

SHOW HORSE COLLECTIVE VICTORIA

SHCV

COMPETITION RULES

Governing Show Horse, Show Hunter, Child's, Formative, Showcase and Rider Competition

Edition 1 — 2026

Show Horse Collective Victoria

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Show Horse Collective Victoria (SHCV) is an independent competition body. SHCV is not affiliated with, and these Rules are not derived from the rules of, any other equestrian organisation, State body or national federation.

Reproduction of these Rules, in whole or in part, is not permitted without the written consent of Show Horse Collective Victoria.

Preamble

These Rules govern all competition conducted by Show Horse Collective Victoria ("SHCV"). They bring together, in a single resource, the conditions of entry, categories of competition, dress and equipment standards, judging system and officiating requirements that apply at every SHCV event.

SHCV is an independent competition body. It is not affiliated with, does not derive its authority from, and is not bound by the rules of any other equestrian organisation, State association or national federation. Any resemblance between these Rules and the rules of another body reflects common show ring practice, not affiliation or adoption.

It is the responsibility of every competitor, owner, official and volunteer to know and abide by these Rules. These Rules may not anticipate every situation that could arise at a show; where a matter is not expressly covered, the Ground Jury and Show Committee must decide in a sporting spirit and as closely as possible to the intent of these Rules.

The SHCV Committee has full and complete authority to interpret, amend or waive these Rules at its absolute discretion, and to give or withhold reasons for its decisions.

Where the masculine gender appears it also includes the feminine gender, and where the singular appears it also includes the plural.

Making an entry to any SHCV event constitutes acceptance of these Rules.

1. Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout these Rules.

Term	Definition
Amateur Rider	A person who does not receive payment or financial remuneration for riding, training, producing or exhibiting horses. An Amateur Rider may own, lease and compete their own horse, and may receive coaching from a professional coach, provided they do not derive income from riding or producing horses for others.
Championship	A judging round in which the placegetters from two or more qualifying classes are brought back together to determine an overall Champion and Reserve Champion.
Child/Junior	A rider who is under 18 years of age. Where a class specifies a narrower age band, that band applies.
Class	Any class listed in the entry form, program or schedule for a SHCV event.
Committee	The governing committee of Show Horse Collective Victoria.
Competitor	The entrant, exhibitor, owner, lessee, rider or handler, each of whom must be a current SHCV member (or otherwise satisfy the entry requirements set by the Show Committee for that event).
Emerging	The horse/pony age division for exhibits 3 years and under 6 years of age.
Established	The horse/pony age division for exhibits 6 years and under 10 years of age.
Event / Show	Any show, competition or gathering of classes conducted under these Rules.
Exhibit	The combination of horse and Competitor, both of which must be eligible to compete in the class entered.
Family	Spouse, partner, brother, sister, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew or cousin, including step, in-law and de facto relationships.

Term	Definition
Gear Steward	The official responsible for checking the saddlery, dress and equipment of each Competitor against these Rules.
Ground Jury	The panel of judges appointed to officiate at a class or event.
Handler	An adult responsible for leading a horse or pony in a Leading Rein or First Ridden class.
Height Certificate	A measuring card or height certificate issued by another recognised horse association or measuring body, or a record of measurement taken by a Show Committee-appointed measurer on the day of a show, confirming a horse's height.
Horse	A hack, galloway, pony or Shetland pony, as the context requires.
Master	The horse/pony age division for exhibits 10 years of age and over.
Novice Rider	A rider who has not won a Royal Show, EV Barastoc Horse of the Year, or SHC GN Qualifier Rider title. Novice status resets on the rider's 18th birthday.
Show Committee (SC)	The body or persons responsible for the conduct of a particular SHCV event.
Professional Rider	A person who receives payment, remuneration or financial reward for riding, training, schooling, producing, exhibiting or preparing horses for competition as part of a business, occupation or regular source of income.
Rules	These SHCV Competition Rules, as amended from time to time.
SHCV	Show Horse Collective Victoria.
Stallion	An entire male horse. Stallions are not eligible to compete in Show Horse, Show Hunter, Child's, Formative, Leading Rein or First Ridden classes.

2. Conditions of Entry

2.1 Acceptance of the Rules

- All SHCV members and competitors are bound by these Rules.
- Making an entry for any SHCV event constitutes acceptance of these Rules.
- Competitors are responsible for knowing and complying with these Rules, including all equipment and dress requirements.
- Breach of these Rules may result in elimination, unless another penalty is specified.

2.2 SHCV Membership

Competitors must hold the minimum level of SHCV membership required for the event, as set out in the show schedule or conditions of entry.

2.3 Measuring

A horse must compete at its current recorded height. To establish that height, a horse must either:

- hold a current measuring card or height certificate issued by another recognised horse association or measuring body; or
- be measured by a Show Committee-appointed measurer on the day of the show.

Where a horse is measured on the day, it must compete in the height division indicated by that measurement. A Show Committee may require a horse to be re-measured at its discretion.

2.4 Registration and Microchipping

To be eligible to compete, a horse must:

- hold a unique microchip number; and
- hold current registration with another recognised horse association or other recognised body.

Competitors must produce evidence of microchipping and registration, together with proof of ownership or lease and SHCV membership and make these available for inspection on request.

