

Ranch Division Rules

- Rules for Ranch Rail Pleasure, Ranch Horse Riding, and Ranch Horse Trail are located in the Arabian section of the USEF Rule Book.
- The rules listed below have been copied from the 2021 AHA Ranch Horse Championship premium book.

Ranch Conformation

The purpose of Arabian Ranch Horse Conformation is to preserve Arabian type and conformation best suited to the function of a natural ranch horse. Selection is based upon well-mannered individuals in the order of their resemblance to the breed ideal that possess the most positive combination of balance, structural correctness, and movement. Individuals should possess appropriate breed and sex characteristics with adequate muscling. The ideal Arabian ranch horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail.

1. To be eligible to compete in the ranch horse conformation class the horse must be ***entered, shown, and judged*** in at least one riding class in the Ranch division at that show. Horses must be at least 3 years of age. Horses in each division may be shown together as one class or divided into Purebred, Half-Arabian, Stallions, Mares, Geldings, Open, Amateur, Youth, or in any combination deemed appropriate by show management. All stallions shall be examined to confirm that they have two visible testicles. All stallions and mares shall be examined for overshot and under-shot mouth. If examination reveals that a horse is a cryptorchid or has an over-/under-shot mouth, the judge shall not use such horse in the final placings of the class.
2. Horses are to be shown in a good working halter: rope, braided, nylon or plain leather. Any horse shown in the ranch horse conformation class may not be shown with an allowed lip cord or safety lead; however a lead shank with an attached chain may be used under the chin or over the nose.
3. As the horse approaches, the judge will step to the right to enable the horse to trot straight to a cone placed 50 feet away. At the cone, the horse will continue trotting, turn to the left and trot toward the left wall or fence of the arena. After trotting, horses will be lined up head to tail for individual inspection by the judge. The judge shall inspect each horse from both sides, front and rear and place the horses in order of preference.

Ranch Reining

The ranch reining class measures the ability of the ranch horse to perform basic handling maneuvers with a natural head carriage in a forward-looking manner. The ideal Ranch Reining horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail in each maneuver.

1. Each horse/rider team is scored between 0-100 points and automatically begins the run with a score of 70 points. The horse/rider team is scored on the quality of each maneuver (e.g. -1½ extremely poor, -1 very poor, -1/2 poor, 0 correct, +1/2 good, +1 very good, and +1½ excellent). Plusses and minuses are a reflection of the smoothness, finesse, attitude, quickness, and authority of the horse/rider team when performing the various maneuvers.

2. Horses will be shown individually. All runs begin upon entering the pen and any infractions are subject to penalty at that time such as two hands on the reins (except for junior horses 5 years & under wearing snaffle bit or hackamore), using either hand to instill fear or praise, etc. Patterns may be chosen from any of the ranch reining patterns found in the VRH section of the AQHA Handbook or on the AHA website.

Ranch Horse Versatility

A superior ranch riding horse has a free-flowing stride of reasonable length in keeping with his conformation and covering a reasonable amount of ground as if he was going across the pasture to do a task on the ranch in a timely fashion. Ideally, the horse should have a balanced, flowing motion, while exhibiting correct gaits with proper cadence and rhythm reflecting the versatility, attitude, and movement of a working ranch horse riding outside the confines of an arena. The ideal ranch horse will travel with forward movement and demonstrate an obvious lengthening of stride at extended gaits. The horse can be ridden with light contact or on a relatively loose rein without requiring undue restraint, but not shown on a full drape of reins. The overall manners and responsiveness of the Versatility Ranch Riding horse to make timely transitions in a smooth and correct manner, as well as the quality of the movement and consistency of the gaits are of major consideration. The ideal Versatility Ranch Riding horse should have a natural ranch horse appearance from head to tail in each maneuver.

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2. Horses will be shown individually at three gaits; walk, trot and lope in each direction of the arena. Horses will also be asked to reverse, stop and back.
3. The selected pattern must ask for an extended trot and extended lope at least one direction of the ring. The pattern may be started either to the right or left direction. Show management has the option to set markers to designate gait changes. The pattern may be set outside or inside an arena. If the class is held inside an arena, the course shall be set up to make approximately one pass of the arena in each direction. One of the suggested patterns for Versatility Ranch Riding may be used from the current AQHA Handbook in the Versatility Ranch Horse (VRH) section or on the AHA website. A judge may utilize a different pattern as long as all required gaits and maneuvers are included.