

# **An Open Shower's Guide**

by Michelle Masters, BreyerFest Show Manager

Hello! And greetings from a fellow hobbyist! I have been collecting model horses since the late 1960's and showing them, as well as hosting shows, since the late 1970's. This guide contains several articles that are meant to be helpful for anyone new to competing at model horse shows, but it is written especially for those who are planning to compete at the BreyerFest Open Show, as I have been the show's manager since 2006. Whether you are brand-new to showing, returning after a hiatus, or moving up to the Open show from the Youth show at BreyerFest, I am sharing this information with you in hopes that you will be more comfortable and feel well-prepared for your show experience.

Getting information about shows is easy with the internet because most shows have their own website. You can find out about shows on Breyer's website or on the North American Model Horse Show's Association (NAMHSA) website. Once you find a show, be sure to print out the classlist as well as all of the information about the show and send in your entry fee before the deadline. You want to allow about a month to make your plans and get ready.

When you choose models to take to a show, you only want to bring the best and that means they must be in very good to excellent condition. Models with scratches, rubs or other damage (like broken eartips) will not be considered by the judge. Models also need to be clean and free of dust - you can clean them with soft, clean rags or, if needed, a warm bath with just a drop of dish soap. Be sure to get the dust out of the mane and tail - those ridges are dust collectors! You can touch up tiny rubs on eartips and hooves, but any other changes to the finish such as adding polish or paint is not allowed with original finish models.

In a halter division, the classlist usually divides horses by breed or breed types, so assigning a breed to your model is the first thing you want to think about when you choose to show a horse. You do not have to keep the breed that Breyer assigns to a model, but you do have to be sure that the breed you assign is appropriate for the horse since it will be compared to other models showing as that same breed or a similar breed. You will want to choose models that are realistic in color, pattern, and position/gait when showing in breed halter classes.

You will need to do some research to match up your horse with a breed that has the same body type and characteristics. Start by deciding what general type the model represents: draft, sport, stock, light, gaited, Spanish, or pony. You must also be sure that your horse is an appropriate color for the breed - not all colors are found in all breeds - and make sure the gait your model is in would be correct for the breed. Studying breed books or researching breeds online will allow you to learn about real horse conformation and breed standards, which you can then compare to your models. While you are researching the breed for your model (in books or online), you should go ahead and copy or print a breed info sheet to use for documentation if you are going to show an unusual breed. You can put the documentation down in front of the horse to show that it is a good example of the breed. This is not required but is a good idea if

you're showing an uncommon breed. You will also need to have a name tag on all of your horses - follow the show's directions for this, as the information needed on the tag varies from show to show but usually does require the breed to be on the tag. You can show a model as a mix of two breeds, and you should list both (ex. QH x Morgan) on the tag.

I do recommend that you start with a small showstring, maybe 15-20 horses, until you get the hang of things. Try to choose many different breeds of horses so you can enter as many classes as possible. It will make the show more fun and give you more chances for ribbons! Be sure to print all of the show's rules and read over everything carefully. You will need to pre-register for the show and pay an entry fee. Just like a real horse show, entrants must pay a fee to cover rental of the location, ribbons and prizes, and compensation for judges. Most shows also have cool extras like raffles and door prizes so you get even more for your money. Don't forget to find out if the show offers lunch or if you will need to go out for food. And check out the area that the show is in so the people that travel with you will have something to do while you're showing. Be prepared for a long day - shows usually start at 8 or 9 in the morning and can go until 6 or 7 pm. You should have plenty of time to walk around and meet fellow hobbyists in between classes. Networking with other showers is the best way to get involved in the hobby and learn about showing. Many people will also have models, tack, horsey items, etc. for sale.