2.5 Entry and Eligibility

- The person making an entry must ensure the Competitor and horse are eligible for, and entered only in, the correct classes.
- A horse is ineligible to compete if its brand, microchip, colour or markings differ materially from its registration or ownership records (colour enhancement for presentation purposes is permitted).
- A Competitor must not exhibit under a judge when their exhibit is ineligible for any reason.
- Stallions are not eligible to compete in Show Horse, Show Hunter, Child's, Formative, Leading Rein or First Ridden classes.

2.6 Placings

A judge's decision is final, subject to the outcome of any protest, report or investigation properly made under these Rules.

2.7 Safety Requirements

- An approved safety helmet, correctly fitted with the retaining harness secured at all points and always fastened, must be worn by every person when mounted. A rider without an approved, properly fastened helmet is ineligible to compete.
- All competitors must wear suitable riding boots with a heel and little or no tread whenever mounted.
- Riders must be mounted on entering and leaving the arena, on penalty of elimination.
- A fall of horse and/or rider — whether in the line-up, during a workout or on the circle — results in elimination from that class.
- A horse that leaves the arena other than at the direction of the judge or an official will be eliminated from that class.
- Following any fall, a representative of the Show Committee (informed where necessary by a doctor or vet) decides whether the rider or horse may continue competing for the remainder of the event.
- A judge may eliminate a horse or rider considered erratic or unruly.

2.8 Outside Assistance

Outside assistance or intervention in the final marshalling or competition area — including coaching by voice or signs, or gear alteration after gear check — is not permitted and may result in elimination, except for removal of spurs; dropping of a whip; tightening of a girth; and the provision of fluids.

A Show Committee may, at its discretion, grant permission for coaching within the final marshalling or competition area — for example, for younger or less experienced riders or riders requiring special assistance.

Any such permission must be notified in the show schedule or otherwise communicated to competitors in advance of the relevant class.

2.9 Age Eligibility

Rider age for Rider Classes is taken as at the day of the show. Horse/pony age for the Emerging, Established and Master divisions is taken as at 1 August in the year of the show, unless the Show Committee publishes a different reference date in the show schedule.

3. Conflict of Interest

Show Committees must publish the names of appointed judges in the show schedule and any advertising in advance of the show. Competitors are responsible for finding out who is judging their classes.

3.1 Six-Month Rule

A Competitor may not exhibit before a judge if, within six months prior to the date of competition:

- the Competitor is a member of the judge's Family;
- the Competitor has represented the judge, or competed on a horse owned by the judge;
- the horse was owned or leased by the judge, a member of the judge's Family, or the judge's employer, employee or business partner;
- the judge has provided privately arranged tuition (not group clinics) to the horse or Competitor, or vice versa;
- the Competitor is, or has been, employed by, or a business partner of, the judge;
- the Competitor's Family has provided private accommodation to the judge within the three months prior to or during the event.

3.2 Judging Panel Conflicts

A person must not officiate as a judge of a class if any of the following apply: they are the veterinary officer for the same event; a rider in the class is a Family member; they have held a riding clinic within the two weeks prior to the event involving a horse or rider entered in the class; they are providing private accommodation to a competitor in the class; they own or part-own a horse in the class; they are a regular trainer/coach of a horse or rider in the class; they have a financial interest in a horse in the class; or they are an employer or employee of a competitor in the class.

3.3 Access to Judges

No person may approach a judge for the duration of an event without first obtaining permission from the Ring Steward. A judge or their Family must not visit competitors or their horses, or discuss any entered horse, for the duration of the show, except as required for judging.

4. Welfare of the Horse

The welfare of the horse must take precedence over all other considerations at every stage of training, preparation, transport and competition. This section sets out the minimum standards that apply under these Rules; the full standard is set out in the SHCV Horse Welfare Policy, which competitors, owners and officials must also comply with.

4.1 General Standards

- Stabling, feeding and training must be compatible with good horse management; practices likely to cause physical or mental suffering will not be tolerated.
- Horses must only undergo training matched to their physical capability and maturity, and must not be subjected to abusive methods.
- Foot care, shoeing and tack must be of a high standard and fitted to avoid pain or injury.
- Transport must protect horses from injury, use safe and well-ventilated vehicles, and be undertaken by competent handlers, with regular rest, food and water on longer journeys.
- No horse showing symptoms of disease, lameness or a significant pre-existing condition should compete, or continue competing, if its welfare would be compromised. Veterinary advice must be sought wherever there is doubt.
- A mare must not compete after the fourth month of pregnancy, or with a foal at foot.
- Competition surfaces and obstacles must be safe and suitably maintained; competition must not proceed in extreme weather if horse welfare or safety would be compromised.

4.2 Abuse of the Horse

No person may abuse a horse during an event or at any other time. "Abuse" means an action or omission that causes or is likely to cause pain or unnecessary discomfort to a horse, including without limitation:

- whipping or beating a horse excessively;
- subjecting a horse to an electric shock device;
- using spurs excessively or persistently;
- jabbing the horse in the mouth with a bit or other device;
- competing on an exhausted, lame or injured horse;
- abnormally sensitising or desensitising any part of a horse;
- leaving a horse without adequate food, water or exercise;
- using equipment that causes excessive pain;
- excessively lunging a horse — no horse may be lunged more than twice in any 24-hour period, for more than one hour at a time, or for any lesser period causing pain or unnecessary discomfort.

