



# **From the Horse's Mouth... Live Show Etiquette:**

*A Handbook for a Happier Experience*

**A Free Publication**

*Acknowledgements to the Contributors*

*I would like to thank all the generous folks who offered their terrific insights and suggestions for this Handbook. Because of you wonderful souls on Fallen Leaves, Model Horse Blab, the RESS Member List, the Minkiewicz Studios Painter's Program List and those in many personal messages to me, this wisdom can be shared freely in our community to help make our live shows a welcoming place for everyone. Thank you!*

By Sarah Minkiewicz-Breunig

## Introduction

The live show is our core activity, being both the competitive outlet and the social center of the community. And happily, the boom of model horse showers has caused the number of live shows to grow exponentially. Indeed, rarely a weekend goes by that doesn't have a live show somewhere in the country!



However, what failed to develop alongside this boom was a formalized understanding of appropriate conduct, which has proven to be a problematic oversight. In fact, many young showers and newcomers have no idea about norms and unspoken courtesies, and so may innocently put themselves or others in unfortunate circumstances. And while most people are friendly and gracious in our little slice of the world, some do tend to become abrasive or unpleasant, sometimes repeatedly. And, truth be told, we all have our own moments of weakness, particularly when emotions run high. Nevertheless, because live shows are a vital link, a cohesive resource offering practical suggestions is needed to promote untarnished enjoyment for all participants.

As a result, this Handbook was compiled with the generous insights and suggestions from your fellow showers, hosts and judges alike, experienced and new. **Every insight contained here is directly from your peers, making the entire Handbook based on practical experience and tested protocol, and can therefore be a useful guide for attending any live show.** I encourage you to think carefully about the suggestions presented and take to heart the spirit of the Handbook. We are each a benefactor of the model horse world, and so have a vested interest in the atmosphere of our most affirming and thrilling group activity.

For clarity, this Handbook is divided into several sections, each addressing a specific facet of a live show. And since many of us have to wear many hats throughout our showing involvement or need to be aware of such matters eventually, it's a good idea to read all the sections to understand the full spectrum of appropriate etiquette. These sections are:

- Hospitality
  - Sportsmanship
  - Suggestions for Newcomers
  - Showers
  - Judges
  - Show Hosts
  - Staff
  - Other Attendees
  - Making Complaints
  - Be a Thoughtful Participant
- Closing Thoughts  
Recommended Resources

# Hospitality

Absolutely, we are passionate about our model horses and know that our activity has a lot of good things to offer anyone interested in horses. But it can be easy to forget that each of us started out as beginners or as children, without a clue as to what it's all about or not having familiar faces greeting you. So the truth is that as we develop as showers, we become obligated to help those in our midst who may be new to this activity. And it's important to remember there is a difference between



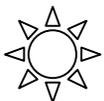
young showers and new showers, as the latter may often be adults who are discovering this activity for the first time, or re-discovering it after a period of absence. So while each type of "newbie" often requires slightly different needs and strategies, they both deserve attentive care and thoughtfulness.



*Without a doubt, we are each a good will ambassador for the model horse world and since our newbies are our future, they should be actively welcomed by everyone at a live show in meaningful ways.*

It's important that newcomers feel embraced and part of a supportive network and that they receive the guidance and insights needed to help them develop and succeed. In a way, the live show is our communal "house" and good hospitality shown to newbies encourages them to join and enrich our whole family.

But hospitality does not extend just to newbies, but also to each other, at every show. **It's important to be gracious and affable to fellow attendees, no matter how many times you've crossed paths, and to foster an atmosphere of happiness and learning for everyone present.**



*Remember that the hospitality we offer each other at every live show accumulates and builds a cohesive and friendly community that benefits not only you, but everyone else as well.*

**So some things each of us can do to offer good hospitality are, as follows:**

- **For hosts**, encourage ambassadorship by various strategies, such as:
  - Identifying new, young, shy, awkward or inexperienced showers before the show (*perhaps by having a special box on the entry form these folks can check*) and then assign each of them to an interested, friendly, experienced shower who is willing to serve as a "show buddy" (*and perhaps have a special prize or award for such generous people*). It's also a good idea to situate the tables of these people near their show buddies to encourage comfort zones and familiarity. This beautiful idea can do wonders for all involved.

- Hook up new, young or shy showers with “pen pals” before the show and try to arrange their tables near each other at the show, too. This really helps to build confidence and a feeling of being welcome.
  - Encourage newbies to volunteer at your show. You get the needed help and they get to meet people and also learn about live shows from the “inside out”. As a suggestion, it’s a good idea to put newbies to work at socially-oriented jobs such as selling raffle tickets, organizing the awards and keeping them ready for the judges, helping to hand out catered lunches, handing out surveys and collecting them, etc.
  - If you have a get-together planned for your show, it’s a great idea to actively introduce newbies around.
  - If possible, it’s a nice idea to designate a staff person to be a newbie “liaison” to help and offer guidance.
  - Refer new showers to your *NAMHSA* Regional list and Regional Representative, or any other person or online source you believe could be a valuable asset to them. It might also be a good idea to have a flyer ready for them that provides all this information for later reference.
- **Experienced showers** should avoid cliquish behavior at a live show, and reach out to newbies at every opportunity. Indeed, newbies should never feel ignored or unwelcome. You can start dialogues and relationships with such techniques as follows:
    - Actively introduce yourself to newbies in an approachable, friendly manner and become that friendly, familiar face every person loves to see.
    - Engage newbies in your circle and introduce them around.
    - Place a sign on your table, "If you're new to model horses, say hello!" and also put this on your nametag.
    - Offer friendly mentoring and advice when asked.
      - Invite newbies to activities or get-togethers you may be attending, so they feel welcome and included.
      - Satisfy their curiosity with useful answers delivered in a friendly way. Remember that newbies are eager and able to learn, and should not be treated dismissively.
      - Always be respectful and thoughtful to newbies. They should never be ignored or patronized at any time.
    - Enthusiastically congratulate newbies on any successes and achievements, and help them achieve more success, too.
    - Encourage good sportsmanship with all newbies, so they don't inadvertently do something embarrassing.
    - While this is a hot potato, it may be a good idea to discreetly and diplomatically inform newbies about any problematic people who might be in the hall. Practically speaking, no matter how many great people may be present, inevitably there's always a couple who may not be so fun to be around. So by gently alerting newbies, they can choose to avoid an unexpected unpleasant situation that might upset them.



# Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship is the glue that holds a competitive activity together and allows it to grow by maximizing an inclusive, welcoming environment. **So it cannot be emphasized enough that good sportsmanship is essential and expected from all attendees, at all times, in all situations.**



Truly, a live show should be the place where you put your best foot forward and allow the best of your character to shine through, so friendships can form and learning can be nurtured. So always remember, good sportsmanship is the primary code of conduct expected of show attendees to promote and also to practice. And it's important to keep in mind that good sportsmanship applies to social settings outside of the live show environment as well, such as at parties, online discussions and large expos. People will form an opinion of you as you behave, so it's really the best policy to be courteous in all social situations.



