot. It's a three-beat gait that usually starts with the outside back leg - the leg closest to the arena rail - followed by the inside hind leg and outside front leg in a diagonal pair, finishing with the front inside leg sweeping forward.

What is a “lead”?

The lead is determined by the front leg that is sweeping forward last in the canter stride sequence. The horse will stretch that inside front leg and the inside hind leg further forward than the outside legs with each stride.

How do you tell if a horse is on the correct lead?

You can notice the horse's lead just from watching which front leg swings forward last and further before the horse repeats the stride.

The easiest way to find a lead is by looking down at the horse's shoulders. The shoulder going further forward, the one that is last hitting the ground between each stride, is the lead.

The “correct” lead is when the horse's inside front leg is leading first. For example: When the horse is cantering a circle to the right, the horse's right front leg should be leading first. That means you are on the right lead, which is the correct lead for when your circle is turning to the right.

Why is picking up the correct lead necessary?

1. **The horse's lead influences its balance and control**, especially when you're turning a corner. If you were on the right lead while turning left, the horse's left back leg would bear twice as much weight because that is not only his driving leg, but his balancing one as well. So that one leg is bearing the weight of the inside of the turn and bearing the weight of the gait.
2. **It can be dangerous** if you turn a corner too sharply on the wrong lead.
3. **AQHA rules state that riding on the wrong lead can be anything from a major fault** - a 10-point deduction - to complete disqualification for riders who fail to pick up the correct lead at all. To excel in AQHA English classes, such as hunt seat equitation, riders need to know their leads

without looking down to check - looking down is a minor fault resulting in a five-point deduction.

4. **Nothing marks you a newbie like riding around on the wrong lead, and it can even be dangerous if you turn too sharply.**

Right Lead vs. Left Lead: Learning Leads

I encourage newer riders to start [learning to canter](#) on a longe line. My students typically spend a lot of time at a walk and trot before they ever canter, so they are less likely to hang on the horse's mouth during transitions.

When riders feel a bit unsteady, a neck strap is a great tool to keep them from hanging on their reins for balance.

Beginner Level: Look Down to Find the Lead

It's best to learn leads while on a [longe line](#) to allow riders to focus on what they're feeling as someone else is guiding the horse. The smaller circle exaggerates the movement of the horse, allowing riders to feel the strides more deeply. It's a lot easier to feel the correct lead on that smaller circle.

At this point, when you're on the longe line and learning leads, don't be afraid to look down at the horse's shoulders. The lead is the shoulder going forward, hitting the ground between each stride.

Expert Level: Feel the Lead

While riders can find their leads visually, if they want to excel in the show pen, they must be able to feel what lead they are on without looking down to check.

How to Pick Up the Correct Lead

Every time you get ready to pick up a canter, go through your departure checklist to cue the horse to canter:

1. Maintain contact with the horse's face through your reins.
2. Make sure his nose is tipped in the direction you want to go.
3. Close the inside leg and press at the girth.
4. Bring the outside leg back 2 or 3 inches and add pressure to the rib cage to help keep the correct lead.
5. Support with your inside leg.

What does the correct lead feel like?

As you sit on your horse at a canter, your body should feel your inside hip - the one on the center of the circle versus the outside - swing up just a little bit higher than your outside hip. That is the signal that you're on the correct lead.

Experienced riders can usually tell which lead they're on as the horse strikes off into the canter, based on his body position. Lots of times, when horses strike off

on a lead, they take a slight step to the inside with their haunches and step into that lead, because their outside back leg has to step underneath them to push off.

How do you correct a horse that's on the wrong lead?

If you do pick up the wrong lead, break your horse down to the walk and ask for it again. When this happens at a crucial moment, such as during a pattern in a class, I always tell clients to use that experience. Think about what happened to make you get to that mistake. What happened with your horse - where did you fail in the communication department?

Read the information about Leads then answer the questions

Fill in the blanks

1. The _____ is the horse's gait one speed _____ than a trot. It's a _____ gait that usually starts with the outside back leg – the leg closest to the arena rail – followed by the inside _____ leg and outside front leg in a diagonal pair, finishing with the front inside leg _____ forward.
2. The lead is _____ by the front leg that is sweeping forward last in the canter _____ sequence. The horse will stretch that inside front leg and the inside hind leg
3. _____ forward than the outside legs with each stride
4. The easiest way to _____ a lead is by looking _____ at the horse's shoulders. The shoulder going further forward, the one that is last _____ the ground between each stride, is the lead.
5. The "correct" _____ is when the horse's _____ front leg is leading first.

_____/13 points

True or False

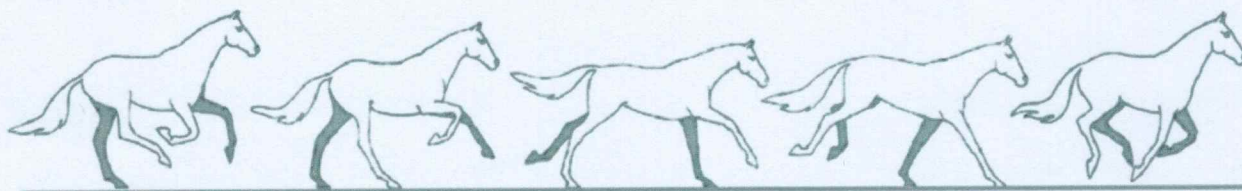
5. _____ The horse's lead influences its balance and control, especially when you're turning a corner.