If you choose to try performance, you will need to do a lot of research and planning first. Performance entries attempt to recreate their real horse counterparts with as much accuracy as possible. The horse, tack, riders, and props need to be exactly what you would see in a real horse class. Performance can be a lot of fun, but it's best to check it out at a show first and to learn about the event by watching videos (or watch in person if you have a chance) and reading books and websites that show you what is expected in the real horse world. Then you can put together some accurate entries that will be competitive. Be prepared, you will need to invest some money in tack and props, but much of what you will need you can make yourself if you are creative! Breyer makes a lot of products you can use to get you started. For example, if you want to show in a Hunter over Fences class, your model will need a hunter saddle, saddle pad and bridle (rider dolls are almost always optional), and you will need an appropriate hunter jump in the proper scale for the model. If you want to show your horse in a Roping class, you'll need a Western working saddle, proper bridle and a calf that is in the right position for your entry. You can always start with "pleasure" classes, where all you need is the tack. Or you can try the Trail class because you could make a great trail obstacle yourself with a little creativity. My advice is to check out the performance classes at a couple of shows first, so you know what to expect and how to prepare.

For those of you coming to Kentucky, The BreyerFest Open Show is the largest model horse show in the world, with entry numbers higher than the North American Nationals championship show. There are nine divisions: Original Finish Regular Run, Original Finish Special Run, Collectibility (for unrealistic-color models, small runs, non-equines, and vintage models), Customized, Foals, Minis, and Original Finish/Customized/Novice Performance. When you enter the show, you choose Halter, Performance, or Both. If you choose Halter, you are entitled to enter any or all of the Halter divisions. If you also choose Performance, you can

show in Original Finish Performance, Customized Performance, or both. Novice Performance is intended for inexperienced performance showers, and is recommended for showers new to the Open Show. There are complete eligibility guidelines in the Show Packet. If you choose to show in Halter and Performance, be prepared for a hectic day!

All divisions run in their own rings simultaneously. The rings are color-coded and there is a tracking chart high up on the wall behind the stage to help you keep up with the divisions. Each ring also has a sign with the name of the current class and a sign that tells you if the class is open to put entries in or closed to be judged. The best way to keep from being overwhelmed is to limit your showstring the first time you show at the open level; I would recommend no more than 25 horses. The classlists are broken up by sections and have more classes than most shows; the divisions range from 23 to 50 classes, and there over 270 classes altogether, and some of them are double-judged!

The championship callbacks are completely different from the Youth show: at the end of each section (which are divided by breed or model types), any model that won a 1st or 2nd place in their class will come back to the ring to be judged again for the championship. The champion and reserve champion will be named right away and prizes awarded. At the end of each division, the horses that won a champion or reserve will be called back into the ring to be judged again for the Overall Champion award. Each division runs independently and is like its own show.

When you decide to enter the Open Show, you will need to access some very important documents. **The most important document is the Show Packet, which you should read very carefully.** Because of the size of this show, there are many guidelines and rules addressed in that document and it can answer a lot of your questions. The documents are available on the Breyer website. Once you have registered for the show, you can join the show's Facebook page, and I highly recommend that you do join because you will receive all of the helpful updates/announcements/reminders from me.

The other document that you will need is the Breed Classification List which helps you determine what halter breed class to put your horses in. After you've decided which models to bring and assigned breeds to them, a big part of your pre-show plans will be registering your horses, which is not usually required at shows. The BreyerFest Open Show has a database and results program that requires every horse to be assigned a unique ID number that will be used on their tag in the ring. You will need to follow the directions in the show packet carefully and be ready to register your horses before the show. It's not a complicated system, but it is an important one. Instructions and forms are posted in early May, and the window to register your horses opens in early June.

Planning and preparation are key to having a successful Open Show experience. There are several articles attached to this that should help you, but the best teacher is experience. Your first Open Show experience may be overwhelming or even disappointing, but I will tell you to hang in there. Walk around and observe as much as you can, and ask questions. The show staff

is always willing to help and other showers (unless they are busy with their own entries) are usually happy to chat with you and answer questions. And you can always contact me - I work on the show all year round! My email is mimichelle437@gmail.com, and I will get back to you within a few days. In the meantime, I hope this packet is helpful to you, and I welcome you to model horse showing or to open level competition. Showing your model horses is an awesome part of the collecting hobby, and the BreyerFest Open Show is a wonderful experience for model horse collectors and showers. Welcome to the fun!