*It's an attendee's obligation to nurture a positive, welcoming and supportive atmosphere for everyone. There is no excuse for bad sportsmanship and it has no place in our community. Bad sportsmanship should be treated with zero-tolerance and be promptly reported to the host and dealt with accordingly.*

The truth is that a live show is not all about you. Yes, you have come for your own personal reasons, but the room is also full of other people who expect to have a good time, too. And so to forget the true spirit of the day is the epitome of bad manners at a live show. Always remember that there is no ribbon, trophy or need to be "right" that is worth a bad experience for you, and for those around you. There's no faster way to become an unwelcome person than to exhibit bad sportsmanship, because people remember who diminished their experience and word gets around very quickly. So please, think twice about your conduct, even when your emotions are running high.

## **Some Examples of General Bad Sportsmanship to avoid altogether are:**

- Do not speak derogatorily of someone or his/her models within earshot of anyone. Negativity feeds on itself and ruins the experience for everyone. Always keep such opinions to yourself.
- Do not appear to be speaking about someone in an unfriendly manner or make him/her uncomfortable with thoughtless or exclusionary behavior. You should endeavor to make everyone feel welcome and comfortable because that's your obligation to your fellow participants.
- Treating people with hostility, disrespect or unkindness for any reason. There is no excuse for it.

- Keep in mind that when you sign the entry form, you agree to all the stipulated rules, codes and regulations of the show. And when you attend a live show, you agree to behave according to the accepted norms of behavior of the greater community. If you choose not to abide by them, you may be asked to leave without a refund, as is appropriate. If this happens, you are expected to leave quickly and quietly.
- Never belittle, demean or patronize anyone at the show, particularly newbies.
- Never use profanity or other “colorful” language at a live show, at any time. Foul language is inappropriate for the necessary environment at a live show.
- Never intentionally ignore someone in need of help or insight.
- If you have an amazing collection of show horses, do not behave in a smug, self-righteous or superior fashion. Snobbish elitism has no place at a live show.
- Some showers are known to consistently win, but it’s inappropriate to express arrogance or prima donna behavior, at any time. We are a community of like-minded folks, and should all be treated with equal respect and regard. Leave your ego at home.
- When a class is announced as “closed” and you missed it, do not demand the class be reopened just for you. Simply concentrate on the next class.



**Some Examples of Bad Sportsmanship Related to Judging to avoid altogether are:**

- Spouting snide, unkind commentary regarding the judge, host, staff, show or placings, to anyone. This includes catty remarks, proclamations of another’s stupidity, negative grumblings or any other disagreeable behavior.
- Standing around an exhibitor or show table, gawking and rudely commenting on the models in the presence of others, or even the owners.
- Confronting the judge before, during or after the class, declaring that you are an expert, and that the class should have been placed your way.
- Accosting the judge for any reason, and loudly declaring that a model is a “disaster” and thusly should never have placed.
- Being rude if a judge encounters something he/she doesn’t know. Remember, no judge can know everything in all of horsedom, and while good judges know a lot, eventually they encounter unfamiliar information. So if you do have something constructive or educational to offer, do so only to the judge, in a polite, gracious and discreet manner, at the appropriate time.
- Making a judge feel bad. Remember, he/she is volunteering the time and energy so you can show.
- Grumbling about judges behind their backs.
- Becoming crabby and ill tempered as a display of disapproval.
- Speaking disparagingly about trivial or personal things regarding the judge or anyone else, for that matter.

- Throwing a tantrum, spouting such complaints as, “The judge must hate me!” or “The judge must be blind!” etc.
- Creating a scene, overt or behind the scenes, with crying, complaining or emotional behavior. If you’re unable to emotionally cope with the situation, it’s best to discreetly and diplomatically leave the premises.
- Loudly packing up and leaving, making a great show of your indignation. Instead, if you feel compelled to leave, do so discreetly, graciously, quietly and politely.
- Standing off to the side of a class, even within earshot of the judge, and griping about the placings and how poorly you expect all the judge’s placings to be.
- Speaking of how you would place the class within earshot of the judge.
- Sitting at your exhibitor table and grousing, being a Negative Nelly, because you are unhappy with the placings.
- Arguing with a judge, for any reason, whether or not the judge is right. This includes cornering a judge who didn’t place your entry as you expected, and thus possibly delaying the show.
- Discussing the models, positive or negative, on the show table within earshot of the judge.
- Complaining about a placing when you placed your model in the wrong class. If you were in doubt, you should have politely asked the judge or host beforehand.
- “Getting in anyone’s face” about a showing issue. This includes threatened or real damage to person or property. Aggressive confrontation is absolutely unacceptable.
- Switching ribbons between models once they have been placed is unacceptable, whether the model(s) belong to you, or to someone else. If a ribbon was accidentally moved, ask the judge for the correct placement if you are unsure where it goes.
- Bribing or otherwise influencing the judge, host or anyone affiliated with show is unacceptable and those responsible should be reported.
- Forgetting to have fun and forgetting to help others to have fun!



## Suggestions for Newcomers

Sometimes shows don’t have an organized means to welcome you, making your first experience potentially bewildering. But even though a live show can be quite intimidating, it’s important to take a pro-active approach nonetheless. Undeniably, becoming part of the community is dependent on showing an interest in the activity, not being afraid to socialize and ask questions, getting involved with groups that share your interests, or even volunteering to help where needed.

The bottom line is you cannot sit back and wait for people to come to you. Rather, you need to actively socialize; so build up the nerve, take the risk, and jump in. Introduce yourself to others and let them know you're a newcomer. While you may be hesitant, remember, people may be hesitant to approach you too!

**Here are some suggested tools to help you mingle (which are also very handy for shy folks too):**



- Take advantage of the Internet since it offers several tools:
  - Join your Regional *NAMHSA* list and other model horse mailing lists, such as *Fallen Leaves* and *Model Horse Blab*, and introduce yourself as a newcomer. Read the various threads and become familiar with what's going on and be sure to engage in conversations in a friendly, polite and fun way so people will want to meet you. Absolutely avoid "lurking" on lists since no one can get to know you if you don't participate.
- On the online lists, find out if anyone will be at a show you plan to attend and arrange to meet them there, if possible. Perhaps they also have the time to show you around and even share lunch.
- Go to any and all local model horse activities you learn about online and actively mingle.
- Contact your *NAMHSA* Regional Representative and introduce yourself and see if he/she can help you ease into the local model horse community.
- Find out if there's a local model horse club in your area, and join. Also attend the meetings and gatherings, and perhaps volunteer to help with club logistics.
- If you're interested in customizing, sculpting or painting, join lists and associations that specialize in our model horse arts, such as the *Realistic Equine Sculpture Society* (RESS).
- Before a show, it's important to contact the host and introduce yourself, and be sure to mention that you're new to the experience. Ask questions, ask for tips and insights, and just get a dialogue going.
- Volunteer to help with a show! This is one of the best ways to learn about the live show experience, meet people, and make a positive impact that people will happily remember. You can sell raffle tickets, hand out packets and information, help distribute any catered lunches, assist as a ring steward, help keep the awards organized, assist the judges when they need it, etc. Really, there's so much to be done at a live show, your assistance will always be welcomed and remembered!
- If the show has a get-together before or after the competition...go to it and actively socialize.
- Find other new local showers and get to know them.

