

**STANDARD BRED
PLEASURE &
PERFORMANCE
HORSE ASSOCIATION
OF WA**



**TRACK TO HACK
SHOW GUIDE**

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Introduction to SPPHAWA

We are a volunteer run association with the main aim to promote the pure and partbred Standardbred as a successful and versatile horse, that can excel in selected disciplines and also encourage an alternative lifestyle outside of racing.

We provide a number of events throughout the year that both cater towards our newer members and also our seasoned competitors. These events offer a variety of disciplines including dressage, harness(race cart & carriage) and sporthorse classes. On top of this we have our major shows, being the Off The Track Classic, Dual Code Spectacular and State Championships with interstate judges presiding.

Your SPPHAWA membership enables you to collect points towards end of year awards such as:

- Led Stallion, Mare, Gelding, Sporthorse & Junior of the Year
- Led Horse of the Year
- Ridden Intermediate & Open Horse of the Year
- Overall Ridden Horse of the Year
- Race Cart & Carriage Horse of the Year
- Overall Harness Horse of the Year



SPPHAWA also likes to recognize the performance of our Junior Members, individual horse or rider performances and club awards in addition to the above. We also have a selection of awards for our Partbreds. Please refer to your membership welcome letter for a full list of awards and how points are accumulated or visit our website - [Awards & Points List](#)

We have a range of merchandise available, with the opportunity of wearing it at selected shows or dressage days where permitted. We do a merchandise order once a year so keep an eye out in your emails for updates when these will be placed. Alternatively, you can contact us as we do keep a small amount in stock.

This booklet has been prepared as an introductory guide that we hope will help with your showing journey. If there are any areas that you are stuck on or want some more help with, please send us an email and we will get back to you with our recommendations – members@spphawa.com.au. Alternatively, there are numerous experienced people in various fields that we can recommend to you to cover any topics you are unsure on.



Where to Start?

SPPHAWA run shows are a great way to give yourself and your horse experience and exposure in the show ring, without there being too many distractions. As a member, you will automatically be sent SPPHAWA Show programs via email.

When starting out, the task of presenting a horse to show ring standards can seem daunting, however with a bit of practice it is quite easy to get show ring ready. As a general rule, with correct feed and work it can take up to 8 weeks for your horse to begin the transition to show horse. It is also important that your horse has a regular worming, dental and hoof care regime.

During this preparation time at home, it is essential that your horse is trained with the basics required to present for judging. Eg Leading, standing for judging and completing an inhand workout. Likewise ridden horses should have the appropriate level of education for the ring they wish to compete in. Eg. Walk/Trot, Intermediate (Transitioning to Canter) and Open (Canter). Please refer to the [Show Rules & Policies](#) for further clarification on grading, or alternatively contact us direct.

In addition to being emailed out to members, show programs can also be found on Cavalletti-<https://www.cavalletti.com.au/event/>

All SPPHAWA Shows are pre-entry only so please ensure you are aware of the closing date. Entries must be sent to entries@spphawa.com.au

A Proof of registration and copy of payment receipt must be supplied with all entries. HRA or SPPHAWA registration is acceptable.(Figure 1) SPPHAWA registrations are recognised with all showing societies.(Figure 2)

Our ongoing sponsorship with Racing and Wagering WA (RWWA) will mean that it is **mandatory** for all horses to have a Off The Track WA Passport(OTTWA) to compete at any of our supported by their sponsorship. The process is free, very simple and can be lodged online. A copy of your passport must be forwarded to us to be recorded for your eligibility to compete. All details can be found here- <https://www.offthetrackwa.com.au/ottwa-passport>

Random swabbing can be carried out at any of our events. Please ensure you bring your horses registration card with you to every event. It is advisable to check with your veterinarian what the withholding periods are for any treatments or products you are using.

You can find a list of banned substances: [Banned Substances](#)

Alternatively you can search the FEI database individually for banned substances:

[Substance Database](#)

Penalties do apply for a positive swab. Please see [Show Rules & Policies](#) for more information.



Figure 1- HRA Registration. Horses can be searched for in the link below:

<http://www.harness.org.au/ausbreed/reports/search>

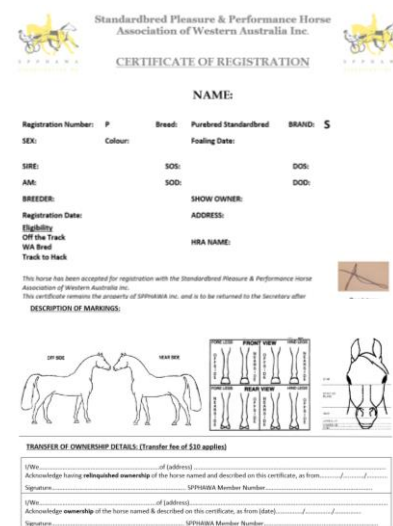


Figure 2- Your SPPHAWA Registration card is accepted by all breed societies

Feed & Condition

A healthy shiny looking horse always starts with proper inner health. A good balanced diet is your first place to start and no coat enhancement products can replace the results of this. If your horse is not responding to the correct diet, there could be underlying issues that may need veterinary attention or advice.