Anyone witnessing suspected abuse must report it, in the form of a protest, to the Show Committee immediately or within 14 days of the incident, for referral to the SHCV Committee.

5. Protests and Reports

5.1 Protests

A protest may be lodged by a current SHCV member against any person, horse or body involved in a SHCV event, in respect of an alleged breach of these Rules or a violation of the common principles of fairness and sportsmanship.

- Protests concerning eligibility of a competitor or horse, or the conditions of the arena, must be lodged no later than 30 minutes before the start of the relevant class.
- Protests concerning an irregularity or incident during a class, or the classification of a class, must be lodged no later than 60 minutes after the posting of results for that class.
- Protests must be in writing, signed by a person 18 years or over, and accompanied by supporting evidence and a cost of \$500 required by the Show Committee.
- A protest will not be accepted against the final decision of the Ground Jury.

The Ground Jury must report any protest and its outcome to the SHCV Committee as soon as practicable.

6. Medication Control

Horses and riders may be subject to random in-competition swabbing in accordance with the SHCV Medication Control Policy. After any veterinary treatment, sufficient time must be allowed for the horse's full recovery before it competes. Abuse of medication will not be tolerated and will be dealt with as a serious welfare and integrity matter.

7. Categories of Competition

SHCV competition is structured around three horse types — Pony, Galloway and Hack — each judged in Open and Show Hunter divisions and further divided by the age-based divisions Emerging, Established and Master. Separate sections cater for young riders (Child's Classes), riders aged 18–25 (Formative Classes), amateur horse-and-rider partnerships (Showcase Classes) and rider ability (Rider Classes).

The SHCV committee reserves the right to alter the structure of the competition.

7.1 Show Pony, Show Galloway and Show Hack

Show Pony: A quality pony demonstrating excellent conformation, movement, manners, presence and overall suitability as a riding pony. Ponies should be well educated, beautifully presented, and exhibit the balance, temperament and elegance expected of the modern show pony.

Show Galloway: A horse in the intermediate height range, combining the refinement of a pony with the presence and movement of a hack. Galloways should display quality conformation, free and expressive movement, correct manners, and a polished, balanced performance.

Show Hack: A quality riding horse exhibiting elegance, athleticism and style, with excellent conformation, flowing movement, a calm and responsive temperament, and the presence expected of an outstanding show horse.

Height Divisions

Category	Height
Shetland Pony	10.2hh and under
Small Pony	12hh and under
Medium Pony	Over 12hh, not exceeding 13hh
Large Pony	Over 13hh, not exceeding 14hh
Small Galloway	Over 14hh, not exceeding 14.2hh
Large Galloway	Over 14.2hh, not exceeding 15hh
Small Hack	Over 15hh, not exceeding 16hh
Large Hack	Over 16hh

All horses and ponies must hold a current Height Certificate, obtained either from another recognised horse association or measuring body, or by measurement on the day, in accordance with Section 2.3 (Measuring).

7.2 Open and Show Hunter Divisions

Each height category above is offered in both an Open (Show Horse) division and a Show Hunter division. The Show Hunter should possess more substance than the modern Show Horse without coarseness, display good bone, and create the impression of being capable of hunting over varied terrain, comfortably and safely for its rider. A horse or pony must be entered in either the Open division or the Show Hunter division at a given show and may not be entered in both divisions in the same height category at that show.

7.3 Emerging, Established and Master Divisions

Within the Open and Show Hunter divisions, horses and ponies compete according to their age, in three divisions:

Division	Horse/Pony Age
Emerging	3 years and under 6 years
Established	6 years and under 10 years
Master	10 years and over

Age is taken as at 1 August in the year of the show, unless the Show Committee publishes a different reference date. A horse or pony competes in only one age division at a given show, determined by its age on that reference date.

Emerging, Established and Master Championships: the first and second placegetters from each of the three age divisions return, within each height/category (e.g. Small Pony, Small Hunter Pony, Large Hack, Large Hunter Galloway), for a combined Championship judged by preferential ranking. No additional entry fee applies to Championship judging.

7.4 Leading Rein and First Ridden

Class Type	Pony Height	Rider Age	Handler
Leading Rein	Pony not exceeding 12hh	Rider 3 years and under 8 years	Handler must be an adult, 18 years and over
First Ridden	Pony not exceeding 12.2hh	Rider 5 years and under 12 years	N/A — rider unaccompanied

In both Leading Rein and First Ridden classes, a simple snaffle bridle (egg-butt or loose ring only or Wilkie bit) is permitted with a cavesson noseband must be used. A narrow strap may be attached to the front of the saddle for the rider to hold; no spurs are permitted. Reins must run directly from the pony's mouth to the rider's hand and must not be threaded through a monkey grip or otherwise obstructed. The handler's or rider's cane must not exceed 40cm.

Leading Rein and First Ridden classes are judged and awarded individually and are not amalgamated into an overall Championship, other than the Mini Championships formed from their own placegetters as set out in the show schedule.

First Ridden to be judged at the walk and the trot on the circle only. No Cantering is permitted.