- When at the show, try some of these handy ice-breaking techniques:
  - People love to talk about their show string, so when you stroll among the exhibitor tables, compliment the owners on their lovely models and ask questions about them like, “Who created this piece?” or “What do you show it as?” or “Has it done well for you?” or “Which is your favorite and why?” Then be sure to tell them you’re a newcomer too.
  - Remember that the common denominator with everyone in the hall is horses! So you really aren’t in a room full of people who may have no common interest with you; in fact, the situation is quite the opposite! So take advantage of this when trying to start a conversation by asking a question about anything related to horses or model horses. You’ll soon discover that model horse folks love to chat about such topics at the drop of a hat. Such questions could be, “How long have you been showing?” or “Do you know of other good shows in the area?” or “Do you know the best place to buy *Breyers* or *Stone Horses* locally?” or “Do you know of any local clubs I can join?” or “Do you have horses?” or “What’s your favorite breed and color?”
  - Put some horse-related magazines and paraphernalia on the corner of your table to attract people to you. This way you’ll instantly have something to talk about.
  - Put a sign on your exhibitor table, or write it on your nametag, that says, “I’m new to model horses – please stop by and say hello”.
  - If artists are present whose work you admire, go ogle their work. Compliment them and ask questions about their inspirations, their techniques and future plans. And if you’re also taking your first steps into the creative side of horse modeling, ask him/her for pointers or critiques. Start a dialogue on ideas, concepts and motivations and you’ll find most artists get quite chatty about such subjects.
  - If you notice someone who is doing particularly well that day, ask them questions that will get him/her talking about their insights, goals and how success was achieved. You’ll find that many showers enjoy talking about such subjects and have a lot of helpful information to offer you.
  - If you have a question about placings, it’s OK to ask the judge when he/she has a free moment. It’s a great way to learn and gain insights.
  - *A Note of Caution:* Be mindful of people’s time and focus. It’s important not to impose on those who are busy showing, so wait until people have a free minute before you approach them. And be sure to circulate in the hall and refrain from latching onto one or two people all day. Not only is this a bit of an imposition, but you lose out on meeting other folks, too. And while most people are very helpful and friendly, if you happen to come across some who are not, do not take it personally.



# Showers

Without a doubt, the live show is an exciting experience! So many things to think about, so many things to look at and so many people to meet! And you've probably planned to attend this show for weeks, perhaps even months, and now the day is finally here! It's a lot to take in at once, for sure. And though it's easy to get caught up in the whirl of things, keep your fellow attendees in mind. Remember that the live show network functions best when gracious behavior is the rule. And above all, always remember to have fun!

**To be a shower who others appreciate, practicing some courtesies is a good idea:**

- **Unpacking at the Show:** This is a very hectic time for everyone, and it often seems more of a scramble than anything else. So it's important to understand that certain behavior can go a long way to encourage a more pleasant atmosphere during this busy time such as:
  - Refrain from socializing or introducing yourself to fellow showers, artists or vendors during this time. Chances are that they're so busy trying to get their tables set up, that friendly interactions can be distracting. Truly, people need to be busy with the business at hand. Permit people the time and "space" to fully set-up and become relaxed before approaching them. Once they are situated, they'll be in the proper frame of mind to greet you and socialize. *(The same courtesy applies when people are packing up to leave the show as well.)*
  - Arrive on time and be ready to go. Never arrive at the hall late and demand everyone wait for you, particularly after the first classes have been called.
- **Critique, Questions and Advice:** When we come together and see each other's models in person, it's natural to have thoughts and ideas regarding all that we see, positive and negative. It cannot be stated strongly enough that it's important to keep negative internal musings to yourself; only offer your comments if they are positive and upbeat. Other courteous behavior should be practiced, such as:
  - Refrain from critiquing or criticizing other shower's models or work, whether exhibited or not. "If you have nothing nice to say, say nothing at all." Unsolicited advice or criticism, whether directed to the person or within earshot, is always impolite. Rather, wait for someone to ask you for input first before offering it.
  - When a critique is asked, it should be offered in a polite, productive, thoughtful and courteous manner. And be sure to offer solutions to the problems you point out since it's insensitive to offer no practical fix for the



problems you've identified. And always find plenty of positive things to say about someone's model, too. And absolutely, "know your stuff" with authentic, useful insights before you offer advice.



- Refrain from mobbing entrants, judges or staff for critique, questions, advice or general help. Rather, wait until they have a free moment and a clear head to be fully able to address your issue. And be sure to ask, "Is now a good time?" before launching into your query. If the time isn't right, then return to them when they've indicated it will be convenient. It's inappropriate to behave as though your issues are the most important at the time.

- **At your Exhibitor Table:** Each entrant is assigned a table as a storage area for showing paraphernalia. The size allotted to you is usually 8x10 feet, but can vary in size depending on the situation of each show hall. You also get to use the space under your table for storage. Although this is your own "personal space" in the show hall, it's important to remember the following:
  - Endeavor to make your corner of the live show a happy and fun experience for all around you.
  - Introduce yourself to all your neighbors.
  - When at your table, make an effort to create a friendly, approachable demeanor, quick with a smile and introduction. Avoid appearing grim, intimidating or brooding since this will put people off. Yes, showing is exhausting and the day can run long, but a good attitude goes a long way for everyone's enjoyment.
  - Likewise, don't be a Dreary Darling. If people ask you how you're doing, don't drone on about your troubles or ills. This is a good way to end up alone all day long. Rather, be friendly and upbeat. Truly, a happier attitude somehow always makes things more fun.
  - Help a neighbor with his/her paraphernalia if it appears assistance is needed.
  - It's OK to put little "Please Do Not Touch" signs on your table, if you wish. Just don't get carried away over this because you must accept a certain level of risk when you bring your models to a live show.
  - Keep your own stuff in your own space. Avoid running over onto another show's exhibitor table or cluttering up his/her side of the aisle. Store items under your table or in your car, if necessary.
  - Keep your table space in mind when you pack your models, so only bring enough models that will fit your space. But if you bring more than can fit, perhaps leave some under your table or even in your car, and rotate them as needed.
  - Keep your table and aisle organized and clean.
  - Avoid placing items on your table that could tumble, spill or fall onto a neighbor's space and property.