*Michelle Masters,  
BreyerFest Open Show Manager*

### **Tried and True Advice for Showday at BreyerFest:**

- ✓ Dress in layers and be prepared for a variety of temperatures in any show hall. At the Alltech Arena, there is air-conditioning, but there is also one whole wall of windows that can heat up the hall pretty quickly. We keep the air-conditioning cranked up, so if clouds move in, it can get chilly. You get my point - be prepared for any temp!
- ✓ Wear comfortable shoes! You will do a LOT of walking and you are required to wear shoes at all times for safety and hygiene reasons. If you think your shoes may become uncomfortable, bring slides, flip-flops, or "houseshoes", as long as the bottoms of your feet are covered.
- ✓ Bring several snacks to munch on throughout the day. It is a long, very active day and just planning for lunch will not be enough for most people. Bring high-protein snacks that are quick & easy to eat.
- ✓ Have a refillable water bottle or gatorade/drinks to have throughout the day - you will not feel good or enjoy yourself if you are dehydrated.
- ✓ Chairs in most halls are the folding variety and are not very comfortable. You may want to bring a seat cushion or folded blanket/towel to sit on.

**A Glossary of Model Horse Show Terms**

**Common Abbreviations:**

OF = original finish (models just as they came from the factory)  
CM = customized (models that have been repainted, repositioned or altered in some way)  
RR = regular run (models that are in the catalog and available on the Breyer site, or in stores)  
SR = special run (models not in the catalog, available only through special offers or limited in number)  
LR = limited run (these are very limited runs of models, anywhere from 5 to 200)  
OOAK = one of a kind (models made for the BreyerFest Auction and other special events where there is literally only one of that model ever made)  
Trad = traditional (size)  
SM = Stablemate  
LB = Little Bit  
PP = Paddock Pals  
Conn = Connoisseur (this was a series of very detailed models and only 350 of each were made; the series ran from 2001 – 2011)  
COA = Certificate of Authenticity (this is a document that comes with a model and certifies that it is authentic and gives the production details of the model; it is given with most Limited Run models)  
PAS/PAM/PAF = Proud Arabian Stallion/Mare/Foal  
FAS/FAM/FAF = Family Arabian Stallion/Mare/Foal  
CAS/CAM/CAF = Classic Arabian Stallion/Mare/Foal  
SHS/SHM/SHF = Stock Horse Stallion/Mare/Foal  
HM = Honorable Mention (a ribbon given to honor an extra entry in a class)  
A/O = Amateur Owner

**Common Breed Abbreviations**

QH = Quarter Horse  
TB = Thoroughbred  
WB = Warmblood  
ASB = American Saddlebred  
NSH = National Show Horse  
TWH = Tennessee Walking Horse  
RMH = Rocky Mountain Horse  
MFT = Missouri Fox Trotter  
App/Appy = Appaloosa  
Arab = Arabian

### **"Pony Pound"**

Most shows have a designated area where judges, stewards and show staff can take models that are left in the ring after a class change. You may not have heard the announcement that the class was pinned or you may have been too busy to pick up your model right away, but horses must be cleared once their class is over. The show staff will carefully move your model to the Pony Pound so that the judge will not consider it as an entry for the next class. If you realize that you forgot to pick up a horse and it is no longer in the ring, the first thing you should do is check the Pony Pound. You should also check the Pony Pound at the end of the day as you are packing up to make sure you aren't leaving a model behind.

### **"First Call"**

This announcement means that a class is being called up to the judging table(s). You should be ready to take your entries to the designated table and set them up. You will probably have around five minutes (usually ten for performance) from the time of this announcement to get your horse into the ring. This announcement will sound something like: "This is a first call for class number twenty-five, original finish Appaloosas, in Ring Two". Sometimes, you will be given a "second call", which is a reminder that the class is being loaded into the ring.

### **"Last Call"**

This announcement means that time is running out to get your horse into the ring for that class. The staff is trying to close the class so that it can be judged and you should get your horse to the ring as quickly as possible. This announcement will sound something like: "This is the last call for class number twenty-five, original finish Appaloosas, in Ring Two." They may even say, "You have one minute/thirty seconds/etc."