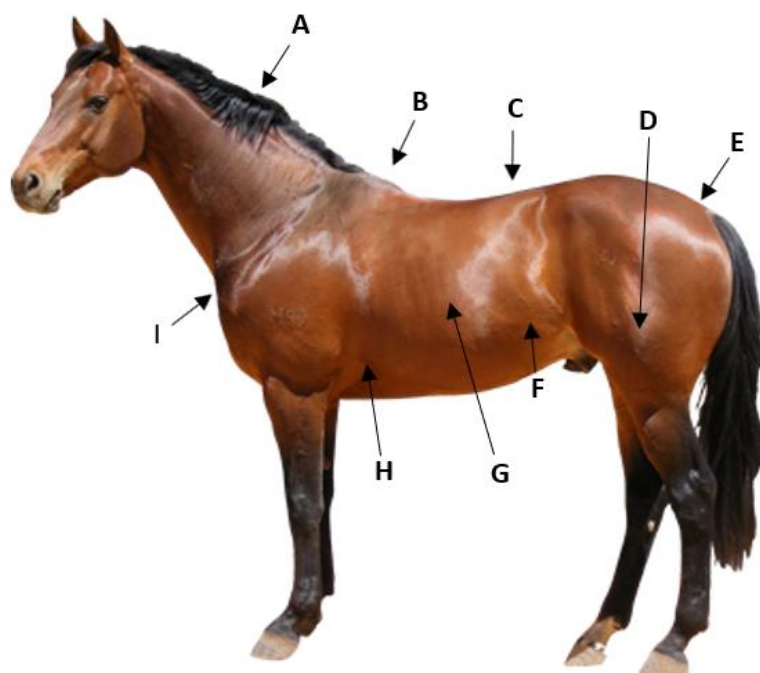
Ensure your horse is getting enough feed for their weight and workload, not only through hard feeds products like pellets or grains, but also roughage from hay/chaff/pasture (Min 1.5% of their bodyweight; 7.5kg/day for a 500kg horse). It is also important to take note of their water consumption and ensure fresh water is available.

On the other hand, if they are a good doer, then you may need to adjust their feed intake down to suit, so they are not carrying unnecessary weight.

Using a body score system can be a beneficial way to assess your horses' current condition. You can then gauge if they need to gain, lose or maintain their current weight.



Body Condition Score Chart



Areas of emphasis for body condition scoring:

- A. Thickening of the neck
- B. Fat covering the withers
- C. Fat deposits along backbone
- D. Fat deposits on inner thigh
- E. Fat deposits around tailhead
- F. Fat deposit on flanks
- G. Fat deposit behind shoulder
- H. Fat covering ribs
- I. Shoulder blends into neck

1. Poor

Animal extremely emaciated; spine, ribs, tailhead, points of hip and buttock projecting prominently; bone structure of withers, shoulders, and neck easily noticeable; no fatty tissue can be felt.



2. Very Thin

Animal emaciated; slight fat covering over base of spine, ribs, tailhead, points of hip and buttock prominent; withers, shoulders, and neck structure faintly discernible.



3. Thin

Fat build up about halfway on spine, slight fat cover over ribs; spine and ribs easily discernible; tailhead prominent but individual vertebrae cannot be identified visually; points of hip appear rounded but easily discernible; points of buttock not distinguishable; withers, shoulders, and neck accentuated



4. Moderately Thin

Slight ridge along back; faint outline of ribs discernible; tailhead prominence depends on conformation, fat can be felt around it; points of hip not discernible; withers, shoulders, and neck not obviously thin.



5. Moderate

Back is flat (no crease or ridge); ribs not visually distinguishable but easily felt; fat around tailhead beginning to feel spongy; withers appear rounded over spine; shoulders and neck blend smoothly into body.



6. Moderately Fleshy

May have slight crease down back; fat over ribs fleshy/spongy; fat around tailhead soft; fat beginning to be deposited along sides of withers, behind shoulders, and along the side of neck.



7. Fleshy

May have crease down back; individual ribs can be felt; but not noticeable filing between ribs with fat; fat around tailhead soft; fat deposited along withers, behind shoulders, and along neck.



8. Fat

Crease down back, difficult to feel ribs; fat around tailhead very soft; area along withers filled with fat; area behind shoulders filled with fat; noticeable thickening of neck; fat deposited along inner thighs.

9. Extremely Fat

Obvious crease down back; patchy fat appearing.

Coat Preparation

During the summer months most horses' coats will be sleek and shiny if correct diet and health management are in place. However, when daylight is shortened during the Autumn/Winter months horses will naturally grow a winter coat. There are several options to avoid this occurring if you prefer to present them with a shorter coat.

Lights

By using artificial lighting, you will be extending the horses exposure to day light which replicates the summer solstice. This is what is needed for the coat to stay short in the winter months. You will need to rug accordingly as your horse won't have their winter coat to keep them warm.

Alternatively, there are products on the market such as an Equilume Mask that the horse wears, to prevent coat growth. (Figure 3)



Figure 3- Equilume Mask

Clipping-Body

Having your horse under lights isn't always a possibility, so clipping would be your next best option. If you are unsure when to clip see the below video.

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/when-should-i-clip-my-horse/>

From all the various styles of clips that you can do, a full body clip is recommended for showing. If you haven't clipped your horse before and are unsure of how to do this, refer to the link below. Otherwise we strongly suggest finding a professional to clip for you.

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/how-to-clip-a-horse/>

Clipping- Legs/White Markings

If you intend to clip your horse's white markings(legs/face) allow up to 7 days prior to the event for suitable regrowth, in preparation for how you wish to present them on show day.

If your horse has no white markings, you can still use the above method to tidy the legs up. Trimming around the coronet, down the back of the leg and lightly against the fetlock can give a natural finish.

Clipping your horse's white markings can give them a more refined look, to give an overall clean and crisp finish (Figure 4) Alternatively, it will improve the application of a whitening product on show day, should you choose to use one.



Figure 4- You can see an unclipped leg on the left vs a fully clipped leg on the right. They have clipped the hair to a good length for keeping the sock naturally white with no makeup.

Clipping-Face/Ears/Chin

Although clipping these areas can give you a more professional finished look, it is your personal preference should you choose to leave them more natural looking and environmental factors surrounding your horse need to be taken into consideration.

