



Llama - Alpaca Performance Classes Rules and Guidelines

4-H Llama - Alpaca performance classes

Performance classes are designed to present or stimulate conditions and obstacles that would be encountered in certain situations when llama - alpacas are requested to perform. These classes should demonstrate the intelligence and versatility of the llama - alpaca.

Minnesota 4-H approved performance classes

- A. Obstacle
- B. Public Relations

At the county level, the requirements for obstacle and public relations classes can be combined into one performance class as long as the required obstacles for both are included. This course would have: a ramp or bridge, jumps, flexibility/maneuvering, change of pace, backing, teeter-totter, confinement, loading in a vehicle, tying a quick release knot and petting by a stranger. The obstacles should be set up in a predetermined competition area. The course should be easy to follow from one obstacle to the next in the given order.

Performance class definitions

- A. Course: Course may be located indoors, outdoors, or a combination of the two and must include the minimum required obstacles for each class. The course for each specific class should be different and reflect the intent of that class with all mandatory obstacles included.
- B. Off course: Includes forgetting an obstacle, taking an additional obstacle, taking an obstacle out of sequence from the posted course, intentionally skipping an obstacle or specific requirement.
- C. Major fault: Any deviation from the posted course such as taking an obstacle backwards, taking multiple jumps in the wrong order, going in or out the wrong door of the trailer, etc.
- D. A loose lead: One in which the handler has his/her hand on the lead rope in a position which permits the handler's hand to be relaxed at his/her side. The lead rope in this description usually forms a "J" from the llama - alpaca's head to the handler's hand.
- E. A tight lead: One in which the lead rope is persistently stretched tight from the handler's hand to the llama - alpacas' head and is not the result of giving necessary direction on a particular obstacle.
- F. A short lead: One in which the handler's hand is close to the llama - alpaca's head, resulting in restriction of movement of the llama - alpaca's head and neck.
- G. Refusal: The determination is made when the animal has been presented to the obstacle and:
 - a. Plants all four feet refusing to budge.
 - b. Will not respond to pressure on the lead rope to move forward.
 - c. Steps to one side of the obstacle.
 - d. Takes a step backward from the obstacle.



Performance class rules

- A. The judge shall make the final inspection of any course to ensure fulfillment of course requirements and safety. This inspection may require changes to be made and these changes shall be announced prior to the start of the class.
- B. Llama - Alpacas must make at least one attempt, but not more than three attempts, at each obstacle. No dismissal from the course for too many obstacle refusals.
- C. Llama - Alpacas exhibiting unruly or unsafe behavior may be dismissed at the judge's discretion.
- D. Coaching from the sidelines by spectators is discouraged and may compromise the exhibitor's score.
- E. Handler should wear clean and appropriate attire for the specific class, including correct footwear that is safe around animals and obstacles (exhibitors cannot be barefooted or wear open-toed shoes).
- F. A course must start with the appropriate obstacles. No changes to the course are allowed after competition begins unless an obstacle is removed for safety reasons or if an extraneous circumstance renders an obstacle inoperable.
- G. Show management is responsible for seeing every obstacle is properly in place for each competitor.
- H. The score sheets may be the property of the corresponding exhibitor after complete placing and records have been recorded. The judge is encouraged to explain the score if asked by the exhibitor.
- I. **No exhibitors should look at other exhibitors' score cards.**

Performance class judging criteria

The formation of an ideal mental picture of a llama - alpaca proceeding through an obstacle or public relations class.

- A. Rapport, mutual confidence and trust between llama - alpaca and handler are desirable.
- B. The llama - alpaca should follow the handler through the course on a loose lead.
- C. The llama - alpaca should be allowed the freedom to pause momentarily before attempting an obstacle.
- D. Each obstacle starts with 10 points. The entries are evaluated and points are deducted for the following categories of faults:
 - a. Handler's errors, including but not limited to: (one point deduction per fault per obstacle).
 - i. Tight lead.
 - ii. Short lead.
 - iii. Dangling free end of lead rope.
 - iv. Inattentiveness to llama - alpaca.
 - v. Improper or unsafe knots when tying lead rope.
 - vi. Too slow of pace through the course.
 - vii. Safety issues (two point deduction per fault per obstacle).
 - b. Minor faults, including but not limited to: (suggested two point deduction per fault per obstacle).
 - i. Touching of obstacles.
 - ii. Too wide or too tight in turns.
 - iii. Slow response to handler's request.
 - iv. Inattentiveness of the llama - alpaca.
 - v. Bad disposition or unwillingness.
 - vi. Nervousness, agitation, fearfulness.
 - vii. Poor jumping form.
 - viii. Llama - Alpaca persistently out ahead of handler.
 - c. Major faults, including but not limited to: (suggested three point deduction per fault per obstacle).
 - i. Refusing an obstacle.
 - ii. Knocking down of poles, jumps or other obstacle parts.
 - iii. Stepping out of obstacle confinements.
 - iv. Extreme irritation, spooking or nervousness.
 - v. Rushing out ahead of the handler on exiting or entering an obstacle.
 - vi. Failure to execute a complete stop.
 - vii. Incompletion, including but not limited to: (suggested 1-9 point deduction dependent on amount of obstacle completed per obstacle).
 - 1. Not closing a gate.
 - 2. Missing an upright pole in a weaving obstacle.
 - 3. Not completing one of a series of jumps.
 - 4. Not backing all the way.
 - 5. Not loading all four feet in a vehicle.
 - 6. No response to request for change of pace.