7.5 Child's Classes

Child's classes are for riders under 18 years of age, exhibiting a pony, galloway or hack that displays excellent manners, quality conformation, freedom of movement, and is a safe and suitable mount for a junior rider. Judging places particular emphasis on the horse's suitability for the child, alongside its quality and conformation.

Within the Child's Pony and Show Hunter Pony sections, Medium and Large Pony classes may be split by rider age (for example, rider under 12 years, and rider 12 years and under 18 years); a pony may only be entered in one such age-restricted class at a show. Child's Galloway classes are offered without an internal age split (rider under 18 years). Child's Hack classes are offered for riders aged 13 years and under 18 years, reflecting the greater size and experience needed to safely exhibit a hack of that height.

A Child's Pony, Galloway or Hack Championship is formed from the placegetters of the relevant Open and Show Hunter qualifying classes, judged by preferential ranking.

7.6 Formative Classes

Formative classes are for riders 18 years and under 25 years, exhibiting a galloway or hack. Exhibits should demonstrate quality, correct conformation, balanced movement and a willing temperament, and be an appropriate and safe mount for the rider. A Formative Open Championship and a Formative Show Hunter Championship are formed from the respective qualifying classes.

7.7 Showcase Classes (Amateur/Enthusiast Rider)

The purpose of this series of classes is to show case the combination of the horse/pony and rider and the bond between both. The height categories are to introduce an alternative group of horses and ponies.

Showcase Classes recognise and reward home-produced horses and their amateur riders. They are intended for competitors who have personally trained, produced and campaigned their horse, rather than engaging a professional rider to do so, and provide a level playing field on which dedication, horsemanship and partnership are celebrated.

The rider is not required to be the registered owner of the horse, but must meet the following eligibility definitions:

- Professional Rider: a person who receives payment, remuneration or financial reward for riding, training, schooling, producing, exhibiting or preparing horses for competition as part of a business, occupation or regular source of income.
- Amateur Rider: a person who does not receive payment or financial remuneration for riding, training, producing or exhibiting horses. An Amateur Rider may own, lease and compete their own horse and may receive coaching from a professional coach, provided they do not derive income from riding or producing horses for others.

Only Amateur Riders are eligible to compete in Showcase Classes.

Lightweight and Heavyweight Riding Horse

Lightweight Riding Horse: a quality riding horse of refinement, elegance and athleticism, combining substance with quality. The horse should display a lighter frame with good depth, correct conformation and sufficient bone for its type, without appearing slight or lacking strength, and possess a kind, intelligent outlook, quality movement with freedom and cadence, balance, presence and excellent manners.

Heavyweight Riding Horse: a quality riding horse with greater bone, depth and substance than a Lightweight Riding Horse, while retaining quality, elegance and athleticism. The horse should display a stronger frame, more developed musculature and greater overall substance, without appearing coarse or lacking refinement, and possess correct conformation, expressive movement, balance, presence and excellent manners.

The distinction between Lightweight and Heavyweight within a height bracket is determined by the horse's bone, substance, overall frame and type. The judge's decision on classification is final.

Exhibitors must select a category that represent their horse for the purposes of competing and cannot compete in both categories or elect to swap a classification over the 12-month period.

Showcase Height Brackets

Height Bracket (Lightweight and Heavyweight offered within each)
12.2hh and under
Over 12.2hh, not exceeding 13.2hh
Over 13.2hh, not exceeding 14.2hh
Over 14.2hh, not exceeding 15.2hh
Over 15.2hh, not exceeding 16.2hh

Height Bracket (Lightweight and Heavyweight offered within each)

Over 16.2hh

A Champion and Reserve Showcase are awarded within each height bracket, drawn from the Lightweight and Heavyweight classes at that bracket.

7.8 Rider Classes

Rider classes assess the ability, position and effectiveness of the rider. Judges consider the rider's balance, posture, hands, seat, use of aids, confidence, presentation and overall horsemanship. While the horse should be well mannered and suitable, the primary focus is the rider's skill and their ability to present the horse to its best advantage. Rider age is taken as at the day of the show.

Class	Rider Age	Feeds Into
Tiny Tot Rider	8 years and under	Must be led. Not eligible for Championship judging or eligible to compete in the 6 years and under 9 years class.
Rider	6 years and under 9 years	Junior Rider Championship – riders are ineligible for the Tiny Tot Rider class.
Rider	9 years and under 12 years	Junior Rider Championship
Rider	12 years and under 15 years	Intermediate Rider Championship
Rider	15 years and under 18 years	Intermediate Rider Championship
Rider	18 years and under 25 years	Senior Rider Championship
Rider	25 years and under 40 years	Senior Rider Championship
Rider	40 years and over	Senior Rider Championship

A Novice Rider is a rider who has not won a Royal Show, EV Barastoc Horse of the Year, or SHC GN Qualifier Rider title; Novice status resets on the rider's 18th birthday. The highest-placed Novice Rider across the Rider Classes at a SHCV event may be invited to compete at SHCV's Festival of Champions, as notified in the relevant show schedule.

7.9 Working Hunter

Working Hunter is part of the SHCV competition framework and may be offered by a Show Committee at its discretion; whether it is run at a particular show, and the obstacles and course used, will be set out in that show's schedule.

