

## Month-by-Month Plan

### *January/February: Plan for the Year!*

#### Planning

- What are your goals? What classes do you want to show in? What level of shows do you want to compete in? Do you want to qualify for state? Do you want to show at other shows besides 4-H shows? Who's going to help you accomplish your goals?
- Visit [horse.osu.edu](http://horse.osu.edu) and check out all the opportunities that the Ohio 4-H Horse Program offers. Are there any of those activities that you would like to be part of?
- Read over rules in the "Uniform Rules for 4-H Horse Shows" and research classes you want to show in. What are the rules? What do judges look for in those classes? What are the grooming requirements/standards for the breed and type of class in which you want to show? What clothing and tack will you need to show in these classes?

#### Horse Care & Grooming

- Keep your horse eating plenty of hay, getting the right nutrition, and getting the right hoof care so that he is healthy and ready to go when the weather breaks.
- Keep your horse's tail clean and in a tail bag.

### *March/Beginning of April: Start Getting in Shape!*

#### Planning

- Try on old show clothes to see if they fit. Start cleaning tack. Make a list of everything you will need for the upcoming season. Check with others to see what you can borrow for the year. Go to tack sales and begin gathering what you might not be able to borrow. Ask someone knowledgeable to help you buy tack and show clothes that are appropriate and in-style. You can waste a lot of money on things that look hideous at a horse show! Don't forget grooming supplies!
- Look for a couple of good practice shows to go to! There are some "fuzzy horse" shows for which you don't even need show clothes.

#### Horse Care & Grooming

- Keep your horse's tail washed and in a tail bag.
- Get out the curry comb and brushes and get to work!
- Vaccinate your horse for the season.
- Deworm your horse.
- Talk to your farrier to see if he recommends special hoof care for your horse for the show season.

## Training

- Start ground work regularly. A little bit of lunging and a little bit of showmanship will help build a relationship of respect between you and your horse. Also, make sure your horse will get in and out of the horse trailer easily.
- Take advantage of dry/nice weather on days we have it! Start riding and getting your horse in shape as much as possible. Make sure to get you and your horse in shape gradually. Ride for a short period of time at first with lots of trotting and then gradually build the level of intensity. Warm-up and cool-down your horse well during this time as it is easy to create muscle soreness when the horse isn't in shape.
- Line up riding lessons and/or training for the year. Try to begin a few lessons (every two or three weeks) when the weather is decent. This will help you solidify your goals and get some steps in place to achieve them. Having someone help you will also keep you motivated to keep working through challenges!

## ***End of April/May: Time to Teach New Skills!***

### Planning

- Fill out and turn in your 4-H paperwork! Horse registrations are due May 1<sup>st</sup>!
- **If you are trying to qualify for the Ohio State Fair Junior Horse Show, print PAS patterns from [horse.osu.edu](http://horse.osu.edu) and begin learning. **\*\*Be careful not to over-practice.\*\*****
- Try on all show clothes. Have pieces tailored if needed. Make sure you have everything you need and that it fits!
- Try on all show tack. Make sure everything fits. Make sure all of your tack is legal. If you have special pieces just for showing, make sure to use them several times to make sure they work like you think they should.
- Lay out show schedule for the season.
- Schedule regular riding practices...just like you have regularly scheduled soccer or baseball practices ☺.
- Ask questions if there is anything you don't understand.

### Horse Care & Grooming

- Keep your horse's tail washed and in a tail bag.
- Groom your horse daily. Use a lot of elbow grease and don't skip the curry comb! Daily grooming will bring out the natural shine of the horse's coat.
- Begin clipping: Bridle path, under jaw, white areas (legs and face), all legs up to ankles
- Begin shortening and thinning mane if appropriate for your horse's breed and discipline.

## Training

- Practice showmanship for 10-15 minutes before each ride. I prefer before as the ground work helps build respect.
- Begin a regular riding and lesson schedule. Schedule lessons at least bi-weekly and ride 4-5 days per week. To progress and learn new things, we need to work more days than we have off.
- This is the time for you and your horse to learn NEW skills. For example, if you need to master riding your western horse one-handed, this is the time. Or, if you and your horse need to master a turn on the haunches or turn on the forehand, this is the time to learn NEW skills, as well as to perfect the old.
- Attend 4-H clinics that are offered. This will help get your horse “out and about” and help you feel comfortable riding and working in a group of horses.
- Go to a practice show or two! Go for the experience at this point, not for the win.

## *June: Smooth Things Out and Make Things Pretty*

### Planning

- Go through your horse show checklist (see the last page of this document) and make sure you have everything you will need.
- Read through rules for the classes you are showing in one more time.
- **If you are trying to qualify for the Ohio State Fair Junior Horse Show**
  - **Greene County’s PAS show will be held on \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - **You can attempt to qualify at 2 different shows. If you go out of county to try to qualify, you will need paperwork signed by the county extension educator.**
  - **Make sure to ask any questions that you may have about the patterns that will be used at the qualifying show ahead of the time. The patterns can be found at [horse.osu.edu](http://horse.osu.edu).**
  - **Registrations for the Ohio State Fair Junior Horse Show are due by July 1<sup>st</sup> at 1 PM.**
- Ask lots of questions!