- Face- The sensory hairs on the whiskers, eyes and inner ear hair **must not** be removed (Figure 5)

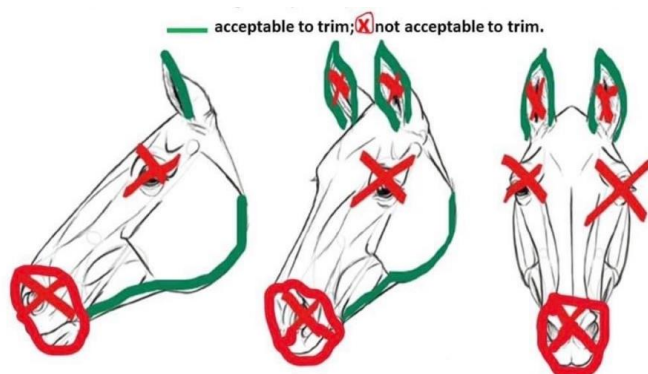


Figure 5- This diagram shows the areas acceptable to trim in green and areas not acceptable to trim or remove in red.

Photo Credit to New Zealand National Horse & Pony Show Association

We have elected to implement the ban on removing inner ear hairs and sensory hairs on the horse. Removal of sensory hairs from the whiskers, eyes or inner ear hair is strictly prohibited as of the 1st January 2022.

Please view our [Show Rules & Policies](#) for more information.

- Ears- Small clippers or scissors are easiest to use around ears, depending on the look you are wanting to achieve.



This horse has its ear hairs left intact and natural.



This ear has had the excess hair sticking out of the ear trimmed off with scissors, as well as the outer edge of the ear neatened with a clipper. The hair inside the ear has not been removed.



Holding the ear closed between your fingers and running scissors or clippers along the edge will neatn the hair on the outside and leave the inside hair intact, like the figure on the left.

Removal of the inner ear hair is prohibited. Please see Figure 5 above for further clarification.

- Chin



Before- This black horse has its chin hair left intact



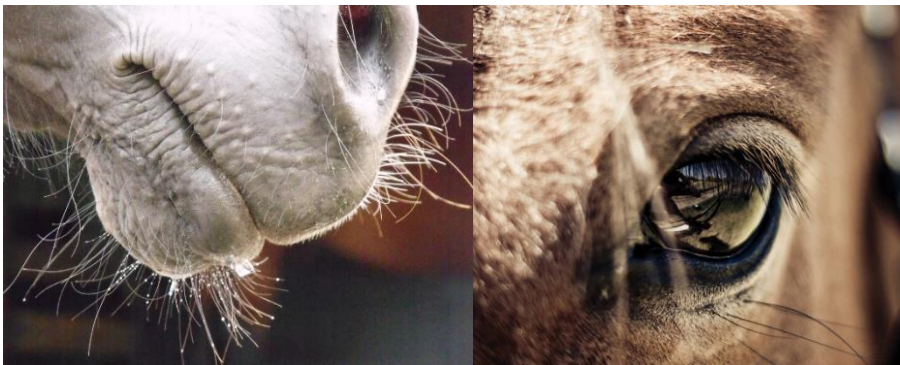
After- The chin hair has now been removed entirely neatening the horses face. Note- Sensory whiskers have been left intact



Before- This bay horse has its chin hair left intact

After- The chin hair has now been removed entirely neatening the horses face

- Sensory Hairs- Whiskers and Eyes



Left- The sensory hairs on the whiskers and eyes must be left intact and not be trimmed or removed in any way.

Below we have a video that covers how to trim up all the areas on your horse, including legs;

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/how-to-trim-up-a-horse/>



Above- Some styles of razors & clippers that you can use, they range from battery power, rechargeable to corded.

Preparation-Mane

A little bit of forward planning to have your horse's mane in the best condition prior to plaiting, can make your job to plait a lot easier and produce some wow factor plaits.

- Does your horse have a tendency to rub a section of their mane?
- Are there any bald spots or areas they have rubbed out?
- Is it really thick and could be pulled a little to thin it out in areas so your plaits are an even nice size?

These are things that you should look at a few weeks out from a show and address so that when you do need to plait, you have something to work with and your plaits look the best they can.

Pulling/Shortening the Mane

If your horse has a thick mane, or perhaps it thickens in the middle of their neck, then thinning it out can help the finished look of your plaits.

Pulling the mane is one way to thin it out. Not all horses tolerate their manes being pulled, so this may need to be done over a few sessions rather than all in one go. It is also recommended to do this after the horse has been worked and their pores are open. This allows the hair to come out easier. Below is a mane pulling video you can follow;

<https://youtu.be/s4NMzeUaQ0E>

Alternatively, below are a series of videos showing you other methods of thinning/shortening your horse's mane;

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/thin-mane-without-pulling/>

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/shorten-mane-without-pulling/>

If you are heading out to a clinic, lesson or training day that doesn't require plaiting, the methods in the above links can be great options to keep your horse tidy and well presented. (Figure 5)

Hogging the Mane

Hogging your horse's mane can look smart if plaiting is not an option for whatever reason. This method often looks better on hunter style horses or others with a well-defined topline. Your horse's conformation should be taken into consideration to see if this method will do the overall look of your horse justice.



Figure 5- The mane has been shortened and gives a neat presentable finish





Above- A tail that has been plaited far enough down to show off the horses' hind quarters with a false tail adding volume.

Preparation-Tail

Along with manes, tails need adequate care to ensure they are in prime condition regardless of the decision if you plait or shave. During this preparation phase in the leadup to your show debut, you will need to decide on what option you wish to take. Assessing the following can help you decide:

- Does your horse have an adequate amount of hair on their tail to hold in a tail plait, especially at the top?
- Will your horse stand patiently long enough for you to plait their tail on show mornings and do you have the extra time for this?
- Does your horse have a tendency to rub their tail and leave you with sparse thin areas?
- Does your horse work comfortably with a plaited tail? Some horses can be sensitive and not react well to a tail plait.

If your horse does not have much hair to plait or has a very thick dock, then shaving or pulling may be the better option. It can also make show mornings that little bit easier as you can do the tail a few days before and just add final touches on show day.

If you haven't shaved or pulled your horse's tail before, having an experienced person do this for you the first time can be very helpful. Otherwise doing it slowly is advised, rather than removing all the hair in one go. View video below for clipping a tail.