- Sometimes showers will share an exhibitor table to cut costs. So if you've decided to share a table, it's important to be respectful of your tablemate. If it'll help, perhaps bring a yardstick, ruler or measuring tape to divide the table equitably.
  - If you've brought only a few models, while your neighbor has quite a few, it's a nice gesture to offer them some of your table space.
  - Do not block an aisle, emergency exit or doorway for any reason. These features need to be kept clear not just for your neighbors' considerations, but for fire and safety issues, too.
  - Do not hoard all the chairs for your table.
  - Be careful when moving around tables and through aisles, even in your haste, since show halls are often crowded and cramped. Always be mindful of people and property around you. **Remember, if you damage something, you may have to pay for it.** If you do bump someone's table, offer your apologies and stay a bit to ensure all the models are safe, even if that means being late to the show table.
  - Likewise, when moving around exhibitor and show tables, try to give them a wide berth, to spare your fellow participants undue anxiety.
  - Be alert and attentive to anyone who needs to get passed you or around you.
  - Be careful not to trip people in the aisle.
  - Set up your sales items so as to avoid becoming a bothersome nuisance to your neighbors with bad traffic patterns or crowding.
  - If you have brought snacks and treats for yourself throughout the day, it's good policy to bring extra to share with your neighbors. And it's always a nice gesture to have a bowl of treats on your table for people to enjoy, like candy, nuts or cookies.
- **For the Classes:** Trying to keep up with your classes is a challenge, putting it mildly! Which means your strategies should be well planned in advance to minimize crisis. But whether or not things are running smoothly for you, never forget the following:
    - Always be helpful to your fellow showers, particularly newbies.
    - Be realistic with your entries and avoid "doing it all" (newbies are advised to bring only ten to fifteen models to their first show). Indeed, it's a mistake to bring the maximum number of entries allowed by the show because it usually ends up in a detrimental frenzy with these unfortunate consequences:
      - You'll only stress yourself out.
      - You'll contribute to a delayed show, as classes have to be held up for you.
      - You'll miss out on all the admiring and learning that's such a unique opportunity at a live show.



- **You'll miss out on the best thing a live show has to offer...fun and camaraderie!**
- If a show requires show tags to identify entries in the ring, be sure to have all your entries accurately pre-tagged the night before. Do not hold up classes because your entries aren't tagged, or tagged incorrectly. Also, it's best to attach the tags on the furthest back hindleg, looped around the pastern, with the required identification facing upwards, so the judge can easily record the placing. However, do not allow the side of the tag with your name to face up for the judge to see. Judges do not like this because it leaves them open to accusations of bias.
- Pay attention to the announcer for your classes. It's inappropriate to hold up the show or continually ask the host, announcer, judge or a neighbor about classes because you weren't attentive.
- Pay particular attention to your entries in simultaneous classes, and be sure to put each entry onto the correct show table.
- Pay keen attention to callbacks so you don't delay the show. And accept that if you miss the callback, your entry misses out on a championship award. (*Callbacks are when the first and second placers of each class are called back to the show table to award championships.*)
- Be responsible and courteous in getting your entry to the show table, walking calmly and carefully. Do not bully your way to the show table for any reason.
- *A Handy Tip:* It's a very good idea to create your own class list and bring it to the show. This list should have the names, numbers and entered classes for each of your entries, along with a blank space for each for notations on placings or championship qualifications. This way, when callbacks occur, you'll have the correct information at your fingertips and not delay the show or put the wrong entry in the callback. Also, over time, these lists offer solid data on which entries are your best showers and which aren't.
- **For the Show Table:** Being around the show table demands great care and thoughtfulness because it holds people's cherished models and expensive property. At all times, please practice these courtesies:
  - If possible, it's polite to place your entry at least eight inches from the others to allow each one to have the appropriate space required for a fair evaluation.
  - In a large class, models can become crowded and bunched up on the limited space of the show table. If the host is unable to split the class or move part of the class onto another table, it's a nice gesture to move your models in such a way as to accommodate other entries. And perhaps everyone can work together to organize his/her own models along rows or in other layouts that would best accommodate the cramped situation.



- Do not bully a spot on the show table for your entry. Conversely, it's a nice gesture to suggest better spots on the show table to fellow showers if you believe the lighting or orientation would better flatter their entries.
- Likewise, take great pains to be careful around the show table, at all times. Do not bump or jostle it.
- When placing your entry onto the show table, be careful not to bump or knock over any entries as you put it down. Be careful with dangling jewelry that can inadvertently cause a tumble, such as long necklaces or large bracelets.
- If your entry is unstable or breakable, such as a ceramic model, you can lay it down, showing off its "glamour side", on a piece of soft, cushioned material. But stay close to the show table while your entry is being judged since the judge may ask you to pick up the model to reveal the other side to make an accurate assessment of it. Do not talk or comment while doing this and leave promptly once you're done.
- Do not block or obscure another entry on the show table, such as putting your entry in front of another's. Not only does this makes it difficult for the judge to see the other shower's entry, but it's also considered rude.
- Keep your entries grouped nicely together with the rest of the entries on the show table. Be considerate of the judge and do not place your model on the show table far from the rest of the entries, such as at the far end of the table or on the other side.



- Do not take an inordinate amount of time preparing your model for the class. This includes tacking up, adjusting tack, dusting, combing or preparing any facet of your entry. This delays the show and is discourteous to fellow attendees. Indeed, twenty minutes is far too long for such things, and indicates better planning and preparation for each class is required.
- It's important that a shower provide documentation for odd or unfamiliar colors, breed variations, and tack or performance set-ups. Please do not expect or assume a judge or host to know everything! In fact, it is not the judge's responsibility to figure out what you are entering. Judges expect documentation when it's needed. Plus, it will speak kindly of your entry if you demonstrate that you've taken the time to verify it. And this documentation should be no more than one side of an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper to lay beside or under your entry, unobstructed. Do not place an entire book, binder, folder or presentation on the table for documentation.
- Do not show the same model in more than one breed class, especially when the rules require otherwise.
- Any helpers should not get in the way of fellow showers, judges, the host and staff.
- Do not physically get in the way of the judge while he/she is judging; a judge should never have to ask you to move out of the way.

