

## NYS 4-H Horse Program Riding Level Evaluation Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Age (age on Jan 1 of current 4-H year): \_\_\_\_\_

Age on Date of Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Riding Level Ridden: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Leader(s): \_\_\_\_\_

### Check the Riding Level for which this child is seeking evaluation:

- Lead Line:** The youth is mounted and led by a side walker, who is 18 years of age or older and has horse related experience. A properly fitted halter must be over the bridle and a lead line must be attached to the ring at the bottom of the halter, not on the side of the bit. Youth must be capable of holding the reins in their hands. Youth will not be asked to back their horse. Youth at this level cannot qualify for State Fair.
- Walk/trot or Walk/jog:** Youth can be Cloverbud or older non-cloverbud youth. The child is mounted and can ride safely in walk/trot or walk/jog situations. Youth may or may not be expected to know their diagonals, depending on the level ridden, or the class entered. The youth will not be asked to back their horse. The youth must be able to control their horse in a group setting. Separate events/classes must be held for Cloverbud youth. Youth at this level cannot qualify for State Fair.
- Walk/Trot/Canter or Walk/Jog/Lope (diagonals to count, no leads to count):** This level is designed for youth who are not a Cloverbud, who have mastered the skills of walking, trotting or jogging and cantering or loping the horse safely, but not the skill of asking for the correct lead at the canter. The youth may be asked to back their horse. The youth must be able to control their horse in a group setting. Youth at this level cannot qualify for State Fair.
- Walk/Trot/Canter or Walk/Jog/Lope (leads and diagonals to count):** Youth must have mastered the skills of walking, trotting or jogging, and cantering or loping the horse safely. Youth must know their diagonals and be able to canter the horse on the correct lead. The youth may be asked to back their horse. Youth at this level may need to do independent patterns or more complicated riding skills demonstrations, depending on the classes they enter. The youth must be able to control their horse in a group setting.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Parent/Guardian Signature signifies that the child and parent are interested in this child having a riding experience; and that the parent is giving their approval for this "Riding Level Evaluation" to be performed.*

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### This youth has been evaluated and approved to ride at (check the appropriate level below):

- Lead Line
- Walk/Trot or Walk/Jog
- Walk/Trot/Canter or Walk/Jog/Lope (diagonals to count, leads do not)
- Walk/Trot/Canter or Walk/Jog/Lope (diagonals and leads to count)
- No Level – this child should not be considered to have a riding experience at this time

Evaluator Signatures or Initials (3 recommended) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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### INSTRUCTIONS ON THE USE OF THIS FORM.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

- This form is to be used for all 4-H youth who have riding experience and are being evaluated for CCE/4-H sponsored programs and events.
  - This Riding Level Evaluation Form is not required for club activities.
  - Any Cloverbud youth must have been evaluated using the “Cloverbud – On the Ground Skills Evaluation Form, been involved in “riding experiences” and have demonstrated their ability to ride safely before they are to be involved in county sponsored programs and events. All Cloverbud policies apply (see the NYS 4-H Cloverbud Leader Handbook).
  - A youth who wishes to “move up” a level must be re-evaluated.
  - Any youths who have previously been evaluated to ride safely in the Junior or Senior levels do not need to be re-evaluated, unless a need is determined.
  - It is recommended that there be a riding level evaluation committee consisting of three (3) individuals with suitable horse and riding experience to perform the evaluation. It is suggested that this committee consist of a 4-H leader, a parent of a 4-H youth and a riding instructor when possible. Other possible combinations may be determined by the county Cornell Cooperative Extension Association or educator. A child may not be evaluated by their own parent or guardian.
  - It is recommended that youth score at least a “2 – fair amount of skill” in all applicable categories, and a score of “3 – good skills” or “4 – excellent skills” in at least half of the applicable categories on the evaluation form before the youth is considered to be a candidate to ride a horse.
  - Youth should be evaluated as a part of the horse and rider combination intending to participate in the programs and events whenever possible.
  - It is important to consider the horse that the youth will be riding. Special care should be taken to help ensure the horse and rider combination is appropriate and that the combination is a safe match. The disposition of a suitable youth’s mount should be quiet, gentle and of a calm nature. The level of training of the horse should be appropriate for the level of rider. The size and body type of the horse and its suitability to the youth, and the youth’s body type should also be considered when choosing an appropriate mount for a youth. Ideally, the horse should be small enough that the youth’s legs are positioned under the youth’s body and at least half way down the side of the horse.
  - Evaluation forms should be kept on file in the county CCE/4-H office.
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## NYS 4-H Horse Program Riding Level Evaluation Form