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/how-to-clip-a-tail>

However, there are still ways to show a horse with a plaited tail if you do not have enough hair, or if you prefer this look. 'Plaiting tails' on Page 13 explains this further



*Above- A tail that has been shaved.
Photo Credit- Nags to Riches*



Above- You can see the difference a false tail can make with this before (left) and after (right)

False Tails

False tails are permitted and often used to complete the show ring look, particularly if your horse doesn't have a naturally thick tail.

Whatever style of tail preparation you choose, your horse may need a false tail added in as the thickness can be greatly reduced. It is advisable to give yourself adequate time to find a suitable false tail prior to your event. This also ensures that you have enough time to make sure your horse is comfortable with the added weight of a false tail as some can react.

The false tail should match the hair from the center of the dock and be attached securely and seamlessly. Prior to purchasing your false tail ensure it is of sufficient length that can be trimmed to your requirements. Below is a video that shows one way to attach a false tail.

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/put-false-tail/>

Tail Length

Your horse's tail should be cut straight and evenly at the bottom, to an appropriate length that shows off their hind quarters best. Some things to consider when deciding on the length is how your horse carries its tail when moving, how thick the tail is etc.

Pre-Show Preparation

Now that all the early preparation has taken place, you and your horse are now ready to begin show day preparation.

Washing

First and foremost, your horse should be presented clean. A good wash the day before a show is one of the most important things you can do.

There aren't any go-to shampoos or products we recommend more than the other. A good standard shampoo like the Equinade shampoo range (pictured right) are quite well priced and seem to work well on most horses. Otherwise your local stock feeders or horse shop carry a lot of different brands so find something you like that works for your horse. Remember, it doesn't have to be the most expensive product to be the best.



Dyeing a horse is permitted but please note it is forbidden to alter or add markings (including coat colour) other than that of the horse's registration. E.g. A bay, brown, chestnut etc. cannot be dyed another colour. Colour enhancing shampoos are allowed.

With any new products you may be trying, we recommend testing it on your horse a few weeks prior to a show. This ensures they aren't sensitive or allergic to any ingredients in the shampoo and also allows you to see the after effects on your horses' coat. Some shampoos can dry the coat out too much or remove too much natural oil. This can affect the shine on show day and can make your horse itchy. Not removing all excess shampoo can also give the appearance of a dull coat.

The following areas often don't get enough attention in the overall washing process;

- Face - Behind the ears, under the chin and the forelock can often be missed, but they all make a difference in that overall finished look.
- Mane - Give the mane a good scrub, this area as well as the tail can get quite oily and you want a clean area to work with when it comes to sectioning and plaiting the mane. It's important to clean the roots to remove all the dirt. Excessive use of shampoo can cause the mane to become too slippery when plaiting.
- Tail - Same principles apply as above. You should be able to section the tail in half and the inside should be clean, as well as the sections near the tail bone. If plaiting, a dirty tail will be highlighted as any dirty sections will be brought to the front of your plait.
- False Tail - This is a good opportunity to make sure your false tail is also washed, conditioned and prepped for show day.
- Hind Quarters - If this area isn't clean when the quarter marks are applied, any dirt, sand or loose hair will be lifted to the top of the coat.
- Socks and White Markings – A whitening/purple shampoo can be used to remove any yellow or brassy tones.



Above- There are numerous products that you may choose to use to help in the pre-show washing process. Try a few and see what works best for you and your horse, and gives you the result you are after.

Plaiting- Manes & Forelock

Standardbreds are to be shown plaited, unless they are in race conditioned, junior or colt/stallion classes.

The most popular style of plait are the traditional rosettes that are sewn in, on the off side of the horse. (Figure 6)

There are other styles of plaits that you can use on your horse, such as running braids, dressage plaits that are banded in(not sewn) or some people may hog a mane.

There are many online tutorials and videos you can watch to help. Here are a few handy tips;

- Each plait should be the same width apart.
- The number and size of your plaits can change the overall look of your horses' neck. (Figure 7)
- A clean mane will give you a better result.
- There are various brands and products you can use to help with the plaiting process as shown below.



Figure 6- This standardbred has been plaited on the off side, with traditional rosette plaits.

Photo Credit to Sherri Wightman Photography

If you are not confident enough to try it yourself, professionals are available to plait for you. The below mane and forelock plaiting videos are useful tools for those wanting to try it themselves.

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/how-to-plait-a-mane>

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/how-to-braid-a-forelock>



Above- Forelock plait
Photo Credit to Grace Imrie

Figure 7- Top Right- Lots of small plaits down the neck which gives the impression of a lengthened front and neck

Middle Right- Larger hooded plaits that are sitting high give the impression of a shorter front and have enhanced the topline

Bottom Right-This is how this particular horse is plaited for a show. It is a mixture of the first 2 styles and complements the conformation best



Plaiting-Tails

A well-executed tail plait can often give that wow factor in a best presented class.

Here are a few handy tips that you may find useful;

- There are lots of small sections of hair taken rather than a few large ones.
- Tail is plaited down far enough. (Figure 9 below) Often tails are plaited and stopped too far up the dock. (Figure 8 below)
- Tail is tight enough that the top of the plait doesn't come undone. This is different to the hair being short and not long enough to sit in the plait.

The link below gives you a good visual aid on how to achieve the desired result.

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/how-to-braid-a-tail/>

Once you have perfected the plait in the video above, you can then try this style, which is the same plait however you now will be dropping sections to keep the plait the same thickness all the way down.

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/tail-braiding-level-expert/>

It is your own personal preference if you choose to plait the night before or the morning of the show.



Figure 8- This tail plait is too loose, with the sections needing to be taken in smaller amounts. The tail is also not plaited down far enough and could go another 15cm. This gives an unfinished look to the horses' presentation.



Figure 9- Comparing this to the tails on the left, you can see that it is a much tighter neater tail plait, that has been plaited down far enough to complement the horses' hind quarters.