- Do not talk to the judges while they are judging. Likewise, do not engage in conversation around a show table while it's being judge since this can be distracting.
- Only remove your entry from the show table when the judge has laid down the awards and indicated showers may then pick up their entries.
- Do not forget about your model and leave it on the show table after the class has been cleared for the next one because this delays the show.
- If you have a question about the class placings, ask the judge calmly, respectfully and politely at the appropriate time. Be sure to thank the judge, too, for the information. And, above all, regard it as a learning opportunity, not as an opportunity to belittle or attack.
- **Other Courtesies:** It's important to practice these additional considerations as well:
  - Always be gracious, polite and friendly and exhibit good sportsmanship.
  - Do not drink alcoholic beverages during the show and do not smoke in the buildings or outside around doors that would allow smoke to waft inside.
  - **Do not ever take, touch or pick up another person's model or property without permission, even if you know the owner or if the model is for sale or if the model is presumed unbreakable. This is The Golden Rule that must be practiced by everyone, at all times, to include children of all ages.** And remember, if you damage the model, you'll have to pay for it, and since most models are irreplaceable, you'll also make the owner very angry. No fun.
  - Do not ask strangers or survey the Internet for answers to your questions about a show because, more often than not, you'll get incorrect information that can complicate matters unnecessarily. Rather, contact the host directly for answers.
  - Send in your entry packets to the show early and do not wait until the last minute, especially if you're a newbie.
  - Do not assume the show hall will be climate controlled. Instead, contact the host in advance for this information and plan accordingly.
  - Keep in mind that the host is usually so busy at the show, he/she may not be able to easily or immediately answer your questions as they arise. So it's best to anticipate questions and present them to the host prior to the show.
  - Never carry bulky backpacks, purses, boxes, etc. without being especially careful with them. Many a model has been damaged from a thoughtless smack from such items.
  - Always walk in the show hall. Do not run in the show hall, ever, even if you are about to miss a class.
  - Never monopolize anything, such as prize tables, the attentions of the host, judges or staff, a showing, etc.



- Help those who look lost, seem to have a question, are alone and need help carrying items or need someone to watch over property while they attend to a necessary task.
- Always offer sincere, happy congratulations to those who placed well in the class, even if you didn't. Really, it's an exciting experience to do well, and that should always be highlighted with support.
- Remember that no show is perfect. Honestly, there will be glitches and setbacks no matter how well run a show is. Yes, there is the occasional poorly run show, too, but the truth is that everyone is trying to make the best of things even though the best-laid plans can go awry. So always be gracious, tolerant and understanding rather than acting like a demanding, self-righteous or angry victim. Actually, if there are any problems, it's a beautiful idea to offer your help to iron them out.

- **Cameras:** Refrain from taking photos of models on an exhibitor's table without asking permission first because this is a shower's "personal space", making it impolite to simply start snapping photos. However, it's generally alright to take photographs of the entries on the show table under these conditions:



- When they aren't being judged
  - When set-up is over
  - When you stand far back enough to avoid bumping the table
  - When you do not hold up judging with your photography
  - Avoid pointing your camera at people without permission, since many people are quite camera shy
- If you start to feel overwhelmed or stressed out, please, step outside for a moment for some fresh air or "down time". This will put you back into a happy state of mind, which benefits you and those around you.
  - It's inappropriate for showers to share the same models for different divisions. For example, you showing a model in Open and your companion showing the same model in Novice or Youth. For the same reason, try to refrain from having someone else do most of your class preparations or provide you with needed paraphernalia. It's important that you do the work, with your own models and stuff, because our community values individual efforts, so to do otherwise engenders ill will. No ribbon is worth this.
  - Bring your own show supplies and refrain from depending on others (*though it's a good idea to bring extra items, just in case*). Such supplies are:
    - A pen, tape and paper, for record keeping, taking peoples names and contact information and for any required checklists or notes.
    - Bring extra nametags since they tend to get mangled throughout the day.

- A tablecloth for your exhibitor table since many tables are rough, sticky or dirty.
- A clean soft cosmetic brush and clean soft cloth for dusting your entries. Dirty entries can be penalized.
- A repair kit containing such items as Super Glue, touch-up paint and small brushes.
- If you have haired models, bring scissors, hair mousse or gel and a toothbrush. It's also a good idea to bring some appropriate glue and extra hair in case you need to repair any damage at the last minute. Hair that's frizzy, messy and ungroomed, or with glue infused throughout, can be penalized.
- Extra show tags because you may need to replace a damaged or lost tag or perhaps you may want to show that new model you just purchased at the show.
- Index cards in case you need to write down documentation or explanation for your entry.
- For performance showing, you'll need tweezers, sticky wax and small cosmetic scissors for dealing with the tiny bits of tack and props.
- Always thank the host, staff, volunteers and the judges before leaving. They worked hard for you and it's good to acknowledge them for it. And say a pleasant good-bye to newly found friends and table neighbors, too.
- Send a Thank You note or email one to the host after the show. And it's a nice gesture to do the same for the judges you showed under, too.
- **And absolutely never forget why you're at the show in the first place...to have fun! Truly, the reason for going should be camaraderie, learning, admiring and having a great time.** So if fun isn't a primary reason, then perhaps it's time to reevaluate your priorities for attending. Really, do not ever treat a live show as a "life or death" situation, or behave in ways that distract from the real purpose of attending. There is no ribbon, trophy or accomplishment worth a rotten time, for you or anyone else.

## Judges



A judging assignment is hard work because judges are on their feet most of the day and having to make some tough choices. It's also important to understand that judges have to work against the clock, since shows that run too long are undesirable. So please remember that judges are often very focused on their task at hand and trying to do their best for you, so don't interpret that as being aloof, impatient or dismissive. Also take into account that a judge can act more reserved to foster a professional distance, which encourages proper decorum and courtesy.



*A bit of advice...it's very important to research judges and choose which show you attend based on who was hired to judge your classes. The truth is that judging alone can "make or break" the experience for you, so it's important to identify those judges who suit your sensibilities best, and then patronize those shows that hire them.*

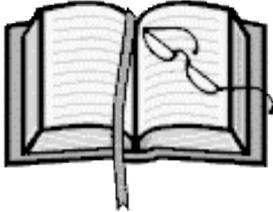
### **Some identifying behaviors of a good judge are:**

- Is deeply knowledgeable of the information required to place the entries credibly, being fluent in authentic, factual information and adept in the application of this knowledge.
- Arrives early at the show hall, is ready to judge, and is fully aware of the division(s) he/she must judge.
- Is professional, friendly, calm, confident and courteous.
- Is groomed and dressed in attire befitting the position.
- Is clear-headed and doesn't exhibit behavior that would cause someone to doubt his/her ability to carry out the job responsibly.
- Will not serve as a judge if he/she isn't knowledgeable enough to be qualified. The post is an important one, and inadequacies quickly become obvious...and word gets around fast! So it's good policy that if you're interested in judging, but have incomplete knowledge of the requirements of an assignment, research them before accepting the post. Also, it may be possible for judges-in-training to "shadow" an experienced judge as a learning opportunity, so ask the host and judge for permission beforehand.
- Does not accept assignments to divisions he/she doesn't believe he/she is qualified to judge. A good judge will also speak up to the host if an inappropriate assignment has been made before the show, so the host can make the corrections in time to advertise them.
- Will not coerce, influence, chide, belittle, pressure or otherwise demean another judge's decisions, during or after the placings have been made. A good judge absolutely minds his/her business and shows respect for fellow judges. Bad judges who do not practice this should be reported to the host immediately.
- Will not pre-judge any class. This includes not standing around and watching the entries and showers coming up to the table and mentally pre-deciding who will win.
- Will not make a scene over an entry believed to be a "nightmare" for any reason. This includes no pointing, giggling or other catty behavior over any entry.
- Won't pin classes based only on personal tastes or whims. A good judge makes placings based on authentic educated facts to form an opinion of accuracy and correctness, not based on which one is "prettiest", most expensive, who did the piece or tack, who has the biggest set-up, etc.



