



Learn about the various breeds and disciplines of horses. Learn about horsemanship, horse care and horse related activities. There is something for everyone in the horse world whether it is recreational trail riding, three-day eventing or ranch work competitions. Whether through observing on the sidelines, leasing or owning a horse, you will learn the value of hard work, responsibility and dedication through horse pursuits.



Exploring 4-H Horses

Spark Activity: Horse Breeds

Research the various breeds of horses and what they are used for. Pick your favorite breed and research all the activities that you can do with that breed. For example: ponies can carry carts, quarter horses can be race horses or cow horses or pleasure horses.



4-H Project Levels and Goals

Beginner

- Learn different types of horse breeds
- Acquire the skills to safely work with horses and prevent injury to animals and humans while riding as well as ground work
- Learn how to groom and tack a horse
- Learn basic anatomy of horse
- Learn basic gaits of the horse like walk, trot, canter
- Attend a horse show to observe

Intermediate

- Develop intermediate horsemanship skills
- Understand different disciplines: Hunt Seat, Saddle Seat, Western, and Ranch
- Learn basics of horse nutrition
- Understand common horse health problems: colic and founder
- Learn how to clean tack
- Learn the basics of horse judging
- Attend a horse show to compete

Advanced

- Learn about advanced anatomy and reproduction
- Visit a horse breeding farm
- Demonstrate and teach advanced horsemanship skills
- Discover breed associations
- Volunteer at a horse show
- Administer horse first aid
- Take the horse to the vet, dentist, and farrier
- Participate in a horse judging competition
- Learn about issues in the horse industry

Put Your Project Into Action

Show Your Skills

- Show at open and 4-H shows
- Show at breed association show
- Trail riding at a park
- Host a horse clinic with local extension office

Service and Leadership

- Volunteer at an educational clinic
- Help younger exhibitors at open shows and other competitions
- Help at a local barn: clean stalls, groom horses, stack hay
- Support therapeutic riding organizations
- Provide barn tours
- Volunteer at a tack auction
- Teach showmanship and horsemanship to younger members
- Organize a tack swap
- Work at local 4-H Horse Shows
- Become a State 4-H Livestock Ambassador Team member

Entrepreneurship

- Braiding and Banding horse manes at shows
- Become a horse trainer
- Learn to sew horse show clothes
- Buying and selling tack
- Teach riding lessons

Technology Connection

- Form a social media group to share patterns for horsemanship, showmanship, trail and reining
- Speed equipment – electronic timers
- Explore horse show management software

Connecting with a Mentor

- Riding instructors and trainers in the local area
- Boarding stables
- Connect with people who lease horses
- Attend a horse show and ask questions of exhibitors
- Connect with horse show management

Events

- Sponsored by 4-H – open ride nights, open shows, tack auctions, tack & clothes swap, Horse Bowl & Hippology Contests
- Attend the Illinois 4-H Junior Livestock Conference
- Sponsored by others – Breed association shows and competitions, IL Horse Fair



Careers for People Interested in Horses

Vet Tech	Horse Breeding / Sales
Farrier	Equine Massage &
Horse Training	Chiropractor
Horse Dentistry	Equine Photography
Equine Vet	

Start a Conversation

How do you find a reliable horse?

Who is the athlete? The horse? The rider? Both?

Why is it important to think of you and your horse as a team?

Which is your favorite riding discipline? Why? What is something new that you want to try?

Do you enjoy showing your horse as a hobby or as a competitive event?

Want to learn more?

go.illinois.edu/4Hhorses

Explore more at Illinois 4-H!

4-H.extension.illinois.edu



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