Use the following scale to evaluate the youth's skills:  
**0 = not at all, 1 = little skill, 2 = fair amount of skill, 3 = good skills, 4 = excellent skills, blank = NA**

<b>On the Ground</b>	
<b>Does the Youth: (circle the appropriate number)</b>	
show the desire to ride and possibly exhibit a horse?	0 1 2 3 4
demonstrate the ability to understand and follow instructions?	0 1 2 3 4
have an adequate attention span for riding and possibly exhibiting a horse?	0 1 2 3 4
appear to have the muscle strength to maintain a proper riding position and hold their head in position when wearing a helmet?	0 1 2 3 4
demonstrate that they have adequate balance to stay in position when riding?	0 1 2 3 4
work safely around the horse?	0 1 2 3 4
work quietly around the horse without being loud?	0 1 2 3 4
work softly around the horse, without quick and abrupt body movement?	0 1 2 3 4
know how to move around and behind the rear of the horse?	0 1 2 3 4
know that they must always wear a riding helmet when riding a horse?	0 1 2 3 4
know that they must always wear equestrian footwear with a distinguishable heel when riding a horse?	0 1 2 3 4
know that they should mainly work around the left side of the horse?	0 1 2 3 4
know the left side from the right side of the horse?	0 1 2 3 4
have the ability to lead a horse safely with adult assistance (Cloverbud) or without adult assistance (all other levels)	0 1 2 3 4
show respect for the horse and the fact that the horse can hurt you?	0 1 2 3 4
show confidence when working around the horse?	0 1 2 3 4
show a relaxed attitude about being around a horse?	0 1 2 3 4
<b>Tack and Equipment (circle the appropriate response)</b>	
Is the tack safe for riding?	yes no
Does the tack fit the horse properly?	yes no
Does the tack fit the child properly?	yes no
Does the youth's helmet fit properly?	yes no
Is the youth wearing equestrian footwear with a distinguishable heel?	yes no

<b>Mounted</b>	
<i>Only evaluate the youth at the gaits necessary for the level for which the youth is seeking evaluation. Never ask a child to perform at a level you do not feel he/she is capable of.</i>	
Can the youth safely handle the horse at the walk?	0 1 2 3 4
Does the youth stay in balance with the horse at the walk?	0 1 2 3 4
Does the youth execute a safe and smooth transition to the walk?	0 1 2 3 4
<b>Trot or Jog</b>	
Can the youth safely handle the horse at the trot or jog?	0 1 2 3 4
Does the youth stay in balance at the trot or jog?	0 1 2 3 4
If applicable, does the youth know their diagonals?	0 1 2 3 4
Is the youth successful at riding the correct diagonal?	0 1 2 3 4
Does the youth execute a safe and smooth walk to trot or jog transition?	0 1 2 3 4
<b>Canter/ Lope</b>	
Does the youth safely handle the horse at a canter or lope?	0 1 2 3 4
Does the youth stay in balance with the horse at the canter or lope?	0 1 2 3 4
Does the youth know their leads?	0 1 2 3 4
Can the youth get the horse on the correct lead both ways of the ring?	0 1 2 3 4
Does the youth execute a safe and smooth transition to the canter or lope?	0 1 2 3 4
<b>Halt and Back</b>	
Can the youth stop the horse safely and quickly?	0 1 2 3 4
Can the youth back the horse safely? (Leadline & walk/trot or jog do not back )	0 1 2 3 4
<b>Comments and Suggestions:</b>	

