



# Missoula County 4-H Miniature Horse Project

## Obstacle Level III





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This project is open to all 4-H members who have completed, or are currently be enrolled in Miniature Horsemanship Level 1. Members in this project will have an opportunity to teach their horse basic obstacle skills, learn obstacle safety, gather tips for competing successfully in the show ring, and discover non-competition uses for obstacle training.

Members may use the following resource book: Training Miniature Performance Horses: A Complete Guide to Hunter: Jumper: and Halter Obstacle, Jennifer Alisia Garrett, Small Horse Press, Ohio, 2006.

This book is only the beginning. You are encouraged to seek advice from a variety of people, including trainers, farriers, breeders, and veterinarians. Members should also read a wide variety of books and magazines, participate in clinics and workshops, brows the internet, and organize the information you gather into a notebook.

Members enrolling in this project area should have the basic equipment needed and access to a suitable horse at least one year of age or older. A member may enroll in each area up to two times depending on their interest and skill level. All new Obstacle Project members must enroll in Level 1, but experienced youth may advance on to higher levels more rapidly than a novice youth. Each level has a corresponding workbook section and project assessment that must be completed and signed off on before a member can move on to the next higher level.

### Objectives

In **Level 1**, 4-H'ers learned basic skills such as:

- Teaching your horse to accept strange objects and noises
- Leading through a course of cones or poles at a walk
- Backing in a straight line
- Walking over varied and raised surfaces such as a tarp and bridge
- Walking over cavaletti or ground poles
- Completing a 360 hind pivot
- Walking through an obstacle with streamers over head

- Teach your horse to carry an object

In addition to mastering the above, 4-H'ers in **Level 2** learned intermediate skills such as:

- Trotting through a course of cones or poles
- Backing through simple patterns such as a L
- Trotting over varied and raised surfaces
- Trotting over cavaletti or ground poles
- Completing a 360 rear pivot
- Walking through an obstacle with streamers that reach to the ground
- Completing a simple ground tie
- Teach your horse to lead from either side

In addition to mastering the above, 4-H'ers in **Level 3** will have an opportunity to learn more advanced skills such as:

- Backing through a course of cones or poles
- Walking and trotting over raised or staggered cavaletti
- Backing through complicated patterns such as a Z
- Complete a side pass
- Completing a 360 ground tie
- Building your own obstacles
- Designing a course for competition

Keep in mind that this is only a sample of what you may learn. Miniature Horse Halter Obstacle is a dynamic sport and obstacles are constantly changing. While some skills such as backing are basic, a finished obstacle course is as varied as the imagination of the course designer. A typical obstacle may combine more than one skill such as crossing a bridge lined with balloons.

In **All Levels**, members will learn:

- To train and handle a miniature horse safely
- How to build trust and teamwork between a horse and handler
- Knowledge of proper terminology
- How to share with others the knowledge gained
- The rewards of good sportsmanship, both in winning and in losing
- To enjoy a healthful lifetime activity

Once you have completed each level, you may want to show off your skills or exhibit your knowledge at the fair. You can compete in one of the obstacle classes offered or perhaps design an educational display or poster on the non-competitive uses of a miniature horse such as trail companion, parade horse, or therapy animals.

You must have completed, or be currently enrolled in Miniature Horsemanship Level 1 and completed Miniature Horse Obstacle Level 2 before beginning this project. When did you complete Horsemanship Level 1 and Miniature Horse Obstacle Level 2?

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### **Section 1 - Project Goals**

A. What do you hope to learn in Level 3? \_\_\_\_\_

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B. Write a paragraph about the horse you plan to use, including age, color, markings, size, and any previous training he has had.

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### **Section 2 – Training**

A. You will be teaching your horse new skills and new obstacles in Level 3. List the equipment you will need to begin this level. Be sure to include any tack you will need. You may want to use pictures cut from magazines or pictures you draw to illustrate.

B. How can you increase the level of difficulty once your horse has mastered walking and trotting through cavalettis or ground poles placed parallel?

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C. What basic skills should your horse master before teaching an advanced skill such as a side pass?

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D. Once your horse has mastered a basic ground tie, how can you increase the level of difficulty?

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E. What can you do to create an image of flawless teamwork? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Section 3 - Activities

**Events** (Participate in a minimum of three events such as workshops, clinics, seminars, group practice sessions, lessons, or shows.)

Month	Type of Work	Hours

A. In competition, the judge is looking for a flawless performance. List 5 faults may lower your score.

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B. A judge will look to see that a horse places all 4 feet on an obstacle such as a bridge. List 3 other things a judge will be looking for when a horse crosses a bridge.

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C. Describe a well executed side pass.

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### **Section 4 – Designing Your Own Course**

A. Many obstacles combine 2 skills, such side passing over a row of flower pots, into one obstacle. Can you think of other obstacles you have seen that combine two skills into one obstacle.

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B. Safety always comes first! Describe some of the things to keep in mind when designing and building a safe obstacle.

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C. Build at least one obstacle keeping in mind what you have learned about safety. Take a picture of your completed obstacle and paste it in your book.

D. Draw a sample obstacle course. Be sure to include arrows indicating the direction and speed (walk or trot) an obstacle is to be taken.



## Section 5 – Level 3 Project Assessment

	DATE	LEADER
1. Back your horse through a Z pattern.		
2. Back through a course of cones or poles.		
3. Walk your horse over raised or staggered cavaletti.		
4. Complete a ground tie, walking 360 around your horse.		
5. Demonstrate a side pass.		
6. Describe what makes an obstacle safe.		
7. List three safety rules to remember when designing an obstacle course.		

**Congratulations!** Your hard work has paid off. You and your miniature horse have successfully completed Level 3.

#### **4-H Rules for Competing in Obstacle Classes**

The obstacle course must be posted at the Show Office not less than two hours prior to the class. Horses must be at least one year old for halter obstacle. All obstacles must be numbered on the course in order of sequence.

Classes will be judged 100% on the manner of horse's performance through the course.

There is a sixty second time limit to complete each obstacle. After time is used, the exhibitor will be directed to the next obstacle. Refusals of three (3) obstacles shall be a major penalty.

Obstacle requirements:

1. Must be a minimum of 5 and maximum 8.
2. Tires and stair steps are prohibited.
3. Jumps are prohibited.

Edible treats to encourage an animal to perform one of the obstacles are not allowed.

All obstacles should be safe for exhibitors as well as for horses.

Faults may include, be are not limit to:

1. Taking an obstacle in the wrong direction.
2. Negotiating an obstacle from the wrong side.
3. Skipping an obstacle unless directed by Judge.
4. Negotiating obstacles in the wrong sequence.
5. Physically moving, or coercing the horse by touching.
6. Stepping on, knocking over, or falling off an obstacle.