### **"Class Closed"**

This announcement means that no more entries are allowed in the class, and that the judge is getting started. This announcement will sound something like: "The O.F. Appaloosa class is now closed". Once a class is closed, you cannot put your horse in the ring. You may also hear a "class closed" announcement immediately after "last call" if no one speaks up to say they have another entry for the class. You may also hear "Please move away from the ring" following the closing of a class so that the area is cleared for the judge to move around the table.

### **"The Class Has Been Pinned"**

This announcement means that the judge has finished judging the class and that ribbons have been placed. You may come up to the judging table and retrieve your entries and ribbons. This announcement will sound something like: "The O.F. Appaloosa class has been pinned. You can come get your horses." You should pick up your horses out of the showing as quickly as possible.

### **"Clear the Ring"**

This announcement means that they are ready to set up the next class, and all horses need to be removed from the table promptly. This direction usually follows the previous announcement and will sound something like: "Please clear Ring Two." If you are unable to pick up your models quickly, they may be moved to the Pony Pound.

## **"Splitting" Classes**

Occasionally, a class will be so large or diverse that a judge will decide to split up the entries. This is usually left to her preference, so she may split them any way she likes. For example, an O.F.

Appaloosa class may be split into O.F. Appaloosa Stallions and O.F. Mares/Geldings. Or she could split it into O.F. Regular Runs and O.F. Special Runs. You are not allowed to put more models in the class just because it was split; the limits still apply.

When the split is announced, listen carefully to how the class is being split and where the horses are to be moved. For example, the stallions may stay in the original ring and the mares & geldings moved to another table, or visa versa. Follow the directions and make sure your entries are in the proper place.

While models are being shifted around for the split, you are allowed to move your model to a better spot if it was originally in an overcrowded ring.

## **"Cutting" Classes**

Another common practice in large classes is to "cut" the class, which results in a smaller class for the judge to consider. The judge will look at all of the horses, placing a colored chip or other object next to the horses that she wants to keep in the ring (the ones that have "made the cut"). An announcement will be made that the class has been cut and you will be instructed to remove any horse that does not have an object next to it.

While horses are being removed from the ring, if your horse has made the cut, you may move him for the final judging. Since the class was so large originally, the table would have been crowded and you may not have gotten the best spot for your horse. Now that several horses are gone, a better spot may have opened up. Once the cut horses have been removed, the judge will proceed with final judging of the class.

I have seen a couple of judges that prefer to place an object horses that they want removed from the ring, so be sure to pay attention to the announcement. It is more common that the marked horses are left in the ring, but make sure you listen just in case!

## **"Callbacks"**

The most common way of determining championships is calling back into the ring any horse that has received a 1st or 2nd place ribbon in a class that qualifies for that championship. When the callback is announced, you will need to bring the ribbon that the horse won back to the ring too, so be sure to keep track of ribbons your horses win. At most shows, you do not need to bring NAN cards back up, just ribbons.

For example, you will hear, "We will now have the callback for the Stock Breed championship. Please bring up all horses that won first or second place in classes 12, 13, 14 and 15, with the ribbon they won, into Ring Three." Once all of the horses are there, then the judge will pick her champion and reserve champion.

For performance championships, there are usually several classes that qualify for a championship and a horse may have entered more than one or all of them. You will need to bring up all ribbons won in any class in those classes.