**BOOKS**

- Won't place a class based on politics or fear-driven decisions.
- Will not disregard an entry because the particulars are unfamiliar or personally believed to be "unfashionable" or "unappealing", relating to such things as breed, expression, color (such as unusual coloration, "plain" or "wild" coloration), phenotype (rare or otherwise), styles of grooming (or lack thereof), style of the tack, etc.



- Can admit that he/she may not know something and seek to look it up in the on-hand reference materials before making the placings. Truly, it's far better to know factual details before pinning a class.
- Is predictable and consistent, always basing placings on criteria the judge is known to favor. It's inappropriate to "bait and switch" criteria because showers often tailor their entries according to the known factors a judge uses to make placings. This consistency should also apply through the years. However, it's important to consider a judge's learning curve, so be sure not to confuse changed criteria based on new data (good) with new criteria based on frivolous whim (bad).
- Is objective and discerning with each entry, inspecting each with the same level of care and concern, even if the judge already suspects the entry to be incorrect. The truth is that it's important to really inspect each entry, particularly in Custom and Artist Resin divisions, since corrections may have been made that are only evident upon close inspection. So a good judge remembers that each shower has paid an entry fee and deserves an equal and fair evaluation, at all times.
- Is neutral and waits for the entry to prove itself based on workmanship or the accuracy of the set-up, and doesn't automatically become biased towards molds, colors, breeds, genders, artistic styles, set-ups, tack, etc. In short, a good judge does not automatically "play favorites".
- Stays focused on the task at hand, directing all energies towards getting the job done in a timely fashion to help the show end on time. It's inappropriate for a judge to be spending an inordinate amount time doing anything else other than judging (except for necessary lunch or bathroom breaks), such as simultaneously showing in another division, socializing or making preparations, such as packing up to leave.
- Takes care of personal matters, such as breakfast, grooming, getting to the hall and making phone calls, before or after the show. In short, a good judge realizes that his/her primary job is to judge, and shows respect for the showers' time.
- Never ignores or avoids questions when asked at an appropriate time.
- Never behaves in a patronizing or belittling manner.
- Does not behave in a way that indicates to showers that he/she would rather be doing something else. For example, does not complain about an aching back or sore feet or grouse about being "stuck judging" that day.

- **Is able to explain placings with clear, precise and reasonable information, based on fact rather than whim.** For instance, "I liked it" or "It screamed at me" are not acceptable reasons for choosing a winner. However, in the rare case of a tiebreaker, such criteria can be appropriate. Likewise, "I wasn't sure if that neck 'thingy' is legal or not" is not an acceptable reason for not placing a model either.
- Never becomes defensive, flustered, indignant or aggressive about having to explain placings.
- Will stick to the facts and not offer colorful, thoughtless or hurtful remarks and will never insult or demean anyone's models or abilities, particularly when explaining a placing, which is essentially critiquing someone's entry.
- Will always act in a cool, polite and professional manner, always "taking the high road" even if a person or situation gets unpleasant.

## Show Hosts

Planning a live show is a huge undertaking, demanding much from a host financially, emotionally, and mentally. A host must wear many hats, which can be tricky at times, even for the best of them. To help manage this, try to make your live show as organized as possible and also abide by the "Three C's" (Consistency, Cohesion and Consequence), as follows:

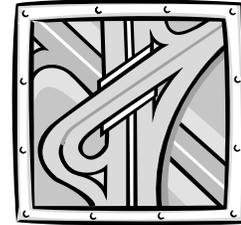


- **Consistency:** The show policies, codes, rules and regulations are thought out, well developed and written in concise, clear language, leaving little room for misinterpretation. Such information should clearly outline the consequences for those not honoring these stipulations, particularly on issues of sportsmanship. Make sure everyone in attendance understands that honoring such requirements is a condition of participation, such as having a clause on a signed entry form alerting entrants to this. And, lastly, ensuring that said stipulations are enforced consistently throughout the show and equally for each attendee.
- **Cohesion:** Everyone is accountable to these stipulations and also helps to ensure others adhere to them, too.
- **Consequence:** If an attendee chooses to ignore the stipulations, consequences are in place and are promptly enacted by the host. This can include being asked to change behaviors and make apologies and reparations, or being asked to leave the show, with or without refund. A host should also share information about chronic offenders with other hosts, because, remember, it's a host's first obligation to protect showers from those who are chronically unpleasant, poor sports, or threatening. Absolutely, there is no overriding concern that should put other showers in harm's way or be forced to endure unacceptable circumstances. *Note:* If your show is a *NAMHSA* member show, it's a good idea to discuss acceptable consequences with your Regional Representative to ensure your member status.

**And hosts, please also remember these other concerns:**

- **Hall Layout and General Considerations:**

- Show tables should be set up in a straightforward and easy-to-access plan. Make sure the show tables are clearly and properly identified, so that any shower in the hall can view and understand this identification. Be sure your judges are clear on this identification as well.
- Likewise, set up the exhibitor tables in a straightforward and easy-to-access plan, making sure that tables aren't too close together, won't box anyone in, or block (partially or not) any necessary doorways, aisles or emergency exits. In short, ensure each table has adequate space, even if that means reducing or limiting your attendance.
- Please consider having one announcer for the entire show so entrants can tune into one voice and be better able to distinguish important announcements over the usual noise of the show. This also helps to reduce crowding at the podium or jockeying for the microphone as judges try to announce information.



- **Show Packets and Advertising:**

- If a website is created for the show, it's important to keep it current and also to provide a show packet download or information on receiving one. It should also have current contact information.
- The show packets should contain all the required information and be detailed, clear and organized.
- Stick to all advertised particulars and bulletins without fail.

- **Before the Show:**

- Carefully procure good judges since they are your "selling point". If you wish, you can also allow judges-in-training to shadow experienced ones, if acceptable to the judges.
- Anticipate potential confusion or questions regarding appropriate classes for certain breeds, colors and performance set-ups and formulate clear policies about them for the show. Be sure showers and judges are also clear on these policies since it can be stressful when the rules say one thing, and the judge inadvertently decides another!

