INSPECTION INFORMATION

Things to Keep in Mind Regarding Inspection

- You will not be penalized for your horse’s behavior. If you need help, we have extra horse handlers.
- We are strictly looking at the cleanliness of you, your horse, and your tack and to be sure that everything is safe. You are not being assessed on how you show your horse. For example, you do not need to switch sides or do anything like you would do in showmanship.
- You are welcomed (encouraged) to bring in your own grooming bucket for any touch-ups as needed.
- It is fine to keep your boots, etc. covered until you are ready to be inspected.
- You may tighten girth just before we get there, but it must be as tight as it would if you were riding and the saddle needs to be in the position it would be in if you were riding.
- Based on the violation, the parent or guardian may be asked to come to discuss fixing the situation so that the horse/pony and rider can safely compete the rest of the day.
  - Once safety violations have been resolved, they must be checked by a safety Inspector prior to snowing in a riding class.

Possible Safety Violations to be aware of:

- Helmet is not fitted correctly and snuggly (see diagram)
- Bridle has been put together incorrectly (i.e. the noseband is attached to the throatlatch) or the bit is in backwards
- Horse’s feet are severely cracked and/or shoes are dangerously loose.
- Elastic on girth is overly/unsafely stretched
- Safety stirrups- rubber worn out (cracked)
- Any cracked leather that could break
- Improperly fitting tack
- Saddle so far back it would be unsafe
- Stirrup Safety Bar on saddle is up and not down (it should be down when you are riding)

NOTE: Parents are allowed to audit but 4-H’er will be responsible to answer questions. If parents have questions, they are allowed to ask at the end of the inspection hour.
Helmet Information

Helmet Tips:

- When you go shopping, wear your hair the way you’ll be wearing it when you ride. A ponytail, clips, headband, or other style can change the way a helmet fits.
- The helmet should feel snug around the entire head without pressure. Shake your head. If there’s no motion, that’s a good sign that it fits.
- It should sit level on your head, covering your forehead. The visor’s brim should be about 1 inch (about the width of two fingers) from your eyebrow.
- When you buckle and adjust the retention system, the chin strap should fit snugly and you should feel comfortable in your helmet.
- Don’t buy a helmet that’s too big, thinking it will fit next year. You need one that fits well now!

Fitting your helmet correctly is as important as wearing one. Fortunately, fitting your helmet can be done in two easy steps.

STEP 1: FIND THE CORRECT SIZE

To be effective, the helmet must fit firmly but comfortably. A helmet that is too loose may shift position as you ride, possibly reducing the helmet’s protective potential, and one that fits too tightly may cause discomfort.

The helmet should sit level on your head, with the front edge just above your eyebrows. (See illustration)

The helmet should not easily roll forward or backward. When you do move the helmet, it should move the skin around your eyebrows. If the skin doesn’t move, the helmet is likely too large. The helmet should feel snug around the entire head without pressure points.

If you feel gaps between your head and the side of the helmet, remove the helmet and use the pads in the areas that have gaps. Smooth the helmet liner with your hand, and try the helmet on again.
Buy the helmet size you need now – don’t plan to grow into your helmet. When you think you have the right size, bow deeply with the retention system unbuckled. If the helmet feels like it may fall off, you may need a smaller size.

**STEP 2: ADJUST THE FIT**

After the helmet fits the crown of the head snugly, it is time to adjust the retention system. Proper adjustment of the fit pads and retention system should be checked each time you wear the helmet to be sure your adjustments have not changed, but generally, once the retention system is adjusted properly, you won’t have to adjust it much more.

Fasten the chinstrap buckle. Adjust each slide glide so that it sits directly below the ear, as in the illustration above.

Next, adjust the webbing next to the male end of the buckle until there is no slack in the strap and fits snugly under your jaw without causing discomfort. You should only be able to fit two fingers between the strap and under the chin. If you yawn, you should feel the retention straps pull the helmet down on the top your head more.

Once the straps are the correct length, pass the loose ends through the keepers. See the illustration above.