Above- False Tails can be purchased in a large array of colours to suit your horses' natural tail, if it needs some thickness added. Pictured are the Champion Tails range that can be found here- <https://championtails.com/>

Rugs & Accessories

It is essential that now your horse has been washed, prepped and plaited that clean rugs and accessories are used for overnight ready for show day. A final vigorous grooming is essential to stimulate oils back into the coat and to enhance the show day shine.

The following examples can be used to keep your horse clean and tidy overnight.



It is a personal choice if you wish to change rugs on the morning of the show into a new clean show set. When travelling to the show, boots or wraps can be used for protection when travelling and to keep their legs clean.



Show Day

You should allow yourself plenty of time on the morning of the show for any hiccups that may arise. Prior to loading and departing for the show here are some tips that may can make your show day run more smoothly if time permits:

- Legs may be washed and white markings enhanced
- Unrug, groom and quick check of plaits to make sure they are all still secure
- False tail can be put in
- Reapply overnight rugs or new clean show sets
- Hoof black applied – this is helpful if there are no suitable surfaces at the grounds the show is held at.
- Protective bandages or boots for travelling. Some ideas are given above in 'Rugs & Accessories' on Page 14



Above- A latch hook is a handy tool to have if you are planning to use a false tail.

On Arrival to the Event

When arriving on the grounds if you have been advised to check in, it is now is the time to do so. This ensures there have been no changes to the program and gives you a chance to collect any competitor packs that may contain programs, numbers or other relevant information.

You are now at the final stage of preparing your horse for show day competition. Depending on the morning preparation that you have undertaken as listed previously (E.g. Hoof black, white markings, false tail) this will determine the finishing touches required at the show.

If the tail hasn't been previously plaited before arrival, then this may be your first preference of things to do. 'Plaiting Tail' on Page 13 references how to do this. In addition, you may also need to add your false tail in and trim your horses' tail if needed. 'Preparation Tail' on page 10 covers this.

Otherwise your next step may be to move onto makeup.



Make Up

Make up is largely used in the show ring to enhance your horse's features. Just like a person's makeup, it needs to look natural and a less is more approach is a good rule to have. You want to avoid the 'panda look' and ensure it is well blended.

When choosing makeup for your horse, picking the right colour that works well with your horse and enhances their natural points. There is a variety of makeup colour tones to suit all coat colours, including black, brown, bays, chestnuts, grey ect.(Figure 10)

Alternatively, clear gloss is another product that can be used alone for a more natural look and will enhance any natural colour the horse may have.

If you do decide to use makeup on your horses' face, then below is a video that shows the areas the makeup should be applied.

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/put-makeup-horse-eyes/>



Above- This chestnut hunter has a matte makeup applied for a more natural finish.

Photo Credit to Aussie Platinum Photography



Figure 10- There are various makeup products available to suit every colour and shade of horse.

Makeup on Legs;

If you have washed your horse's legs well, then you don't have to use a makeup on their legs. However this can be good to do if your horses legs need covering for any reason such as blemishes, scars or bleached hairs.

White Markings

White markings can be quite striking to look at especially if they are ultra clean. However, they also need a little more attention when it comes to preparing them for a show.



Figure 11- The sock on the left has been clipped short with no makeup applied vs the sock on the right has had makeup applied and it has been blended nicely into the black part of the leg

If you have chosen to clip your horse's white markings (as outlined on page 7) then you may also choose to use a white paste or chalk over them. Figure 11 below shows the difference between a sock without makeup and a sock with makeup applied.

A white paste or chalk can be applied to these areas and this can either be done the day before or the morning of the show. Again, you want this to look natural, so if using paste, give yourself time for the paste to dry so that you can brush off the excess before you head to the ring.

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/present-white-socks/>

If your horse is not registered with any form of white markings le star, socks or other. You cannot add or alter them.



Above- This hack has a gloss black makeup applied



Quarter Markers

A well placed and thought-out quarter mark can not only give the illusion of a well-balanced hind end, it can also enhance the overall look and minimise the appearance of faults. On the other hand, an incorrectly placed quarter mark can weaken your horse's hind end and draw attention to it. This can often happen if horses are still lacking a bit of condition and muscle in their hind quarters. If this is the case, you may consider leaving them off entirely.

There are many different types of quarter marks you can do with some being more traditional like checkers and hunter stripes. With some imagination, there are many other styles and patterns you can come up with. Please note that smiley faces or 'fun patterns' should be left for a fun day or fancy dress.

You can draw your quarter markers on with a quarter mark comb, nit comb or a short stiff bristled brush. If you aren't confident with drawing your quarter marks on yourself, you can purchase pre-cut stencils that you brush against the coat. (Figure 12)

Regardless of the way you choose to apply them, you should always practice as much as you can at home, so that when it comes to show day you are feeling confident and know what suits your horse and looks best.

Below are some videos we recommend as they help explain how to create quarter marks and what you should be looking for;



Figure 12- Stencils can save you time and stress if you are unsure how to do the quarter markers by hand. When choosing a stencil consider your horse's confirmation.



<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/quarter-markers-styles>

Quarter Markers photos credit to Grace Imrie



<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/quarter-markers-create-checkers-apple-bum-line/>



Above- An assortment of brushes, products and combs that can be used when creating quarter markers.



<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/sharksteeth-quarter-marks/>

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/sharksteeth-decide-suits-horse/>

<https://www.nagstoriches.com.au/show-prep/striking-sharks-teeth-quality-quarter-marks-tips-tricks/>

Handler & Rider Presentation

Handler Presentation

A judge's first impression starts when you enter the ring, therefore it should be for all the right reasons. You don't want to dress in a manner that is inappropriate or distracting for the judge, but should be practical and pleasing to the eye with colours complimenting that of the horse.

It is advisable to organise your in hand outfit well in advance of any event. Please consider the following rules and regulations prior to purchasing.