### Planning and Preparation for a Show

- Read the rules and information for the show thoroughly. Every show has their own policies and procedures; it's very important that you follow them. If you have a question about something, ask the person in charge of the show well in advance. Email is the best way to contact them, but do not wait until the last minute.
- Do not plan to show more horses than you can handle. If the show does not have a limit on how many horses you can bring, set a reasonable limit for yourself. You do not have to have an entry for every class, and you do not have to show the maximum number of horses allowed in every class. Choose your best horses and remember that quality wins, not quantity!
- Most shows allow you to provide documentation with your horse if you are showing it as an unusual or rare breed that a judge may not be familiar with. Be sure to follow the guidelines set by the show, which usually include a size limit on what you can put with your horse. In general, it is best to print or copy the information rather than putting a whole book in the showing, and you should try to include photos. You should also cite the source of your information whenever possible.
- You will also need to name your horses; you do not need to show them using the name that Breyer gives them. Try to keep names a reasonable length and remember that model horse shows are family events; there should be nothing inappropriate about the name of your horse.
- Once you have chosen the horses you want to take, print the show's classlist and write the names of the horses you are showing in each class (or type up a roster). For example:
  - 21) Thoroughbreds: Galadriel
  - 22) European Warmbloods: Legolas Greenleaf
  - 23) Other Warmbloods: Gandolf, Bilbo Baggins
- Have your horses' ID tags on their legs when you pack them up at home. The show's information will tell you what to put on the tags; be sure to follow the instructions and write neatly. Most shows use basic white hang tags that can be found at office supply stores and are about 1 x 1 1/4" in size. Attach the tag to one of the horse's hind legs, down around the fetlock.
- There are many ways to pack up horses and whatever works for you and gets them there safely is just fine. "Pony Pouches" are popular (hand-sewn fleece or quilted pouches with a flap), but most people just wrap their models individually in something soft like a large piece of towel, blanket, or fleece. I do not recommend that you put bubble-wrap directly against a plastic model (I've seen disastrous results), but bubble-wrap over fabric is fine.
- Large plastic tubs are preferable to cardboard boxes as they provide more protection when the horses are being moved around. Breyer models are pretty sturdy – as long as you are relatively careful and use common sense when packing and handling, they should be fine. I do recommend padding the bottom of the tub and don't pack it so full that you have to force the lid on.
- If you are showing quite a few horses, you might want to consider packing them in the order that they are showing. You can pack the horses that are in the first couple of sections in one tub, horses in sections 3-4 in another and so on, so that you can pack up horses that are finished showing and unpack horses as their sections come up. That way, you won't be trying to make room on your table in the morning for horses that don't show until the afternoon. Be sure to label the tubs so you know who's in each one!



- Unless otherwise stated in the show's rules, you are allowed to cover your table at the show with a cloth or drape. This can be anything from a store-bought tablecloth to a hand-made banner. Be sure it's not too thick or bulky – your horses are going to have to stand on it. The show info should tell you what size table you will have; many shows use the standard 6' x 3' banquet table. You will likely have half (or maybe all) of one, so a rectangular cover that can cover the whole table or be folded in half works well.
- You may choose to have a sign for your space with your name (some shows print these for you). Something creative that can be stood up in a simple frame works fine. It's nice to see a shower's name, with maybe a stable name and the city/state they're from.
- Many shows have a raffle or door prizes, and they would welcome a donation. You can donate a model, tack item (even small items like a halter or nice saddle pad), props, dolls, accessories, or other horsey items like books, decorative items, t-shirts, etc. Consider donating something and be sure to pack it up with your things. Let the showholder know what you are donating and give it to her first thing in the morning.
- Most shows do allow you to sell items from your table, but be aware that you will not have very much space for sales items. Most people find it best to bring just a few things to sell. Make sure that sale items are marked as "for sale" (so they will stand out from your show horses) and have a price on them. If you have a lot of things for sale, you can always bring in copies of a sales list and keep the models in your vehicle (weather permitting). Be sure to check, as some shows (including BreyerFest) do not allow sales.
- If you are traveling a distance that requires you to stay in a hotel, book your room in advance. The show will probably suggest a local hotel, and might even have a "host" hotel with a special rate. If possible, request a ground floor room so that any boxes of horses that you bring in overnight won't have to be lugged up stairs (I speak from experience here!).
- Be sure to have good directions to the town and the showhall, or plan to use a reliable GPS. Most shows (especially those that have their own website) provide this for you, but be sure to check them ahead of your departure. There's nothing worse than getting lost on your way to a show!
- The show's information will include what the plans are for lunch. You may want to bring snacks to have throughout the day to keep your energy up. It's also a good idea to have some drinks and/or a water bottle. Make sure you check the show's rules to be sure you're allowed to bring in outside food/drinks.
- Do a little research about the town that the show is in – there might be something else that you would like to see or do while you're there, especially if you're arriving the day before the show. You can also find out if there's anything going on the night before the show. There may be a get-together, which is a great way to socialize before the big day!
- On the morning of the show, plan to be at the showhall when the doors open for showers (you can get there early, but don't expect the doors to open early). You will need the time before the show starts to unpack, set up, and get ready. Do not plan to arrive at the time the show starts. Once the show starts, the pace is usually pretty quick. If the show starts at 9:00, and the hall opens at 8:00, get there at 7:59!
- As you unpack, keep your packing materials neat and return them to your boxes or tubs. Fold any towels, blankets, or bubble wrap. This will save you time and trouble at the end of the day. When your boxes or tubs are empty, store them under your table or take them back out to your vehicle. You must keep the aisles around your table clear.