### Horse Care & Grooming

- Keep your horse’s tail washed and in a tail bag.
- Clip everything-bridle path, ears, jaw, legs, muzzle
- Finish shortening mane if appropriate.
- Practice banding or braiding if you aren’t confident in your skills.

### Training

- Practice showmanship 10-15 minutes before or after each ride.
- Continue your regular riding and lesson schedule. This is the time to PERFECT new skills. Ride like you will show for at least part of each ride. That means to practice rail work, patterns, and proper position as you would do at a show. Have a parent or coach call gaits for you to practice

your transitions and holding your horse together during rail work. Practice patterns and pieces of patterns-straight lines, turns on the haunches and forehand, lead changes, extensions of gaits, etc. Balance time spent correcting your horse with time spent in “show mode” covering up your horse’s mistakes.

- Attend 4-H Clinics that are offered!
- Come to horse camp! This is a great way to have a knowledgeable, fresh pair of eyes look at you and your horse and give you some pointers for creating a prettier picture.
- Go to a practice show or two!
- If you want to qualify for state, you get two chances. Try to do a PAS show in June.

## ***July: Show Time!***

### **Planning**

- Go through your packing checklist and make sure you have everything you will need.
- Clean your tack.
- Ask questions.
- Get excited for the Greene County Fair!
- **The Ohio State Fair Junior Horse Show is July 14-18 at the Ohio State Expo Center. You or a friend might be showing there this year! If not, go check it out as a spectator! It will be a great learning experience, and you will see the “best-of-the-best” showman in Ohio 4-H there. The show schedule for the State Fair Horse Show is posted on [horse.osu.edu](http://horse.osu.edu).**

### **Horse Care & Grooming**

- Keep horse’s tail washed and in a tail bag.
- Keep your horse clipped so it is not a huge project the day before the show. Allow leg hair to “grow out” for 2-3 weeks before the show. Keep white hairs on horse’s legs and bodies as clean as possible so they aren’t stained at show time.

### **Training**

- Attend 4-H Clinics that are offered!
- Continue regular riding and showmanship practice. Work on the finer things-smoothing out a pattern, making transitions smoother, and the finer points in your riding position. Don’t expect your horse to learn brand new skills at this point! Keep your rides short and sweet if possible to keep your horse from getting sour or sore.

### ***August/September/October: Do What You Like Best!***

These months are typically great weather for riding. You have several choices of things to do...

- Keep your regular riding schedule and keep showing at open shows.
- Keep your regular riding schedule and use the time to begin teaching your horse new skills for next year. Maybe you want to tackle the Trail Class next year or teach your horse a flying lead change...
- Participate in Greene County's "Groom and Clean" Activities
- Condition your horse for the State Competitive Trail Ride.
- Trail Ride for fun.....trail riding is a great mental break for horses. They feel like they are actually going somewhere besides in a circle!
- Get together and ride with friends.
- A combination of the above.

### ***November/December: A Little Time Off!***

These months are pretty tough to keep riding and training without the luxury of an indoor arena. Look for opportunities to trailer your horse somewhere to ride. Take advantage of nice days on the weekend to ride. Refresh and set goals for next year!

### Horse Show Packing List

Grooming Supplies		Horse Care	
Clean Brushes		Wheelbarrow or Muck Bucket	
Hoof Pick		Pitchfork	
Hoof Polish/Hoof Oil		Buckets-Grain & Water	
Face Shine		Hooks to Hang Buckets	
Razor		Hay Bag	
Rags/Towels		Hay and Extra Hay	
Clippers		Grain	
Fly Spray		Fan and Extension Cord	
Coat Polish			
Sharp Scissors			
Bands/Yarn			
Shampoo & Conditioner		Clothing for Rider	
Hose and Sprayer		<b>Western: (listed in order of importance)</b>	
Mane Tamer and Sheet		Helmet	
Safety Pins		Well-Shaped Cowboy Hat	
		Boots & Long Socks	
		Pants (starched and pressed)	
		Chaps (optional-highly recommended at state level)	
<b>Tack-for training/warm-up</b>		Belt	
Halter & Lead		Shirt	
Chain Lead		Scarf, Earrings, Hair Clip, Other Accessories	
Lunge Whip			
Lunge Line			
Dressage Whip			
Little Cones		<b>Hunt:</b>	
		Helmet	
		Hunt Cap	
<b>Tack-for showing</b>		Boots & Long Socks	
Saddle(s)		Belt	
Bridle(s) **check for all pieces**		Breeches	
Saddle Pad (s) **big enough for numbers on both sides**		Ratcatcher & Pin	
Girth(s)		Shirt	
Show Halter and Chain Lead (if showing Western Showmanship)		Jacket	
Spurs (optional)		Gloves	
Crop (optional)			
Riser Pads/Shims (if you use)			
		<b>General:</b>	
		Hairspray & Hairbrush	
		Hair Ties	
		Bobby Pins	
		Safety Pins	