1. Skirts and dresses must be of an appropriate length (no shorter than knee length) not too tight, full or to interfere with running.
2. Tops, dresses and shirts must cover the shoulder. (Thin straps, see-through styles and cleavage are not appropriate)

Following are some options you may consider as it is a personal preference as to what style you may choose. However, it should be neat, clean, well-fitting and suitable for handling and running out a horse.

- Suit - This is a very traditional choice of outfit and it is your preference if you want pants or a skirt to suit. It is a personal preference if you choose to wear stockings/tights. Alternatively, a top or dress shirt of your choice may be matched with the above. (No T-Shirts)
- Dresses- It is now quite popular for dresses to be another option for inhand showing. It is a personal preference if you choose to wear stockings/tights.
- Riding Outfit- It is acceptable to present yourself in riding attire however if you intend to do this you should ensure that you are wearing all components of the ridden outfit. I.e Helmet
- Gloves- Should always be worn in a best presented class, the colour should complement your outfit. (Figure 13)
- Headwear- Headwear is essential in a best presented class, this can come in the form of hats, beret, fascinators or helmets. It should be proportionate in size that compliments you and not too broad that it obstructs your view. Ensure it is well secured to prevent it being dislodged. Your hair should be off your face and neat and tidy, a hairnet can be a good investment for this.
- Whip/Cane - A whip or cane is recommended. It can be a very handy tool to stand your horse up or even just an accessory matched to your outfit. Maximum length is 120cm.
Note; Whips are mandatory when handling any entire horse
- Shoes- Should be acceptable for handling and running horses out. The top part of foot must be covered (**No ballet flats or joggers**) Below are 3 popular styles that can be used as part of your outfit;



Figure 13- There are a large variety of glove colours and styles to choose from. Stick with a material that you like and gives you good grip with a lead or rein.



Above- These are a popular style if you have a skirt or dress to match attire to, whilst still allowing you to run comfortable and keep your foot protected from your horse.



Above- These are a popular style when wearing dress pants. Again, they are comfortable and allow you to run with your horse



Above- Top boots can finish off a smart ridden attire inhand look.



Rider Presentation

Show Hacks: The dress code for Show Hacks is more open to choice and colours than for our Show Hunter counterparts. It is very much personal choice however should complement yourself and your horse.

Jackets: Jackets can be double or single vent and should not be too long, ideally the tail of the jacket should hang just over the top of the cantle of the saddle when seated. Colours can vary however should always be conservative, black and navy are the common choices, however there are other options and patterns if you want to try something different.

Vests: You may choose to wear a vest underneath however this is optional. Colour should tie in with your outfit or add a pop of colour to compliment your browband.

Shirts & Ties: There are many different styles of shirts available and it is dependent on the finished look you want. You may choose a collared shirt and tie combination, with the tie offering a pop of colour and matched to your horse's browband. Or you can also go with a ratcatcher style shirt with or without a stock tie.

Jodhpurs: Jodhpurs can be fawn, cream, caramel, banana or beige in colour. Dark or brightly coloured jodhpurs are not worn in hack classes.

Boots: Riders can wear long boots or short boots paired with leather gaiters or chaps (*unless competing in a junior rider class, you will then be required to only wear short boots. Jodphur clips are optional but recommended*). Boots must have a heel and have a non-grip, smooth sole.

Gloves: Should complement your overall attire.

Whips/Canes: They can add a finishing touch to your outfit, but must not exceed 75cms (including any tassel) in the competition arena.



Above- Hair nets are great at keeping your hair neat and tidy under your helmet



Above- These are 2 helmet styles that can be worn to suit your attire

Helmets/Top Hats: Helmets must comply with current EA Guidelines. Details can be found here - [Approved Helmets](#)

Jewellery/Hair/Makeup: Hair should be neat, jewellery and makeup should be subtle. Below is a video that shows how you can do your hair so it discretely sits under your helmet - [NTR Hair Lock](#)



Above- There are many colour and style combinations you can choose when looking for a Hack outfit
Photo Credit NVS Equine Attire Australia- <https://www.nvsequineattire.com.au/>



Rider Presentation

Show Hunter: The horse and rider dress code for the Show Hunter classes, is generally far more conservative and understated than for Show Horse.

Jackets: Jackets can be double or single vent and should not be too long, ideally the tail of the jacket should hang just over the top of the cantle of the saddle when seated. A tweed colour jacket is most popular, although plain navy or black fabric is acceptable. Tweed can be blue, green or brown mixture and the colour should go well with the mount.

Vests: You may choose to wear a vest underneath, in a toning colour to your jacket choice above.

Shirts & Ties: A shirt with a proper collar in a tone which matches the jacket should be worn together with a plain or discreetly patterned matching tie. Alternatively, you can wear a ratcatcher style shirt with a white or cream stock tie.

Jodhpurs: Jodhpurs should be fawn, banana or beige in colour. Dark or brightly coloured jodhpurs are not worn in hunter classes.

Boots & Gloves: Riders can wear long boots or short boots paired with leather gaiters or chaps (unless competing in a junior rider class, you will then be required to only wear short boots. Jodphur clips are optional but recommended). Boots must have a heel and have a non-grip, smooth sole.

Gloves: Should complement your overall attire.

Whips/Canes: They can add a finishing touch to your outfit, but must not exceed 75cms (including any tassel) in the competition arena. (Figure 14)

Helmets: Helmets must comply with current EA Guidelines. Details can be found here - [Approved Helmets](#)

Jewellery/Hair/Makeup: Hair should be neat, jewellery and makeup should be subtle. Below is a video that shows how you can do your hair so it discretely sits under your helmet - [NTR Hair Lock](#)



Figure 14- There are various styles of whips and canes that can complement your hunter attire.



Above- There are a large choice of jacket, stock, shirts and tie combinations that you can chose for your Hunter attire.

Photo Credit LP Designs Australia- <https://www.lpdesigns.com.au/>

Is My Horse a Hack or Hunter?

A horse can be shown as either a hack or hunter, **not** both.