- Plan out how you can set up your table to best suit your needs. Most people line their models up across the front edge of the table, making two rows if necessary. Be sure to leave room near your chair for cleaning horses, checking classlists, etc.
- Remember that some models are “tippy” (they fall over easily). Plan for space to lay these models down, or you can lay them on cloth on top of your tubs under your table.
- You will see many showers with a structure that will hold their models, like rows of standing stalls. You can ask people how they made theirs and make them for yourself. It is a very good investment - you won't ever have to worry about the dreaded domino effect and the horrible sound of a model hitting the ground :(
- When one of your horses wins a ribbon, immediately write down the horse's name and the class name on the back of the ribbon. You can write directly on the ribbon, or you can bring some labels for this. It is important that you keep track of your horse's placings. You can also write them down on the classlist roster that you made.
- Keep a notepad handy to write down things that you need to get or want to do for next time, names of people you meet, etc. It will be a busy day and you probably won't remember all of the things you want to!
- As the show is wrapping up and you're packing, make sure that you have everything and check the Pony Pound for any models you might have accidentally left in the ring. Even if you're tired, pack as neatly to go home as you did to get there so that your models get home safe.
- Be sure to clean up your area, throw away all trash, leave your table just the way you found it, and say a nice “thank you” to your show hosts!

## **Article Three**

### **A Supply Box for the Model Horse Shower**

I recommend that you purchase a plastic bin with a snapping lid from Walmart or Target for a few bucks and load it up with an assortment of things you might need. My supply box is about the size of a large shoe box with a flip-up lid and a handle on top. Below is a list of things you might want to consider putting in your supply box. Some are model horse related and most are simply things that I have needed at some point in time and have been glad to have handy.

- Soft, clean dustcloth for cleaning models' bodies
- Soft, clean, fat make-up brush (or two) for cleaning faces and crevices in manes/tails
- Sharpie black and brown felt-tip markers for touching up eyes, eartips, and hooves
- Pastels in assorted browns and "horse colors" for touching up tiny rubs
- Clean, soft toothbrush for grooming hair manes & tails (also works for stubborn dust)
- extra hang tags for ID tags
- Scissors, glue stick, small bottle of glue, scotch tape and masking tape
- pens, pencils, sticky notes, notepad, index cards, highlighter
- ruler or mini tape measure, small magnifying glass
- Tweezers for small buckles, etc. on tack - have at least two pair, one of them preferably needle-nosed
- Small cube of "magic eraser" cleaning pad - can be used on white areas of models to rub off marks.
- Sticky Wax is a must for performance showers to keep bits and things in place. It's sold in small tubs in dollhouse shops or online, or you can use dental wax
- performance repair kit: small bottle of white craft paint & small craft paintbrush and colored markers for touch-ups on props, sewing kit for doll clothes, invisible thread for help with dolls' hands
- gum, candy, change for vending machines, nail file/clippers, tylenol, tums, anti-bacterial hand gel, band-aids