- **At the Show:**

- Welcome each shower warmly, and offer each one your hospitality.
- Introduce the judges to the showers, perhaps along with staff members, too.
- Actively seek feedback from showers and judges during the show, and make meaningful changes based on that feedback. Remember, the show

is for the showers and they are your “customers”. If you want a successful show, tailor it to their needs.

- Arrive early to set up the hall, allowing it to start smoothly on time. So if you advertise that doors open at 7am, do it and have things ready to go.
- Stick to the arrangement and timetable of classes and divisions, and do not switch them at the show.
- Keep the show and classes moving along to adhere to any timetables or deadlines.
- Try to avoid last-minute changes in your choice of judges and their assignments. It's very stressful to a shower who may have brought entries tailored to the advertised judge.
- If a code, rule, regulation, policy or timetable is advertised, it's important to consistently enforce it.
- Stick to class rules unfailingly and make sure the judges enforce them in tandem. For example, if the rules require no halters in the Custom division, make sure your judges disqualify all those wearing halters. Likewise, if rules require the costume class be free of props, make sure your judges disqualify those entries with them. In short, everyone should be made to follow the rules equally.
- However, before a class is closed, please allow showers the opportunity to fix an entry if it's a simple, quick fix. For example, if a model is required to have a show tag, and a shower accidentally forgot it, please allow the opportunity to provide one before disqualifying that entry.
- Do not tolerate inappropriate behavior and bad sportsmanship for any reason, from anyone. Please enforce the advertised consequences in a timely manner to maintain the integrity of the show.



- Arrange a reasonable series of planned breaks, such as lunch or dinner breaks, and stick to them as closely as possible.
- Provide for your judges with such things as meals, beverages, breaks and, if possible, travel and lodging expenses.
- Provide the showers with water or other beverages, if possible, or choose a hall with a water fountain or soda machine.
- Choose a show hall with accessible, clean, functioning bathrooms and with easy access from the parking lot into the show hall.
- Provide some good reference materials on breeds, colors, tack or performance for showers or judges to refer to throughout the day. Specialized breed books are the best source, although they may be impractical if space is limited.
- Inform your judges and helpers about how the awards are to be handed out and announced.
- Ensure that necessary things, such as NAN cards and awards, are organized for judges and ready to be distributed.

- Be sure your announcer(s) are well versed in how the show and classes will run throughout the day. It's also a nice gesture to provide your announcer(s) with water and throat lozenges, as needed.
- If feasible, it's a nice gesture to provide your judges with rolling office chairs to allow them to "sit n' roll" to judge, instead of continually being bent over and on their feet all day.

- **After the Show:**

- Please mail out results in a timely manner. Be sure they're clearly written, complete and organized.
- Thank your judges and staff with gifts or Thank You notes.

- **Other Courtesies:**

- Be obvious as the host. This includes being groomed and dressed in attire befitting the position and perhaps wearing a pin or badge with your name and title on it.
- Always be professional, organized, courteous and confident and have the positive skills of leadership and problem solving.
- It's important to respond to questions or issues in a timely manner, so don't procrastinate with this task.
- Refrain from impatience, curtness or rudeness when responding to emails or phone calls. It can turn away a potential entrant, making him/her feel unwanted or less prone to ask legitimate questions as well.
- Provide pins or badges to your judges with "Judge" on it, to identify them to showers and staff.



- Likewise, provide pins or badges to your staff with "Staff" on it, to identify them to showers and judges.
- Try to rotate judges in your region, or import them, to keep your show "fresh".
- Never ask back poor judges, no matter how hard up you may be for a judge.
- Be attentive to the needs and growth of your showing community. If possible, consider offering specialty classes such as "Custom by Owner" or "Vintage Models". Or consider adding entirely new divisions, such as "Amateur Owner", "Youth", or "Custom Glaze".
- It's a nice idea to organize a get-together the evening before or after the show to nurture camaraderie.
- It's a good idea to spend the extra fee to become a *NAMHSA* member show.
- Design a fee schedule that is sympathetic to a small number of entries.
- Publicly thank your judges, staff and showers for their participation and patronage, before and after the show.

- **Donations and Sponsors:** Donated items include door prizes, awards, auction items or any other piece of property offered to support or promote the show. And because these items are often provided by a donor's generosity,

it's important to keep that thoughtfulness in mind. If you have a sponsorship program for awards, classes or divisions, extend to sponsors the same courtesies and recognition you would to donors. It's also imperative to practice the following:

- Always stick to your prize list, to include door prizes, donations, raffle items or any such items.
- It's paramount at a show to recognize and acknowledge people who donated items to your show, whether auction times, door prizes, raffle items, etc. Sending Thank You notes to donors is also good policy.
- Likewise, do the same for your sponsors. And don't forget to mention sponsors and their sponsorships at appropriate times throughout the day.
- Never keep any donated items for yourself! These items are for the showers, and absolutely not for you.
- Never alter donated items! They must be awarded in the very same condition they were when sent to you. This also means never changing an item's information, such as signatures or other identifying marks, or certificate details.
- Never switch donated items!
- Keep all donated items safe from damage! It's poor form to allow donations to become damaged or lost due to negligence.
- If you have to cancel a show, return all donations in a timely manner, in the same condition they were when sent to you. Do not sell them, hold onto them for next year, or otherwise distribute them. They are not your property and the donors will expect them to be returned.

## Staff

Because the staff is an extension of the host, professional, polite and responsible behavior is expected at all times, even in unpleasant situations. This includes, the following:

- Show up on time and be ready to do the job at hand.
- Be obvious as the staff, and wear any identifying pin or badge the host provides.
- Be groomed and dressed in attire befitting the position.
- Function as a complement to the host, and work with diligence and reliability.
- Work to uphold all rules, regulations, timelines and codes of the show, including the enforcement of proper behavior of all attendees. For example, put a stop to dangerous behavior (often by children) such as running in the hall or rough housing, make sure showers are careful around the show tables or remind folks not to take too long setting up their entries, etc.
- Seek to help all showers, particularly newbies.
- Aid judges in their duties, when necessary.
- Help to set up before the show and clean up after the show.



## Other Attendees

Usually a live show has other folks present who are not active showers, such as spouses, family members, friends, and visitors. These attendees are welcome and can add to the show's enjoyment. Really, it can be fun to chat with someone who may have a whole different perspective on the day and has interests outside of model horses.

Nevertheless, these folks are bound by the same tenants of etiquette as showers are, and are expected as well to comply with the rules, policies, regulations and codes of the live show. This includes etiquette pertaining to children and pets.



