

Qualifying Spots for the Utah 4-H State Western Individual Horse Show

The Utah 4-H State Horse Show, held in September each year, is a pinnacle event for youth participating in horseback riding projects. All riders are encouraged to come to the non-qualifying events which are not affected by county participation. This includes the Working Ranch Horse, In-Hand, Two-Hand, and English shows. To participate, youth need to be registered in their county and be in good standing. The Western Individual show is a qualifying event, meaning county programs send their top riders in each age division.

Qualifying Spots

To determine which bracket the county program fits into, and thus the number of qualifying riders that can be sent to state, the average **horse show attendance** for each age group, rounded up to the nearest whole, should be taken over a two-year period and should be reevaluated on odd years (2021, 2023, 2025, and so on). Because 2020 may not be indicative of a program, for the 2021 State Horse Show an average from 2018 and 2019 may be used instead. County 4-H Staff and County 4-H Horse Councils are responsible for working together to find the average participants for each age group in order to determine the qualifying riders that will be eligible to attend the Western Individual Show. These numbers should be reported to the Utah 4-H Western Horse Council as soon as the number is finalized, and no later than August 1st on odd years, so they can adequately prepare.

Average Horse Show Participants (per age group)	Qualifying Spots for Utah 4-H State Western Individual Horse Show
1 – 4**	2
5 – 10	3
11 – 15	5
16 – 20	7
21 – 30	10
31 – 40	13
41 – 50	15
51 – 60	18
61+	20

**In the case where there are less than 5 riders on average in the age group, riders interested in attending the State Horse Show should be encouraged to participate in an open, regional, or state level show to gain experience and prepare. Whether the riders are ready to represent the county at the state level is ultimately up to the county staff and county horse program leaders.

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Because this system relies on the average horse show attendance for each age group, and not the county program as a whole, a county with few junior riders may send a fewer amount of juniors than intermediates or seniors. Alternatively, county programs may choose to take an average across age groups and send the same number of contestants across the board.

For example, County A has an average of 10 junior participants, 15 intermediate participants, and 20 senior participants in 2019 and 2020.

Option 1: According to the participant brackets, County A can send 3 junior participants, 5 intermediate participants, and 7 senior participants.

Option 2: Taking a total average across age groups $(10+15+20 / 3)$ we get 15 average participants per age group, per show. With this option, County A would send 5 participants per age group.