6. _____ It can be fun if you turn a corner too sharply on the wrong lead.

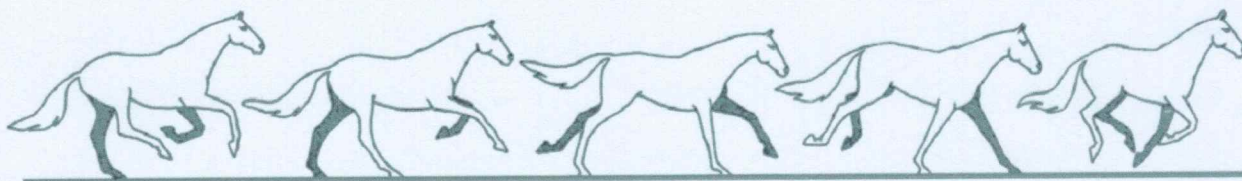
7. _____ As you sit on your horse at a canter, your body should feel your outside hip – the one on the center of the circle versus the outside – swing up just a little bit higher than your outside hip.

8. _____ It's best to learn leads while on a **longe line** to allow riders to focus on what they're feeling as someone else is guiding the horse.

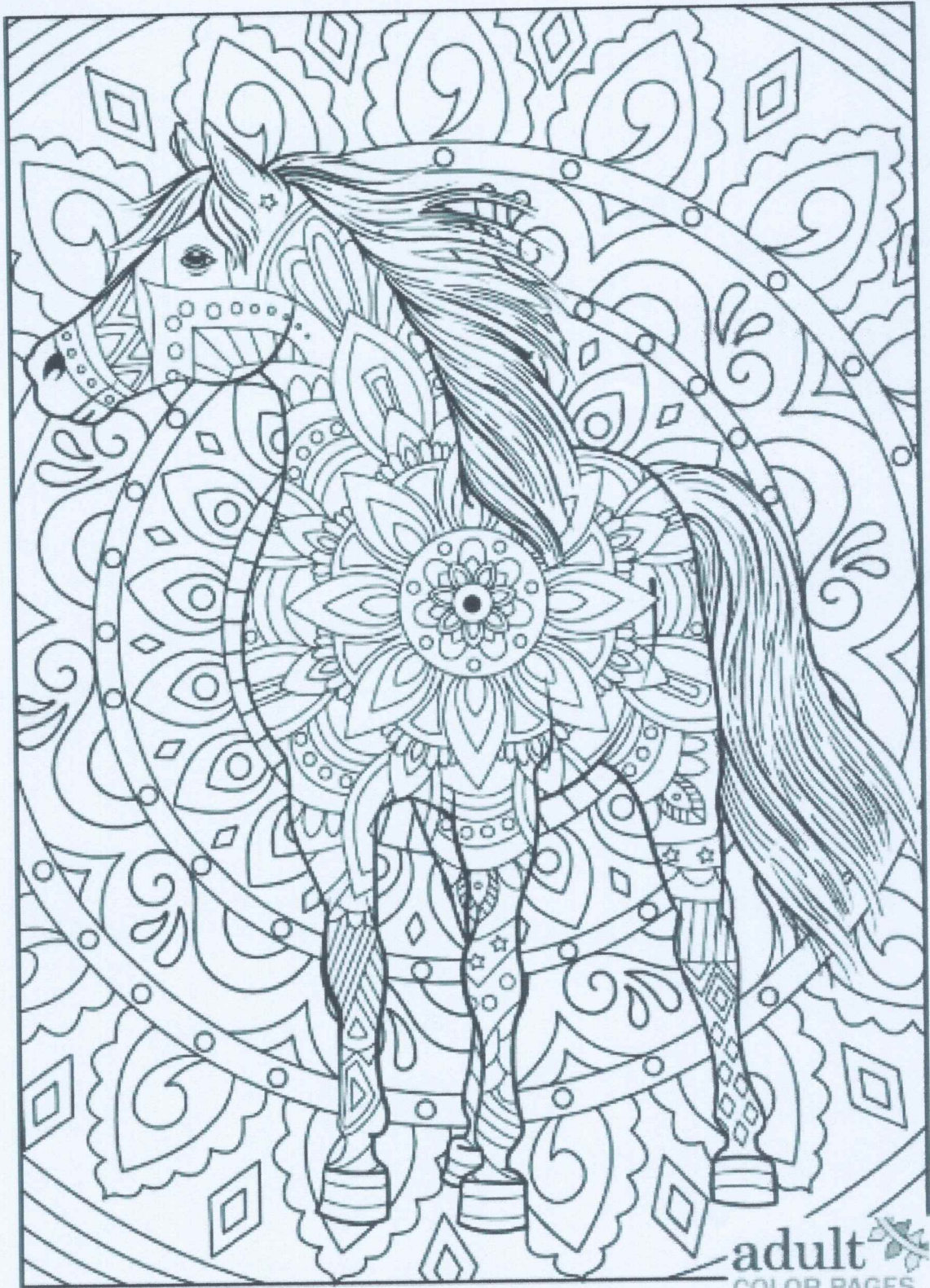
9. _____ While riders can find their leads visually, if they want to excel in the show pen, they must be able to feel what lead they are on without looking down to check.



The horse above is traveling to the right is the horse on the correct lead? How can you tell?



This horse is also traveling to the right is the horse on the correct lead? How can you tell?



adult
COLOR PAGES

Date Finished _____

1 point/