A Working Hunter should possess more substance than the modern ridden Show Horse but must be emphasised as a quality animal. A quality Working Hunter creates the impression that it is capable of hunting over a variety of terrain — this militates against any weakness in conformation which would prevent this — and must do so comfortably and safely for its rider. The Working Hunter in competition is required to jump.

Phase 1 — Jumping

The course should be ridden at a hunting pace, jumping each fence smoothly; all changes of leg should be flying changes and not done through the trot. The course should be open and flowing and must have a change of direction.

There must be eight jumping efforts, comprising verticals and spreads and which may include a two-stride double. Some obstacles may be jumped from either side, in which case fewer actual obstacles are needed. All obstacles must be clearly numbered.

The course should comprise natural obstacles such as hay bales, brush, a gate, a wall, a picket fence, a log with rail, or rustic rails. All jumps must have a top rail in cups; wooden blocks on a wall are acceptable. A steward must be available to assist with altering or rebuilding the course.

Phase 2 — Workout

The workout should be similar to that of a Show Hunter class and should always include a gallop and a change of lead at the canter. The leniency shown to minor transgressions in Show Horse classes should not be extended to the Working Hunter. The order of priority for flat-phase judging is conformation, followed by action and temperament.

- No change of saddlery is permitted between or during phases.
- Boots and bandages are permissible for the jumping phase only.
- An approved safety helmet must be worn by all competitors.
- In the event of equal marks, the total mark from Phase One takes precedence, followed by the manners mark and then the conformation mark. If still tied, the judge's decision is final.
- Both phases must be ridden in a snaffle bridle.
- Whips must not exceed 75cm.
- No martingales, bearing reins, or side or running reins of any kind are permitted.
- Ponies up to and including 12.2hh must be ridden by a rider 14 years or under; ponies over 12.2hh may be ridden by a rider of any age.

Rules for Phase 1 — Jumping

- Riders may walk the course dismounted prior to the competition.
- No penalty is incurred if the lower pole on the same vertical plane is lowered.
- If a horse/pony turns its quarters to a fence, or executes a complete turnaround, a refusal is given.
- A horse/pony displaying continued disobedience or leaving the ring (whether the rider is mounted or dismounted), will be eliminated.
- A horse/pony taking the wrong course, or jumping another fence after completing the course, will be eliminated.
- The fall of horse and/or rider anywhere on the course results in elimination; the rider may not attempt another fence and must leave the area immediately on foot.
- A horse/pony eliminated or disqualified in the jumping phase will not be required for Phase 2.
- Horses/ponies must not enter the jumping arena prior to the event.
- If a jump is knocked down due to a refusal or disobedience, the competitor must wait for the steward to rebuild the jump, and for the judge's permission, before re-attempting the obstacle.
- The jumping phase must be conducted in an enclosed arena, with practice jumps available in a separate area.
- A penciller must be supplied for the judge.
- Judges must inspect the course prior to the event to ensure it is suitable, with at least two fences at maximum height.

Maximum Height of Obstacles

Category	Height	Max Obstacle Height
Small Pony	12.2hh and under (rider 14 years and under)	45cm
Large Pony	Over 12.2hh, not exceeding 14hh	55cm
Galloway	Over 14hh, not exceeding 15hh	65cm

Category	Height	Max Obstacle Height
Hack	Over 15hh	75cm

Marking System

Phase 1 — Jumping

Marks	Points
Jumping (10 per obstacle cleared)	80
Style and manners while jumping	20

Deductions/Penalties:

Penalty	Deduction
Knockdown	10
First refusal	15
Second refusal	20
Third refusal	Elimination
Fall of horse or rider (either phase)	Elimination

80 marks are awarded for completing the course without elimination. Penalties are then deducted, and the mark for style and manners is added, to arrive at the Phase One total.

Phase 2 — Workout

Marks	Points
Conformation	20
Freedom of action	20
Manners	10

A workout is prescribed by the judge, who may also require the horse to be stripped to conclude an accurate conformation mark. Final placing in Working Hunter classes is determined by the combined Phase One and Phase Two marks, applying the tie-break rule set out above; this scoring method is specific to Working Hunter and operates separately from the 100-point averaged-panel system described in Section 10.

8. Dress, Saddlery and Equipment

8.1 Open (Show Horse) Classes — Dress

Item	Requirement
Jackets & waistcoats	Dark-coloured riding jacket, optional vest/waistcoat
Hats & helmets	Approved safety helmet compulsory at all times when mounted
Shirts & ties	Collared shirt with tie, or ratcatcher shirt with or without a stock
Jodhpurs/breeches	Subtle colours
Boots	Heel, non-grip sole; short boots for riders under 18 in Child's/Rider classes
Spurs	Permitted when compliant with the spur requirements below
Whips/canes	Not exceeding 75cm including tassel (not in warm-up); First Ridden/Leading Rein not exceeding 40cm

Item	Requirement
Jewellery/hair/makeup	Hair neat; makeup and jewellery subtle

8.2 Show Hunter Classes — Dress

Conservative and understated. Tweed riding jacket with optional vest/waistcoat; otherwise as for Open classes above. Everything worn should fit the rider and be comfortable to ride in.