7. Off side of bridge or ramp without another successful attempt.
8. Entering, but not successfully completing or exiting any obstacle or activity.
9. When more than one attempt is allowed, the entry may reattempt an obstacle after a refusal or a partial completion, but must incur the penalty points already assigned by virtue of the failed previous attempt.

[A full-size scorecard](#) is available online. Scorecards are to be printed and available to the judge prior to the show - one score card per participant.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION		
Performance Scoring Sheet		
Exhibitor Number	Total Score	Placing
Score 1 – 10 (with 10 being perfect) on each obstacle. If a box for any obstacle has a diagonal slash through the score, the exhibitor was "off course" and cannot be placed ahead of anyone completing the course.		
OBSTACLE NUMBER	SCORE	REMARKS
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
Total		

Preparations for performance classes prior to judging

- A. Have the judge check the course at the earliest opportunity for safety, required obstacles, required changes and general layout.
- B. Be sure your scorecards are ready and go over the scoring system with the scorer. There should be a runner available to relay scorecards to the scorer after each animal completes the course.
- C. Decide on your tie breakers as described under rules for scoring.
- D. Inform the scorers that the scorecards are not to be viewed by exhibitors without the judge's permission.
- E. Exhibitors must be informed of the following:
 - a. Number of attempts allowed on each obstacle.
 - b. Whether the handler must complete the obstacle.
 - c. They should move on when asked by the judge.
 - d. Any other special instructions for the course.
- F. Other items to have on hand: Clipboard, pencil, measuring tape and calculator.
- G. Check scorecards and placing before they are announced

Performance classes course details

Obstacle class

Equipment and conduct of class

- A. Equipment: The llama - alpaca must be shown in a clean, well-fitted halter and lead.
- B. Conduct of class:
 - a. If there is one judge, the competitors will work through the course one at a time.
 - b. If there is more than one judge for the course, the next competitor begins the course as soon as the judge is ready and the first section of the course is clear.
 - c. All the age groups may use the same course without difficulty changes. The show management has the option of changing the course for different age group competitors as long as the mandatory obstacles are used.

Course

- A. All courses must include the mandatory obstacles described for this class.
- B. Mandatory Obstacles:
 - a. Bridge or ramp
 - b. Jumps
 - c. Flexibility and maneuvering
 - d. Change of pace
 - e. Backing
- C. More obstacles may be added to the course. The optional obstacles may be mixed with the mandatory obstacles in any order (except bridge or ramps cannot follow a water obstacle).
- D. The Public Relations mandatory obstacles may be combined to make one course. The completion of this course by the competitors will be credited as doing both mandatory classes.

E. The course should be easy to map out. The course is not designed to confuse the handler of its order.

F. No more than ten obstacles are recommended for a course.

Description of mandatory obstacles

A. Bridges and/or Ramps

- a. Minimum width 30" for all divisions.
- b. The recommended length of a bridge is approximately 8' and risers 7".
Stairs, max of three steps, 7" stair risers and 6" minimum stair treads.
- c. All surfaces must be treated or toughened to avoid slippery surfaces.
- d. Shall not swing, sway or sag.
- e. Maximum height for all divisions is 24" without rails. No minimum height.
- f. Ramp requirements must meet all of the above.
- g. The width and height of ramps shall match the width and height of the bridge.
- h. Bridges and/ or ramps should not follow a water obstacle.