Each have their own attributes that your horse should ideally fall more under.



Show Hack

Definition: A Show Horse is a quality, comfortable, well-mannered and educated riding horse, being sound of wind and limb. The horse should be excellently presented and give the appearance of being a pleasure to handle, watch and ride. Show Horses are judged on conformation and soundness and also for manners, paces and education. It should be noted that first and foremost a show horse is a quality animal.

Conformation & Movement: 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. Holding a

horse in a shape with the use of brute strength or artificial gadgets is not truly getting a horse to accept and come happily on to the bit. A show horse must give the impression of covering the ground easily and fluently. The horse must be well balanced work without any obvious effort by the rider or any untoward resistance from the horse. The whole picture should be pleasing to the eye. The horse should go forward with controlled and free movement, the correct bend and an even rhythm in all paces at a tempo chosen by his rider.

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

Tack:

Saddle- Saddle should be of good quality with a dressage type most desirable. General purpose saddles are acceptable and girths can be light or dark coloured depending on your preferences.

Numnah/Saddle Cloth- A discreet saddle cloth is acceptable, with a sheepskin numnah being the most popular option. Colours can range with cream, brown or black being common choices. (Figure 15) You also have the choice of a half numnah or full size numnah depending on what might suit your horse better.

Bridle- Should be the same colour as the saddle. Snaffle bridles are to be used for all walk/trot and intermediate horses. Double bridles are optional for Open graded horses only.

Ear Plugs- Ear plugs such as Pomms/Wagners are acceptable.

Browband- Ribbon or bling browbands are the most popular browband types for show hacks. The style you choose is very much personal preference, however picking a more traditional ribbon browband with a few key colours, will generally not age quickly and can last you many seasons regardless of the trends that may be occurring. The colour of your browband should complement your horses coat colour and looks very smart when complimented by your outfit, whether this be your tie, stock, vest or lapel. (Figure 16)

Spurs; (Must conform to the following requirements if used)

- A curved or straight shank must point directly back from the centre of the spur when on the rider's boot
- Arms of the spur must be smooth
- The tip of the shank must not point inwards or upwards
- If rowels are used, they must be blunt/smooth and free to rotate. Daisy rowels are permitted
- Dummy spurs with no shank are allowed



Figure 15- Three popular colours that numnahs come in. (left to right) Brown, Cream and Black



Figure 16- The red colour on the browband really 'pops' and looks great against the horses darker coat colour





Show Hunter

Definition: A Show Hunter should possess more substance than the modern ridden Show Horse but it must be emphasized they should be quality animals. A quality Show Hunter must create 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 they must do it comfortably and safely for the rider. The Show Hunter in competition is not required to jump other than in a Working Hunter Event.

Conformation & Movement: The Show Hunter should have short, well defined cannons with sufficient

forearm, and second thigh. They must cover the ground in all paces with a well-balanced gallop, moving from the shoulder, and with the hind legs well under. A certain amount of knee action is permitted, while a flat, stilted action is unacceptable.

Manners: Manners are extremely important and small misdemeanours, which may be overlooked in a Show Horse, should be penalized in the Show Hunter.

Tack:

Saddle- Saddle should be of good quality with a dressage type most desirable. General purpose saddles are acceptable and girths should be dark coloured.

Numnah/Saddle Cloth- A discreet saddle cloth is acceptable, with a sheepskin numnah being the most popular option in either a brown or black. You also have the choice of a half numnah or full size numnah depending on what might suit your horse better(Figure 17).

Bridle- Should be the same colour as the saddle and the noseband should be plain. Snaffle bridles are to be used for all walk/trot and intermediate horses. Double bridles are optional for Open graded horses only.

Ear Plugs- Ear plugs such as Pomms/Wagners are acceptable.

Browband- Should be plain leather matching the bridle other permitted options now popular are plaited or patent leather for something different. (Figure 18)

Spurs; (Must conform to the following requirements if used)

- A curved or straight shank must point directly back from the centre of the spur when on the rider's boot
- Arms of the spur must be smooth
- The tip of the shank must not point inwards or upwards
- If rowels are used, they must be blunt/smooth and free to rotate. Daisy rowels are permitted
- Dummy spurs with no shank are allowed



Figure 17- Pictured we have a half numnah (top) and a full numnah (bottom)



Figure 18- Patent or plaited browbands can offer something different for hunters, with a large variety of choices now available



Show Ring Etiquette

A basic understanding of show ring etiquette is something all competitors should know about when competing. Not only are the following showing courtesy and manners to other competitors, it also helps prevent accidents from happening.

When out amongst others, the following should be considered in led, ridden or harness sections.

Outside the Ring (Marshalling/Warm Up)

Do not stand in the entry or exit to the ring. These areas either have signage or will have cones showing a pathway.

- Be attentive, on time and listen out for classes that are being called.
- Have a copy of the program and keep track of the classes you have entered as you should be waiting and ready to enter the class.
- All rubbish must be taken with you. Often coffee cups, water bottles and tissues are left lying around.
- When passing other competitors, pass them left shoulder to left shoulder (Figure 19)
- Horses being ridden in the higher gait have right of way in the warm up ring. I.e a cantering horse has right of way over a horse trotting.



Figure 19- Passing other riders left shoulder to left shoulder

In the Ring

- Entering the ring - In led classes enter on the right rein
 - In ridden classes enter the ring as directed by the ring steward
- Listen carefully for any instructions from the judge or ring steward
- Give yourself plenty of space between you and the horse in front (think 3-4 horse distance minimum)
- If you are stuck behind a slow horse, there are a few things you can do in order to keep your distance;
 - It is perfectly ok to turn inward and do a small circle therefore allowing the horse in front to gain some ground;
 - You can go around the horse depending on which side allows you more space to do so; or
 - You can cut across the arena to an empty spot allowing ample room.
- Don't converse with other competitors inside the ring. If someone talks to you, smile and nod, but make it clear that you're interested in the class and not how you got your horses markings so white. Keep these conversations to outside the ring. A quick comment to a competitor to help calm their nerves or support them is fine.
- After ribbons have been awarded congratulate all competitors in your line up.
- Thank the judge when leaving the ring
- When leaving the ring after placings have been given out, you must allow the class to leave in placing order. I.e Winner leads the class out, followed by the 2nd place getter then the 3rd and so on unless instructed by the judge otherwise. It is most common for all place getters to exit the class in a trot.
- If you have not placed in the class you should not leave prior to ribbon placings unless instructed to do so.