- **Children:** Rare is the youngster who can remain quiet, calm and courteous at a table during an all-day adult indoor event such as a busy live show. And rare is the parent who realizes this. Really, youngsters would be happier elsewhere. Too often, curious children of whatever age want to touch and pick up the often expensive collections and things on the tables, or want to play with another shower's pet, or want to run around and make noise and play rough to burn off energy. An undisciplined, frustrated child is an annoying distraction to the tone of the show, and will cause concern among the showers for the safety of their collections on display. Each live show may have different policies regarding the attendance and behavior of children and you as parent are obligated to abide by them. Prior to a show, be sure to check with the host about the policy. If you must bring along children, remember you are responsible for them and their behavior and actions, including damage to people's property.

### **Some things to consider regarding children you bring to an adult event:**

- A child must be attended at all times and will not be allowed to wander the show hall and among the tables without supervision, for any reason. This includes groups of children as well.
- Do not expect your neighbors at the show to baby sit your child at any time. Instead, bring along an adult with you to watch the child if you must leave for awhile.
- A child may not touch, grab, take or pick up anyone else's property without supervision and the permission of the owner.
- Unacceptable behaviors include running, rough play, yelling, and creating a general annoyance.
- Not welcome are balloons, balls, roller skates, bats, large or noisy toys, loud music players, and other things that could endanger property or person or be an annoyance.

- If someone makes a legitimate complaint about your child's behavior or your lack of considerate supervision, consider their point of view and comply with any requests made by your fellow attendees and the host. If compliance is not possible, be prepared to remove the child from the hall.
- For their safety, small children should be kept out of the way before and after a show, during the hustle and bustle of set-up and packing up to leave. If possible, they can play outside with supervision.
- **Pets, Dogs:** Many shows do not allow them and it is wise to ask the host about pets before attending a show. Similar to bringing a child, you are responsible for the pet's actions, including injury and damage to people's property.

**If you are allowed to bring your pet, keep in mind these considerations:**

- Be thoughtful to the allergy concerns of your neighbors.
- The pet should be clean, quiet and well behaved.
- The pet must be attended and supervised at all times and will not be allowed to roam the hall at will.
- A travel cage or kennel is an ideal enclosure for your pet during the show if you must leave a pet unattended for awhile.
- The pet should be well socialized to people of all ages and to other pets, and not be perceived as dangerous or threatening at any time.
- The pet should be kept out of the way of your neighbors, and not take up aisle space or neighbors' table space, including under their tables.
- **Vendors:** Vendors are expected to comply with the rules, policies, regulations and codes of the show, and conduct themselves in a manner acceptable to the show's host and staff. Vendors are also expected to comply with all requests made by the host in a timely, polite manner.

## Making Complaints

There may come a time when you have a legitimate concern that needs to be addressed. The host and staff may be able to improve a situation, but only if made aware of it.

**Legitimate Concerns:**

- A legitimate concern may be the hall's environment: The temperature is uncomfortable, the sun is blinding through the windows, the tables are too close together, more chairs are needed, tobacco smoke is wafting in from the outside, the bathrooms are locked, the water fountain does not function, etc.



- A legitimate concern may be an attendee's behavior, whatever the age: The conduct poses a danger, it lacks good sportsmanship, it creates a loud or unruly annoyance, it fails to comply with the show's rules, it disrespects personal property, it fails to address a neighbor's complaint, etc.
- A legitimate concern may be a judge's methods: The judge is not reading documentation, is ignoring bay horses, is placing illegal performance entries, is disregarding the quality of all entries, is otherwise engaging in behavior uncharacteristic of a good judge. No one likes a whiner and poor sport, yet there are times when a judge does exhibit obvious unfairness.
- *Note:* Insufficient reason for complaint would be unhappiness because your entries are not doing as well as you had hoped.

### Procedure for handling a legitimate complaint:

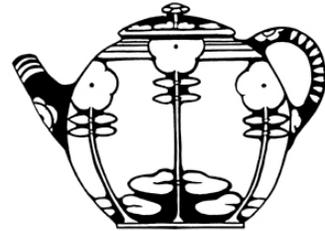
- Calmly and diplomatically bring your concern to the host's attention and give your clear examples and reasons. Your quiet approach can prevent an unpleasant situation from becoming worse. Do not whine or become unpleasant about the situation.
- A host cannot know about your dissatisfaction with a show unless you provide that information, so fill out the survey/evaluation sheets, if provided. If not provided, write a courtesy note to the host on your issues, particularly if you believe some judging was questionable. Be sure to inform the host of the good judges, too, since that is important information for the following year.
- It is important a host understand that the selection of judges has a negative or positive impact on attendance. If you choose not to attend a show because you believe the hired judge is questionable, please discreetly inform the host.
- **Disciplinary Action:** Remember, it is the host's primary responsibility to protect the shows and it is the staff's responsibility to support the host in that task. As a condition of attendance, you must follow the rules, regulations, policies and codes of the live show, as well as practice good sportsmanship. If you choose to ignore them, you may be asked to leave.
- **Always Remember:** We are human and we all make mistakes and misjudgments from time to time. It is important to learn from an unhappy incident and to let go when amends have been made.



# Be A Thoughtful Participant

Additional courtesies are easy to practice that also encourage a positive atmosphere. Sometimes it is the little things, too, that make a big difference, such as:

- Wear your nametag! If one is not provided, make or bring your own. Put your stable or studio name on it too.
- If you live close to the show hall, it is considerate to offer assistance to the host with such tasks as helping to set up tables and chairs, lay out the awards, set up the microphone, clean up after the show, etc.
- Clean up your exhibitor or vendor tables before you leave and dispose of unwanted packing materials yourself in the appropriate way.
- If you can, it's thoughtful to help clean up after a show, such as putting away the tables and chairs, clean up the garbage, collect all show materials, etc.
- Be considerate to a tired staff. Pack up quickly and leave if you are not helping to clean up after a show.
- It is appropriate for both judges and showers to support a mutual respect for the time, money, and effort that was invested in their attendance at the show.
- Present yourself in a way that allows others to be proud of sharing their chosen creative efforts with you.
- ***And, above all, remember...Never forget to have fun! So smile and let everyone see you are having a wonderful time!***



## Closing Thoughts



Everyone who attends a live show wants an enjoyable experience with happy memories and a sense of community. This is essential not just for personal reasons, but also for the future success of live showing. In that light, the priority ought not to be competition, but the positive atmosphere that fosters fun, happy relationships and a welcoming community. With that in mind, may your live show experience be full of laughter, learning and likeable people!

## Recommended Resources

- *North American Model Horse Shows Association (NAMHSA)*  
[www.namhsa.org](http://www.namhsa.org)
- *Realistic Equine Sculpture Society (RESS)* [www.ress.org](http://www.ress.org)
- *Fallen Leaves* (online community) <http://alienstudios.org/post/index.php>
- *Model Horse Blab* (online community) [www.modelhorseblab.com](http://www.modelhorseblab.com)
- *Model Horse Gallery* (online resource)  
<http://www.modelhorsegallery.info/>