**General Live Show Rules and Etiquette**

- Do not touch, pick up or move someone else's model(s) or any part of a set-up without the person's expressed permission.
- Be responsible for friends and family members that come with you to the show. Explain the "do not touch" rule to them and try to find a place for them that is out of the way of other showers. Many halls have a lobby area or an adjacent room that may be empty. If they sit at your table, they must stay out of the aisles and out of the way of other showers in your area.
- It is not recommended that you bring young children to a model horse show, no matter how well-behaved they normally are, unless you have someone with you that is in charge of them. It is a very long day, and you will be preoccupied with showing.
- There should be no running, rough play, throwing things, yelling, raucous behavior, or inappropriate language in the showhall.
- Remember that you are responsible for any damage caused by you or anyone with you. For example, if you have a young child with you that is running in the hall and knocks over a horse that is worth \$200, you will be expected to pay the owner of the horse the \$200. The showhall and the showholders are not liable for damages.
- Laptops, handheld games, smart phones, iPads, etc. should have sound turned off or be used with headphones as a courtesy to other showers. Cell phones alerts should be set on vibrate or at a very low volume.
- Smoking is usually not permitted inside any showhall. Be sure to smoke only in a designated smoking area and dispose of butts properly.
- Eating is usually allowed in a showhall, but be sure to check the show's information on this. Make sure that you clean up any mess you make, dispose of all trash in proper waste receptacles and recycle whenever possible.
- No alcoholic beverages should be brought into a showhall, or illegal substances (including tobacco by a minor).
- Shoes and shirts should be worn in a showhall at all times.
- Pets/animals are almost always not allowed in the showhall, except service animals. Let the showholder know ahead of time if you have a service animal so that she can assign you to a table that will have a little extra space for your animal.
- Do not tape, glue or thumbtack anything to the walls or any property (tables, etc.) of the showhall. Show respect to the property of the hall and any personnel who work there.
- After you unpack your models, take empty tubs and boxes back out to your vehicle or put them under your table so they are out of the way.
- Do not block aisles or walkways around your table. Keep your belongings in the space allotted to you, and be considerate of those around you.
- Listen carefully to all announcements so you don't miss any class calls or important information. Keep noise to a minimum and talking to a whisper when announcements are being made so that everyone can hear.
- Be considerate of others when setting up your entries on the show tables. Just a couple of inches between models is fine; many classes will be full and show staff will ask you to make room for as many horses as possible. Do not ever deliberately block the judge's view of another person's horse.

- As soon as your entries are in the ring, step out of the way so that others can get their models set up. After a class has been closed, you are not allowed to move or adjust your entries.
- Once the judge has started looking at models, you must move away from the table and stay away from the table until the announcement is made that the class has been pinned. **It is very important that you do not get in the judge's way or try to talk to her while she is judging a class.**
- If you need to ask a judge a question, do so in between classes when she is not actually judging or attending to other show duties. Be polite and have a positive attitude about her suggestions. **Do not ever challenge a judge's decisions or expect her to justify her placings.**
- If you want to take a picture of an entry, try to do so before the class is closed or right after it has been pinned, while showers are picking up their horses. If you would like a picture of something on someone's table, it is polite to ask first. Photos of entries in the ring can be taken without asking.
- Be sure to say thank you to anyone who helps you throughout the day, including show staff, judges, and other showers. **Clean up your area completely before leaving and dispose of all trash.**

### **A Few Words About Sportsmanship**

- Displays of poor sportsmanship are totally inappropriate at a model horse show. This may include complaining about how a class was placed or how your horses are doing, questioning a judge's ability, claiming that a shower has broken a show rule or is engaging in behavior that suggests "cheating", etc. If you have an issue such as this, you should go directly to the person in charge of the show and discuss it with them privately and in a calm manner. You should not make comments to other showers or to staff; it is disruptive and disrespectful to cause a scene at the show because of something that is bothering you personally. If something is going on at the show that you feel needs to be dealt with, let the show manager know. It is her place to deal with it, not yours.
- With regards to how the classes are placed, please remember that judging is opinion-based. Every judge is different and has her own opinions and preferences. The showholder has chosen judges that she believes will deliver an educated, experienced, un-biased opinion when placing the classes at her show. If you set up a class with the exact same entries and had them judged by three different judges, you would probably have some similar placings, but you would not have three sets of exactly the same results. That is the nature of a judged competition. Every horse in a class has an equal chance of winning and the focus of showing should be to enjoy the competition, celebrate accomplishments, and show good sportsmanship, whether you win the blue ribbon or not.