8.3 Leading Rein / First Ridden — Handler Dress

Handler attire should be tasteful and functional. Women: skirt or trousers with jacket, or tailored suit, flat shoes suitable for the arena surface, hat and gloves. Men: smart dress pants with sports jacket, or tailored suit, hat, suitable shoes and gloves. The handler carries the whip or cane (not exceeding 40cm) — never the rider.

8.4 General Equipment Standards

- Correctly fitted gear is the primary consideration.
- Saddle: good quality leather, supple and clean, sound stitching. A straight-flapped show saddle is preferred. A discreet, natural saddlecloth is acceptable.
- Bridle: double or snaffle, matching the saddle in colour, supple, good quality leather.
- Headgear must be an approved safety helmet with the retaining harness secured and fastened at all times when mounted. Failure to have the harness fastened results in elimination.
- Footwear must have smooth or almost-smooth soles and heels; heavily indented treads are not permitted.
- Gaiters/chapettes may only be worn with short boots, must match boot colour, and are not permitted for competitors under 18 in a Rider class.

8.5 Spurs

- Not permitted for Leading Rein or First Ridden competitors.
- A curved or straight shank must point directly back from the centre of the spur when on the rider's boot; the tip must not point up or inward.
- Arms of the spur must be smooth. Rowels, if used, must be blunt/smooth and free to rotate; daisy rowels are permitted.
- Maximum length is 2cm. Dummy or roller spurs not exceeding 2cm are permitted.

8.6 Bridles, Nosebands and Bits

A snaffle bridle is an English-type bridle with a single snaffle-type bit and one set of reins. It is compulsory to fit one — and only one — of the following nosebands on a snaffle bridle: dropped noseband; cavesson noseband; flash (Hanoverian) noseband; or crossed (Grackle/Mexican) noseband. A dropped, flash or crossed noseband is not permitted when a double bridle is used — only a cavesson noseband may be used with a double bridle. Nosebands must never be fitted so tightly as to harm the horse; an official who considers a noseband too tight must ask the rider to loosen it rather than doing so themselves and refer any dispute to the Ground Jury.

Only snaffle bits meeting the following criteria are approved: all parts of the bit that contact the horse's mouth must be metal, metal-and-rubber, or metal-and-synthetic (a bit made only of rubber, or rubber and chain, is not permitted); mouthpieces may be a single thickness or tapered towards the centre; there must be no more than two joints in the mouthpiece; a double-jointed mouthpiece may have one rotating middle

piece only; and all parts contacting the mouth must be rounded, smooth and free of sharp or corrugated edges. Within this definition, permitted types include (among others) loose-ring, eggbutt, D-ring/racing, hanging-cheek, and straight-bar snaffles, with or without a Mullen mouth; half-moon port-mouth curves; rubber, synthetic or sweet-iron bits; and snaffles with a rotating mouthpiece or rotating middle piece.

A double bridle is an English-type bridle with a bridoon (snaffle) bit and a curb bit and curb chain; each fitted with its own reins. The bridoon must be metal or rigid plastic (which may be covered with manufactured rubber/latex), with a minimum mouthpiece diameter of 10mm; flexible rubber bridoons are not permitted. The curb bit must be metal or rigid plastic (which may be covered with manufactured rubber), with the lever arm below the mouthpiece limited to 10cm; neither bit may be modified from its manufactured design.

8.7 Permitted and Prohibited Equipment

Permitted at all times:

- False tails/tail extensions.
- One whip, in all areas (subject to the length limits above).
- A monkey grip

Not permitted at an event or venue:

- Tongue ties; blinkers; nasal strips; muzzle nets.
- Any other equipment the Ground Jury, Technical Delegate or Chief Steward determines to be against the intent and general principles of SHCV competition.
- Spurs that measure over XXXX

Permitted in the warm-up/exercise area only (not in the competition area — non-compliance incurs elimination):

- Running martingales (with a snaffle bridle); boots and bandages; over-boots; saddle covers; earphones (one ear only) or similar devices.

8.8 Working Hunter — Dress and Saddlery

The dress code for Working Hunter classes is conservative and understated. An approved safety helmet, correctly fitted and fastened, must be worn by any person when mounted.

Saddlery should be clean, neat and well fitting, though it may be more workmanlike than for a ridden show class. A straight-flapped, all-purpose or jumping saddle may be used, with a saddlecloth matching the shape of the saddle. A Working Hunter must wear a snaffle bridle with a plain front — a plain browband and noseband; coloured or fancy browbands are not permitted. No martingales, bearing reins, or side or running reins of any kind are permitted, other than as set out in Section 7.9 (Working Hunter) for the jumping phase.

9. Roles of Officials

All officials must abide by the SHCV Code of Conduct for Officials. Any official is authorised to intervene to prevent abuse of a horse, or a contravention of the common principles of behaviour, fairness and sportsmanship.

9.1 Ground Jury

The Ground Jury consists of the judges appointed to a class or event and is responsible for: the technical judging of all classes; the allocation and verification of final placings; and referring any matter beyond its jurisdiction, or deserving of a penalty beyond its jurisdiction, to the SHCV Committee. Members of the Ground Jury must judge independently of one another and must not take into account unofficial advice, or

prior knowledge of a competitor or horse, that is not part of the official judging process. The Ground Jury's decision on a class is final, subject only to a protest properly lodged and dealt with under Section 5.

