

OBSTACLE GUIDELINES

The UHCA strives to create courses that allow all participants to succeed with ride challenges. Below is a guide on some of the obstacles used in past events. Several obstacles can be arranged to allow for different degrees of difficulty. Creative courses are encouraged, but safety should be considered a significant consideration. The list of potential obstacles is extensive, and event hosts are quite creative; a rider may encounter obstacles not explicitly listed here.

1. Backing
 - a. Straight shoots
 - b. An 'L' or 'V'
 - c. A serpentine pattern through cones
 - d. In and out of 3 barrels
 - e. Up or down a slope

2. Ball (large) Movement to a designated area or goal by using the horse's leg
 - a. Front legs
 - b. Back legs

3. Bareback riding for the Open division can be in conjunction with other obstacles.

4. Barrels and Board – a 12' board with a rope or metal handle on one end is laid on two barrels with centers 10' apart. The rider picks up the handle end of the board and rides all the way around the other barrel back to the starting point without letting the board come off the center barrel.

5. Bridges:
 - a. Can vary in width, length, and height, but make them strong!
 - b. Wide bridge (pedestal) on the ground;
 - c. Narrow or elevated ;
 - d. 90-degree turns or steps incorporated in the bridge(s)
 - e. Fixed - Higher at the far end;
 - f. Fixed - Enter on the high end;
 - Safety: Try to use a slip-resistant surface. Wait to place in the event soon after a water obstacle. (wet, slippery, muddy hooves)*
 - g. Teeter-totter style that tilts as a horse/rider goes across it.
 - i. Teetering entered from the low end;

ii. Teetering entered from the high end;

Safety: A notch in the bridge structure to keep the pivot point consistent. No round pivot log

6. Broken Jump: 3 jumps are 'attached' to each other to make a 'Z' pattern where the angles are 90 degrees. The pattern is set to jump all three sections and should require lead change(s).
7. Car wash: The horse must pass between foam noodles attached to two poles. Poles may rotate or not.
8. Carry Items: Water bucket, a sack of cans, stuffed animal, tarp, etc.
Safety: Consider the weight for each division(s) involved
9. Cattle Work:
 - a. Cut cattle out of a herd;
 - b. Move cattle from one area to another;
 - c. Quietly walk through the herd
10. Cowboy polo: Moving like a soccer ball with a 'mallet' such as a broom to a hay bale goal or marked area.
11. Curtains: Go through an archway with strips of tarp, fabric, or foam 'noodles.'
Safety: Do not use string, thin strips, or small rope! They may self-tie and hang a horse or rider.
12. Daisy chain:
 - a. Position 4 poles (or cones) in a square about 30' per side. Place a 5th pole in the center. Various patterns can be designed from this placement. The most common is alternating a left turn around the middle pole and then a right turn around an outside pole until all have been used. This is designed to show lead changes, smoothness, uniform patterns, etc. Another common pattern is similar to pole bending the diagonal, returning to the center, go to a new corner, and pole bend the remaining. (Lead changes are important)
 - b. Position 3 poles 30' from each other and develop different pattern to take less time.
13. Ditch: Ride through a cut about 2-4' deep in the ground or in a dirt mound
14. Doubling a horse into the fence and reversing course, 2 or 3 turns
15. Downfall: Horse/rider crosses an area of logs and limbs in a jumbled pattern. It is good to have them attached to each other or marked to keep their positions

consistent.

16. Dragging items.

- a. Pick up a rope tied to an obstacle, drag it around a cone, etc.
- b. Dallying is prohibited in some classes for safety considerations, so those obstacles are lighter.

*Safety: Have enough rope available to keep away from horse's hind feet
Do not have much 'extra' rope for lower divisions.*

- c. Drag item with horse facing the item

17. Drop offs: Similar to the step down but is generally one larger vertical distance.

18. Flag carry:

- a. Pull flag out of barrel, ride a route and place back into barrel
- b. Pull small flag out of bucket of sand on barrel and ride a pattern

19. Free ride: Often around the perimeter of the course to show varied speeds and control.

20. Gates:

- a. Rope,
- b. metal hinged, right hand, left hand,
- c. Pole, various heights and lengths. *Note: Once a gate is touched, the rider should not lose contact with it.*
- i. Pole swung open and closed;
- ii. Pole lifted over head and ridden under;
- d. Rope;
- e. Back through;
- f. Hinged, latch in 90 degree corner;

Safety: Gap style gate (non framed) may be dangerous if open enough to trap leg of horse

21. Ground tie: the rider dismounts and releases the reins to do a task while the horse remains in that spot. Sometimes an area is marked but best scores are always for a horse that does not move. Tasks can be about anything. (move 2 hay bales, drive a nail in post or board, climb a ladder, pick up a calf dummy, tie a goat etc.)

