



## SHOWMANSHIP TECHNIQUES

What should your child think about in preparation for the show?

1. **Entering the Ring.** At the show, when the rider enters the arena, he is making a very important first impression on the judge. Riders should think about being at their very best when they come through the in-gate. We begin trotting before we get to the gate, so that when the rider comes through the gate she is sitting up straight, hands up, chin up, looking ahead down the rail. First impressions last!
2. **Making a Pass.** Each time the rider heads down the straightaway in the ring (the long straight rail on both sides of the ring) she is "making a pass" by the judge. Each time you make a good pass down the rail, you make a positive impression on the judge. Each time the rider makes a poor or weak pass down the straightaway, she will lose points in the judges' eyes. Riders may pretend their picture is being taken on each straightaway, and *stay in perfect form!*
3. **Looking Around the Turn.** When heading down the straightaway, riders should be looking up ahead to the end of the straightaway. Once they reach the end of the straightaway, they should put their chin up and turn their head to look down the *next* straightaway. This is a showmanship technique that makes beginning riders look experienced; it also allows them to be watching the traffic in front of them.
4. **Checklist.** Riders should think through their correct position and fix it as they ride, beginning with their feet and ending with their head. First, make sure the stirrup is on the ball of the foot; then that heels are down; knees should be flat against the saddle and bent; posture straight; elbows bent with hands up; chin up. Then start at the foot again!
5. **The Lineup.** In the lineup, the judge will be taking his last look at the rider and making his final decisions. This is not a time to let down and relax! Riders in the lineup need to show the judge that they know all their correct form. Riders should loosen their reins, then fix their legs, posture and hands to be the very best they can be.
6. **Please support and praise your child's effort.** It is harder than it looks! Pick out the things that were done well, and praise your child!