9.2 Gear Steward

The Gear Steward guides riders on the legality of saddlery, equipment and dress, and checks each competitor's gear for each class. It remains the competitor's full responsibility to comply with the equipment rules; the Gear Steward must not alter any gear — if gear is too loose or incorrectly fitted, the rider or their agent must make the adjustment. Where a bridle or bit is in question, inspection should occur immediately after the class concludes, using a fresh pair of disposable gloves for each horse if the mouth area is inspected.

9.3 Chief Steward

The Chief Steward oversees all officials at an event and is the primary point of contact for questions on the technical conduct of the show.

10. Judging System and Scoring

10.1 Class Placings — 100-Point Score

This system applies to every class across every section — Open/Hunter, Child's, Formative, Showcase and Rider classes.

Each class is judged by a panel of three judges, presiding over the class simultaneously and scoring independently. Judges score blind by competitor number against the 100-point rubric set out in Section 11 for the relevant class type. The three judges' scores for each competitor are added together and divided by three; this averaged score determines class placings.

In the event that a judge is unavailable, the committee reserves the right to reduce the number of judges on a particular class(s)

Tie-Break — Class Placings

- Compare the unrounded average first — many apparent ties are only a rounding artefact.
- Still tied? Countback to the single highest-weighted criterion for that class (e.g. Workout/Manners) — the higher score on that criterion wins the tie.
- Still tied? Move to the next-highest-weighted criterion, and so on down the rubric.

10.2 Championships — Preferential Ranking

This system applies wherever judges rank Championship finalists from first to last, rather than scoring points. Each of the three judges independently ranks the Championship contenders from first place to last; a competitor's placings across all three judges are added together, and the lowest combined total is awarded the Championship, with the next-lowest awarded Reserve Champion.

Tie-Break — Championships

- Count each exhibit's number of first-place votes across the three judges — the most first-place votes wins the tie outright.
- Still tied? Move to number of second-place votes, then third, and so on until the tie is broken.
- Still tied? The head judge's individual placing between the tied exhibits decides.

10.3 Judging Principles

These descriptors guide judges; scoring within each band still relies on professional opinion, not points alone. Judges should assess each criterion independently, score within the range that best reflects the performance seen and apply deductions consistently. The highest aggregate score wins, subject to these Rules.

11. Judging Standards and Rubrics

11.1 Criteria Definitions

Criterion	Definition
X Factor	The indefinable quality that makes a horse or pony stand out in the ring — presence, brilliance and the ability to catch and hold the judge's eye.
Presence	The horse or pony's bearing and expression, and its ability to command attention and make an impression in the ring.
Workout/Manners	The horse's performance and execution of the requested workout, including willingness, obedience, way of going and behaviour under saddle.
Workout/Execution/Accuracy (Rider)	How accurately and effectively the rider executes the required workout, including their aids, timing and control.
Paces/Correctness	The correctness, freedom and quality of the walk, trot and canter, including straightness, rhythm and natural way of going.
Paces/Correctness/Soundness (Rider & Showcase)	The correctness and soundness of the horse's paces, including freedom of movement, rhythm and absence of irregularity.
Connection (Rider)	The visible partnership between horse and rider — how effectively the rider's aids are applied and how willingly the horse responds.
Combination/Partnership/Connection (Showcase)	The overall partnership between horse and rider, reflecting the amateur, home-produced nature of the Showcase classes.
Conformation/Purpose	The horse's structural correctness and suitability for its intended purpose, including proportion, bone, topline and overall build.
Overall Appearance	Turnout and presentation on the day, including grooming, plaiting, condition, and the fit and cleanliness of tack and equipment.
Overall Appearance/Balance (Rider)	The rider's position, balance and turnout, including the overall harmony of the horse-and-rider picture.

Criterion	Definition
Suitability for a Child	The extent to which the horse or pony's temperament, manners and paces make it a safe mount for a child rider, judged on calmness and reliability as much as performance.

11.2 Judging Standard — Show Horse / Show Hunter

The Show Horse and Show Hunter should present as a quality riding horse, exhibiting elegance, refinement, balance, soundness, correct conformation, free movement and a willing temperament. The ideal exhibit is pleasing to the eye, displaying presence, quality and suitability as a comfortable, athletic riding horse.

Key characteristics:

- Refined, elegant and balanced overall outline.
- Quality head with a kind expression, broad forehead, large eyes and alert ears.
- Well-set, proportionate neck with a natural arch and generous length of rein.
- Sloping, well laid-back shoulders promoting freedom of movement and rider comfort.
- Strong topline, deep girth, well-sprung ribs and a short, strong back.
- Well-developed hindquarters with strength, muscling and correct tail carriage.
- Clean, straight limbs with correct bone, angulation and soundness.
- Well-shaped feet in proportion to the horse.

Movement:

- Free, even, straight and ground-covering action.
- Correct, balanced movement with rhythm and fluency.
- Moves willingly and comfortably, with minimal effort required from the rider.

Temperament and manners:

- Obedient, responsive and well mannered.
- Calm and attentive, and a pleasure to ride and assess.

Perfection is rarely found; judges should assess each horse as a whole, weighing its strengths against any faults, with preference given to the exhibit whose positive attributes most strongly outweigh its deficiencies.