22. Jumping

- a. Fixed jumps such as: logs, tubes or barrels; *Safety: block the barrels to prevent rolling if hit.*
- b. 'Knock down' jumps such as those on jump standards, edge of hay bales etc
- c. 'coffin' jump - Sometimes 1' wide x 1' deep x 10' long but can vary and sometimes is much wider.

23. Leading a horse on a straight or crooked path
24. Leading a blindfolded horse across a sheet of plywood. (A fly mask with duct tape in it or on it can work for a quick on and off mask.)
Note: Leading obstacles used to cross the finish line eliminates the time/ effort of remounting
25. Lean down/ Pick up/Drop off: Move a tennis ball from one traffic cone and to another cone.
26. Lift and swing: A heavy object (cinder block) is tied to one end of a rope with the other end tied to a tree or pole at a height of about 10'. A second rope is tied to the object and the rider picks up the loose end of that second rope. The rider now has to dally and via backup and side-pass, lift the object and move it to a table, drop it in a bucket etc. Tough.
27. Loping over poles
 - a. Poles (or small logs) can be in a pattern and even spacing or more random
 - b. Example: Pinwheel: Trotting, loping 4 poles in a spoke pattern (each 90 degrees to the ones next to it)
28. Pedestal (Platform) dismount: ride up to platform, log, rock etc. dismount, lead your horse around the platform while you remain on it. Remount.
29. Plywood –cross 4x8 sheet of plywood on horseback.
30. Pole bending: weaving pattern around poles in a straight line or circle or another design.
31. Pony - lead 2nd horse from your horse.
32. Rain slicker: pick up or put on or ride with it and place it back on post or barrel.
33. Ring Spear: With a broomstick handle (or any 4'- 5' stick) spear PVC rings as you ride by them. They are generally set on the top of poles about 6' tall. Control, speed and accuracy are factors.
34. Roll backs marked along a fence or something similar; 2 to 4 turns.
35. Roll backs with a single or double bale of hay or other obstacle in the middle to jump
36. Roping
 - a. Stationary or moving practice steer.

- b. Livestock
- c. Your own horse from ground

37. Shooting

- a. A cap gun from horseback at a target to show correct technique and horse stability;
- b. Shoot 45 blanks at balloons. They will break within 12' or so.

38. Side-passing

- a. while straddling a single log;
 - b. An 'L', 'W', 'V' or other pattern
 - c. With front feet remain in a ring such as a tractor tire side wall. (Pivot on front feet)
- Safety note:(if a tire is used , cut it into two 'C's rather than an 'O' for safety in case it is caught on a horseshoe heel trying to back out of it;

39. Spin horse right and left in an area. That area should be at least 12' across;

40. Sprinklers: on ground or elevated but do not have aimed towards horse faces.

41. Steps up and/or down. Should have a landing area large enough to jump onto the next step.

42. Stops -Precision: Stopping usually from a lope inside a marked area (cones, paint, logs etc.)

43. Tarp -Ride over Any color; with or without log border; white logs can make it tougher

44. Trailer loading: Often the last obstacle in the series with time stopping upon closing the door or running across a finish line. No riding horse into trailer; No sliding off the horses back by grabbing the trailer roof. Sending horse is highest score; Trailers can vary in all shapes and sizes but keep tall enough for reasonable sizes horses with saddle still on them.

45. Trash run: Ride between panels with trash on the ground and tied to the panels

46. Trotting over poles. Poles/small logs can be in a pattern with even or random spacing.

47. Turn horse around in a marked area;

- a. Circle or box shape
- b. Keyhole shape

48. Water - cross:

a. Ponds, creeks, ditches and puddles .

Safety: Make sure bottoms will not become too boggy after multiple crossings.

49. Water Box -cross;

a. Often approximately 4' x 8' with 6" wall;

b. Water box with floater: for a 4'x 8'box, a 3 ½' x 7 ½' sheet of plywood floating in it; the floating sheet would have holes in it to allow water to squirt up when stepped upon; Safety note: Provide a surface that resists excessive slipping and sliding.

50. Wind the clock: Rope a barrel, walk, trot or lope around it until the rope is too short to go farther. Walk is good, consistent trot is better, Lope is best.

DIVISION OBSTACLE RESTRICTIONS

Division	Bareback	Dallying	Roping Livestock	Trailer Loading	Shooting	Jumps	Step Up /Down
Buckaroo	No	No	No	No	Cap/H 20	Max 12"	Max 12"
Youth	No	Not Req'd	No	Yes	Cap/H 20	Max 18"	Max 24"
Novice	No	Not Req'd	No	Yes	Cap/H 20	Max 18"	Max 24"
Classic	No	Not Req'd	Yes	Yes	All	Max 18"	Max 36"
Level 1, 2 & 3	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	All	Max 18"	Max 24"
Colt	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	All	Max 18"	Max 24"

Keep safety for horse and rider in mind in all divisions!