B. Jumps

- a. Jumps may range from a minimum of 12" to a maximum of 16" in height.
- b. The width of the obstacle should be a minimum of 4'.
- c. In combination jumps, the distance between them may range from a minimum of 4' to a maximum of 6'.
- d. Poles (cross bars) must be a minimum of 3" in diameter. The maximum depth for a solid jump shall be no more than 30" at the base.
- e. The jumps should be solid or anchored so as not to tip over easily.

C. Flexibility and Maneuvering.

- a. Weaving around objects (intricate weaves are not recommended).
- b. Through lined up barrels, poles, gates or doors.
- c. The height and width of openings through which an animal must go shall be constructed to accommodate the largest animal of the division.

D. Change of Pace

- a. The handler and llama - alpaca shall be required to jog or run for some distance.
- b. There shall be a definite starting and stopping point.

E. Backing

- a. The passageway may be defined as minimally as 2" PVC pipes or 2"x 4"s, a flat plank walkway, a low angled ramp, or as extensively as panels or a wall. Ropes are not suitable to define a backing obstacle.
- b. Passageways may be straight, angled or curved.
- c. Passageways shall be a minimum width which allows passage of the largest llama - alpaca and a length of at least 10'.
- d. The backing activity (i.e., backing into or out of) should reflect the degree of proficiency expected of the division.
- e. The minimum width of the backing obstacle is 24".
- f. Backing down steep stairs, ramps or other unsafe obstacles is not permitted for safety reasons. Backing over low ramps, bridges or planks is permitted if approved by the judge as safe.

Other approved obstacles

A. Water Obstacle

- a. This obstacle must include water.
- b. Tarpaulins or other simulations are not water obstacles.
- c. This obstacle shall be a minimum of 4' wide and 6' long with a minimum depth of water of 4".

B. Deadfall

- a. A jumble of posts, logs, tree limbs, etc.
- b. This obstacle should be a minimum of 8' in diameter.
- c. The height of this obstacle should not exceed 24" where the llama - alpaca crosses.
- d. The number of posts, etc. should be no less than six.

C. Crawling and Ducking

- a. Anytime an animal is required to pass under an obstacle, the obstacle must be securely anchored so as to not move when an animal presses against the crosspiece or upright.
- b. This obstacle may be used where the age and size of the llama - alpaca is more predictable but should be constructed so as to accommodate the tallest animal.

D. Hula Hoop

- a. This can be difficult for kids with larger llama - alpacas.
- b. The hula hoop is laid on the ground. The handler steps into the hula hoop, lifting it over their head and over the llama - alpaca's head. The llama - alpaca then has to step through the hula hoop with both front and both hind legs. The handler then sets the hula hoop back down on the ground.

E. Tarp (change of surface): Changing the surface of the show area in any way. Whether it is a tarp, astro-turf, a sheet or any other safe material that the lama can walk across.

F. Circle

- a. Handler walks llama - Alpaca into a circle made from boards, PVC or any other safe material.
- b. Handler then turns llama - alpaca in a circle keeping all four legs inside the circle border.

G. Side Pass

- a. The llama - alpaca is led up to one side of a pole on the ground so that the front half of the llama - alpaca is on one side of the pole and the back half is on the other side.
- b. Without touching the llama - alpaca, it walks sideways along the pole keeping the pole under the llama - alpaca.

Public relations class

This class is for the animal to simulate community activities, going to schools, hospitals, service clubs, parades, charity functions, children's homes and rehabilitation therapy with a variety of patients, television or other media appearances for promotion.

Equipment and conduct of class

Same as the Obstacle class.

Course

- A. The course must include the mandatory obstacles described for this class.
- B. Mandatory obstacles
 - a. Stairs, ramps or teeter-totter
 - b. Confinement/Manageability
 - c. Loading in Vehicles
 - d. Quick Release Knot
 - e. Petting by a stranger
- C. More obstacles may be added to the course. The optional obstacles may be mixed with the mandatory obstacles in any order (except bridge or ramps cannot follow a water obstacle).
- D. The Mandatory obstacles for the obstacle class may be combined to make one course. The completion of this course by the competitors will be credited as doing both mandatory classes.
- E. The course should be easy to map out. The course is not designed to confuse the handler of its order.
- F. No more than ten obstacles are recommended for a course.

