

Guidelines for Show Hack Classes

The show hack is a good performer in the show ring. He must have good conformation, graceful movement and accurate paces. He must be obedient to the rider's touch, well conditioned and neatly presented in gleaming good health.

Judges seek a horse with undeniable "presence" which seems to be born in some animals or eventually arises in a horse from certain confidence and self-pride. The horse that seems to say "look at me" simply commands attention.

While show horses are not expected to be highly trained in dressage, they will have undergone basic dressage training to become safe, enjoyable riding horses.

By setting workouts to be performed individually, the judges can test the obedience and training of the horse on show as well as giving the rider the opportunity to show the quality of movement and conformation.

The "Hack" is a beauty contest and the ratio for judgement of a hack is 60/40, 60% conformation and soundness and 40% manners, paces and education. It should be noted, first and foremost, a "Hack" is a "quality" animal.

Hacking is an art and it is entirely up to the talent of the rider and those connected with the horse to present and have it going in the way in which it looks and performs the best.

Every part of the horse's body must be involved in the movement, not just the legs—the whole picture should be pleasing to the eye.

The horse should work with a nicely rounded back, naturally elevated in front and head flexed at the poll. The contact should be light and even.

A hack must give the impression of covering the ground easily and fluently.

The horse must be well balanced and work without any obvious effort by the rider or any unseemly resistance from the horse.

Conformation and Soundness (60%)

Conformation in a show horse is the correct coupling of evenly balanced parts of the horse, which will produce a magnificent looking animal that is both sound in wind and limb.

Manners and Paces (40%)

A hack should be well mannered and obedient but never mechanical. Exuberance may be forgiven, but not naughtiness, biting, rearing, bucking or bolting. A hack must show soft, regular, active strides, which cover the ground, going forward with rhythm and impulsion. All paces should be clearly defined.