11.3 Open / Show Hunter Classes — Rubric (100 points)

Section	Criteria	Points	Notes
Circle	X Factor/Presence	15	Poor 0–5 · Satisfactory 5–10 · Excellent 10–15
Workout	Workout/Manners/Accuracy	30	Poor 0–6 · Insufficient 6–12 · Good 12–18 · Very Good 18–24 · Excellent 24–30
Workout	Paces/Correctness/Balance	30	Poor 0–6 · Insufficient 6–12 · Good 12–18 · Very Good 18–24 · Excellent 24–30
Final Presentation	Conformation/Purpose	15	Poor 0–5 · Satisfactory 5–10 · Excellent 10–15. Deductions: lack of straightness; faults affecting soundness
Final Presentation	Overall Appearance/Quality	10	Poor 0–3 · Satisfactory 3–7 · Excellent 7–10. Deductions: unplaited (where required); unclean/untidy; ill-fitting or inappropriate gear

Total: 100 points.

What each band looks like

X Factor (15 pts)

Excellent (10–15): a true Show Horse type that catches the eye — refined, elegant, full of presence and quality, with real ring appeal. Poor (0–5): lacks the type, refinement or presence expected of a Show Horse.

Workout & Manners (30 pts)

Excellent (24–30): accurate, confident workout — obedient, settled and beautifully mannered, giving a clear picture of a quality Show Horse. Poor (0–6): unsettled or poorly mannered, obscuring the horse's true type.

Paces & Correctness (30 pts)

Excellent (24–30): pure, correct paces shown with freedom and ease — true to type, with the ground-covering way of going a Show Horse need. Poor (0–6): restricted, incorrect or irregular paces that fail to show the horse's type.

Conformation & Suitability for Purpose (15 pts)

Excellent (10–15): correctly made and true to type — the conformation, proportion and quality expected of a top Show Horse. Poor (0–5): conformational faults that compromise type, quality or suitability as a Show Horse.

Overall Appearance & Turnout (10 pts)

Excellent (7–10): immaculately presented — a picture of quality and professionalism that does justice to the horse's type. Poor (0–3): untidy or inappropriate presentation that undersells the horse's type and quality.

11.4 Child's / Formative Classes — Rubric (100 points)

Section	Criteria	Points	Notes
Circle	X Factor/Presence	15	Poor 0–5 · Satisfactory 5–10 · Excellent 10–15
Workout	Workout/Manners/Accuracy	30	Poor 0–6 · Insufficient 6–12 · Good 12–18 · Very Good 18–24 · Excellent 24–30
Workout	Suitability for a Child/Youth	30	Poor 0–6 · Insufficient 6–12 · Good 12–18 · Very Good 18–24 · Excellent 24–30
Final Presentation	Conformation/Purpose	15	Poor 0–5 · Satisfactory 5–10 · Excellent 10–15. Deductions: straightness; faults affecting soundness
Final Presentation	Overall Appearance/Quality	10	Poor 0–3 · Satisfactory 3–7 · Excellent 7–10. Deductions: unplaited; unclean/untidy; ill-fitting gear

Total: 100 points. Formative classes (rider 18–25 years) use the same rubric, substituting general suitability for the rider in place of "Suitability for a Child/Youth".

11.5 Rider Classes — Rubric (100 points)

Section	Criteria	Points	Notes
Circle	Presence	10	Poor 0–3 · Satisfactory 3–7 · Excellent 7–10
Workout	Workout/Execution/Accuracy	30	Poor 0–6 · Insufficient 6–12 · Good 12–18 · Very Good 18–24 · Excellent 24–30
Workout	Connection/Riding Skill	30	Poor 0–6 · Insufficient 6–12 · Good 12–18 · Very Good 18–24 · Excellent 24–30

Section	Criteria	Points	Notes
Workout	Correctness/Soundness	20	Poor 0–4 · Insufficient 4–8 · Good 8–12 · Very Good 12–16 · Excellent 16–20
Final Presentation	Overall Appearance	10	Poor 0–3 · Satisfactory 3–7 · Excellent 7–10

Total: 100 points.

11.6 Showcase Classes — Rubric (100 points)

Section	Criteria	Points	Notes
Circle	Presence	10	Poor 0–3 · Satisfactory 3–7 · Excellent 7–10
Workout	Workout/Manners/Accuracy	25	Poor 0–5 · Insufficient 5–10 · Good 10–15 · Very Good 15–20 · Excellent 20–25
Workout	Paces (Way of Going)/Correctness/Soundness	25	Poor 0–5 · Insufficient 5–10 · Good 10–15 · Very Good 15–20 · Excellent 20–25
Workout	Combination/Partnership/Connection	30	Poor 0–6 · Insufficient 6–12 · Good 12–18 · Very Good 18–24 · Excellent 24–30
Final Presentation	Overall Appearance	10	Poor 0–3 · Satisfactory 3–7 · Excellent 7–10

Total: 100 points.

Guiding principle for Showcase Classes: the amateur, home-produced intention of the class is applied by the judge as a lens on the Combination/Partnership/Connection criterion, not scored as a separate item.

Scoring bands: criteria under 20 points use a 3-tier scale (Poor / Satisfactory / Excellent); criteria of 20 points or more use a 5-tier scale (Poor / Insufficient / Good / Very Good / Excellent) for finer differentiation.