Description of mandatory obstacles

- A. Stairs, Ramps and Teeter-totters
 - a. Minimum width 30" for all divisions.
 - b. The recommended length of a bridge is approximately 8' and risers no more than 7".
Stairs, max of three steps, 7" stair risers and 6" minimum stair treads.
 - c. All surfaces must be treated or toughened to avoid slippery surfaces.
 - d. Shall not swing, sway or sag.
 - e. Maximum height for all divisions is 24" without rails. No minimum height.
 - f. Ramp requirements must meet all of the above.
 - g. The width and height of ramps shall match the width and height of the bridge.
 - h. Bridges and/ or ramps should not follow a water obstacle.
 - i. Teeter-totter must follow the same minimum width requirements as ramps and bridges. The teeter-totter can be a plank that sits on a PVC pipe or a round wooden rail.
- B. Confinement/Manageability
 - a. Types
 - i. Catching
 - ii. Haltering
 - iii. Touching and inspecting specific llama - alpaca parts
 - iv. Picking up one of the llama - alpaca's feet
 - b. Rules
 - i. Haltering must take place within an enclosed area, for example, four portable corral panels.

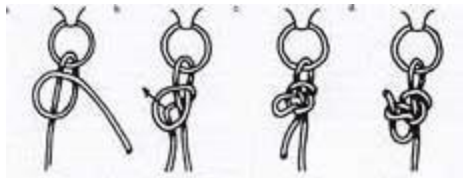
- ii. When an obstacle requires two hands of the handler to perform a task, the exhibitor has the option of the animal being tied or held by an assistant.
- iii. The assistant shall not participate in any activity other than holding the lead rope.

C. Loading in Vehicle

- a. A full-size van or a trailer (minimum 10' by 5') may be used. The height of the floor of the vehicle may not be more than 24" from the ground.
- b. Vehicle must have non-slip surfaces.
- c. Vehicle should be inspected closely for safety.
- d. A pickup must have a stock rack or equivalent.
- e. Handler loading in the vehicle is at the discretion of the judge.

D. Quick Release Knot

- a. Demonstrate the ability to successfully perform tying a quick release knot.



E. Petting

- a. A person, usually a volunteer, sits in a chair, wheelchair, hospital bed or using a walker is stationed on the course. The llama - alpaca is required to walk up to the person. The person then runs their hand down the llama - alpaca's neck onto the shoulders. The volunteer is to do the same movement on each llama - alpaca.
- b. The llama - alpaca may need to back out of the area where the person is or it may be led straight away, depending on the set up of the course.

Other approved obstacles

- A. Mirror: Llama - Alpaca is walked by a mirror and allowed to look at itself.
- B. Camera Flash: A volunteer is stationed somewhere along the course. The llama - alpaca is positioned in front of the volunteer who then takes a picture with a flash (don't make the animal stare into the flash).
- C. Door
 - a. The handler will move the llama - alpaca through a doorway.
 - b. The handler must open the door and lead the llama - alpaca through the door and then shut the door behind them. During the entire time the llama - alpaca must be in the handler's complete control.
- D. Picking up an Object
 - a. This can be just about anything that the handler and llama - alpaca may encounter in the public.
 - b. A mailbox with mail, which the handler has to grab.
 - c. American flag that the handler has to grab and wave, or any other objects that are safe for both handler and llama - alpaca.
- E. Fan: Llama - Alpaca needs to walk past the fan within two feet.

Costume class

Age Divisions: Intermediate = grades 6 - 8, Senior = grades 9 - 10, Advanced = grades 11+

This class is very entertaining for the public and exhibitors. Different themes could be adopted such as sports, story book characters, South American themes, etc. Be respectful of diverse cultures and avoid dressing in ways that depict entire groups of people/cultures/ethnicities as "costumes". Judging criteria includes originality, training, degree of llama - alpaca coverage, time and energy involved, etc. The handler is also in costume.

4-H Llama - Alpaca Costume exhibitors at the MN State Fair will receive an extra premium.

1. Handlers must wear completely enclosed footwear.
2. Safety for the exhibitor and llama - alpaca is key. The costume should be safe for the handler and llama - alpaca, the llama - alpaca's vision cannot be blocked by the costume. Llama - alpaca and handler must be able to propel itself through the ring. No riders allowed; exhibitor must be on foot.
3. Ribbons will be awarded to all participants. Champion and Reserve Champion awards will be given.
4. Costume Class age division will be combined if one of the classes has less than 4 exhibitors.
5. A typed description of your costume along with your name, llama - alpaca's name, county, fun anecdote, etc., will be completed online during state fair registration.

Acknowledgements

Revision team: This rulebook was revised by the Minnesota 4-H Llama - Alpaca Showmanship Show Committee and the 4-H Curriculum Team.

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References: ALSA Handbook 14th Edition

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