### Tips for Successful Showing

- Keep your table neat and organized. Have your classlist and horse roster handy (cross off the classes as they are judged so you can keep track of what classes are up next) and have your horses for the next class ready.
- Pay attention to all announcements. The last thing you want to do is miss a class, and the only way to avoid that is to listen carefully to classes being called and pay attention to what's going on.
- Take your horse(s) to the judging table/ring as soon as the class is called (first call). Sometimes, rings fill up quickly and it's best to go ahead and get a spot for your horse. Choose an open spot for your horse that is well-lit and (preferably) not next to a model just like it (same mold in the same color).
- Place your horse on the table with his best side facing the edge of the table. The judge will look at both sides, but she will see the side facing the edge more close-up. If the model's head is turned (like Strapless), face the model so that they are looking off the table so the judge can see the model's face. If the model does have a small rub or flaw, you will probably want to put the side of the model with the flaw facing away from the edge of the table.
- A judge can see your horse just fine if it's lined up in the middle of the table; so if a ring starts filling up, you can put your horse there. If the ring is really full and you can't find a spot, be patient; chances are you are not the only one and the show staff will open up another table for the rest of the entries for that class. If it doesn't look like they're going to open up another table and you cannot find a spot for your horse, find the ring steward or other show staff and politely point out the problem.
- Be sure you have followed the show's directions for making your tags and write neatly.
- Be absolutely certain that your horse is 100% clean! All dust should have been removed - don't forget between the ears and in the creases of the mane and tail. Take a dustcloth or soft brush with you to the table for last minute dust-offs. Do not use any type of polish or oil on your models. This is considered altering the original finish and will be counted against you by the judge, possibly resulting in disqualification of the model. Some products will eventually destroy the model's finish.
- Most shows do not allow actual halters to be worn by horses in halter classes. Models in a halter class should not have on any type of blanket, leg wraps, decorations or any other tack (unless molded on, like the halter on the Pacer).
- Be ready to pick your horse up as soon as the class has been pinned. If you win a ribbon, write the horse's name and the name of the class on the back. If it's a 1st or 2nd place ribbon, make sure that you keep that model close by and listen for the announcement of a callback for that section since that horse is eligible for a championship.
- You might find that it's helpful to pull one of your tubs out every few classes and pack up some of your horses that are finished showing. It will save time at the end of the day and give you more room at your table. Or you may need to pack up horses that showed in the morning to make room for horses showing in the afternoon.
- Spend your time while classes are being judged meeting fellow showers, seeing their models/set-ups, discussing the hobby, etc. Try to walk around the showhall several times; you'll see different things every time and catch different people at their tables since folks are always on the move at a show.

- Don't be afraid to ask questions! As long as someone's not in the middle of something, they are usually more than happy to answer a question or just chat. Experienced showers are usually very willing to help (we were all newbies once too!) and show staff (when not busy with show duties) will be happy to help you with any type of question.
- As long as you stay out of the way of judges while they are judging, you are welcome to check out the classes in the rings. Walk around and see what's on the tables while people are setting up. See if you can pick who the top three or four horses in a class will be. Once ribbons are placed, you can go see if you were right!
- Don't get discouraged if you don't win a blue ribbon your first time out. Every show is different - next time, it could be your turn to bring home the championship!
- If you do win a ribbon, especially at the BreyerFest Open Show, remember that this is a HUGE show and you should be proud! You are competing with the best showers and the best models from around the country!
- Keep in mind that model horse showing is challenging and can be overwhelming but, above all else, it's supposed to be FUN! So make sure you take time to breathe, relax, and enjoy the day!