Around the Grounds

- Clean up after both yourself and your horse;
 - Manure and hay should be removed from your area and either placed in the manure pile provided by the club, or taken back home with you.
 - If your horse digs a hole then it is courtesy to fill it back in before leaving
 - Rubbish should be either placed into bins provided or taken home



After the Event

- Events are not possible without our sponsors, associations, judges and helpers. Please ensure you take the time to thank them even if you are not a winner or place getter. A sponsor or association can be found through social media, their website or if you are unsure of how to get in touch please contact us.
- Please remember to support the official photographer of the event (found on the program). There is a link they share through social media in the days following the show so keep eyes peeled there. Please ensure that if sharing any photos to others or through social media that they are your purchased photos and not watermarked screenshots. If you have taken your own photos please keep them for your own personal use and don't distribute as we want to support the official photographer.

Preparing and Presenting for Harness

SPPHAWA runs several harness classes throughout a season for those wishing to enjoy a discipline that this horse was initially bred for. It is another avenue that extends the life of the OTT horse if for some other reasons it may not be suitable to make a saddle horse due to the consequences of age, wear and tear on joints etc or temperament. We have adapted and implemented the rules set out for Standardbred Harness classes by the Harness and Carriage bodies who encourage these horses to make the transition and have the opportunity to eventually compete in the main stream open carriage competitions. Please see below for our Race Cart & Carriage Rules that will apply to any of the Harness events that SPPHAWA run or use for our point shows.

Race Cart

As with any horse coming from a racing background, your horse must be educated and conditioned for the task ahead. A horse will be presented at **SPPHAWA shows** in a race spider and must wear the traditional “block blinkers” and be capable of showing a fluent walk, trot gait (no pace), suppleness and correct self-carriage. We strongly suggest that you prepare your horse well before an event as some may revert back to race day antics and become very unsettled working on the ring with other horses. Local Carriage and Harness societies often have clinics and training days where standardbred owners are made very welcome to attend to learn the art of harness/carriage driving.

The following is the requirement and guidelines for Standardbred classes:

- All junior drivers must wear an approved helmet and be attended in the ring with a handler.
- Horses must have been registered at some time with HRA and may include pacers and trotters.
- The vehicle to be used will be a race spider and not jog or work carts of any description.
- As the usual carriage driving whip is difficult to use when driving a spider and the standard trotting whip is not acceptable, **a no whip** policy will apply. Drivers also need to be aware that it is unacceptable to strike the animal with the reins.
- Normal racing harness is used, with the **exception** of hobbles, over and under checks, tail ties, bandages and brushing boots. As of the commencement of the 2019/20 season we have allowed the use of ear plugs (Pomms-Figure 20) **at SPPHAWA events only**
- The dress code of the driver and any attendant should be the same as for mainstream classes with the exception of no apron. Females will obviously wear long pants rather than a skirt. **Racing colours are not permitted**



Figure 20- Ear plugs such as Pomms are very soft and great at blocking outside noise.

The horse shall be turned out clean and neat with the main and forelock plaited but the tail must be free and no quarter markers to be applied. Makeup may be used to enhance the facial features and hooves are painted.

Workouts need to display all aspects of carriage requirements including halts, extensions and serpentines. A judge should be looking for good manners, willingness to work with impulsion (whilst not pulling) displaying an even rhythm and a nice outline with a degree of rounding without being above or below the bit and not over bent. Bucking, rearing, refusing to go forward and pacing are unacceptable.



GEAR CHECK LIST
Race Spider – Quick Hitch/Conventional (Tie Down)
Saddle/Girth & Crupper
Bridle fitted with Block Blinkers, Reins
Breast Plate/Buxton
Ear Plugs (Pomms) - Optional at SPPHAWA run events
- Not allowed at any other events



Carriage

The versatility, temperament and already having a background of harness driving has seen the popularity of the breed increase, when making the transition into the open carriage driving scene with very pleasing results. This has enticed us to include Carriage sections onto our Harness program in recent times.

Carriage driving has many variances where the versatility of the breed can excel in a range of disciplines. Consequently, the presentation rules will depend on what discipline you intend to follow and what type of vehicle you will be required to use. WA has several carriage clubs throughout the state that cover all aspects of carriage activities including Show Driving, Combined Driving and Driven Dressage disciplines.

The presentation and rules for Carriage Driving at SPPHAWA events are run in accordance with the Australian Carriage Driving Society rules and must be adhered to at all our events. It is paramount to take the time to make sure you understand all the requirements for competing in carriage with a Standardbred at any event run by SPPHAWA or when competing in open carriage classes at outside events.

You can view all the guidelines & presentations for the Australian Carriage Driving Society here - [Australian Carriage Driving Society](#)

The WA based groups and associations are:

- [WAHDS](#)
- [Albany Carriage Driving Club](#)
- [Murray, Avon & Hills Districts Carriage Driving Club](#)



A Final Word...

We hope this booklet has been of assistance to you in the commencement of your journey showing your standardbred. Please feel free to recommend any of your friends or family to become a part of our journey promoting life after racing for the Off the Track horses. For more information on various types of memberships available please feel free to contact us or view our website.

Contact Us

Email: members@spphawa.com.au

Web: www.spphawa.com.au

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SPPHAWA/>



SPPHAWA would also like to give credit to Nags to Riches for the use of their educational links and photos that have been used throughout this booklet



S P P H A W A
Standardbreds WA