



POULTRY SHOWMANSHIP

**A Manual
for the Organizer
and the Judge**

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the American
Poultry
Association**



POULTRY SHOWMANSHIP

This booklet is intended to offer guidelines for the initiation and development of youth showmanship activities.

It is our hope that the ideas contained within will enable judges and show management to create quality programs for young people who express an interest in poultry.

Acknowledgements

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|------------------|---|
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- | | |
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Poultry Art adapted with permission from Scratching the Surface, a youth poultry activity guide of the 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System Skills for Life Animal Science Series.

Chapter One - The Contest

Poultry showmanship is an opportunity for young people to demonstrate their abilities as poultry stewards and to communicate their knowledge of poultry husbandry to others. It is the exhibitor's time to interact, one on one, with an experienced judge. Showmanship offers the chance to elaborate:

This is who I am.....

This is what I have learned.....

This is what I am capable of doing.

Who is Eligible to Enter?

Showmanship is intended for any young person with an interest in poultry. Members of 4-H, F.F.A., and the A.P.A. - A.B.A. Youth Program are strongly encouraged to participate. Younger children, who assume the responsibility of caring for their own birds, make good showmanship candidates if they are able to understand the purpose and benefits of this type of competition.

Open poultry shows frequently offer showmanship classes for children under 9 years of age.

How Are Showmanship Classes Divided?

Ideally, a separate class should be created for each age group by year, e.g., all 9-year olds have their own class, all 10 year olds, etc. When there are insufficient numbers to achieve this (aim for 4 or more entries per class), the competition may be divided as follows:

A Junior Division for ages 9 - 11

Intermediate Division for ages 12 - 14

Senior Division, 15 and older.

Some shows add a Novice class to meet the needs of those who have never participated in showmanship before, regardless of age. Another consideration would be a Pre-Junior division for younger children.

What Equipment is Necessary?

Large fowl cooping set on a table or stand works well for presenting large and bantam chickens and bantam ducks. When the contest includes large waterfowl or turkeys, cages should be placed on the floor for easy entry. All cages should be bedded for safe footing.

If the class is large, and space permits, the judge may want to see the entire class at one time. Arranging the necessary number of cages in a single long row, or back to back, forming a double row will allow for comparison judging.

Some shows choose to set up 3 or more "performance stations". The exhibitor completes an activity at each station, is evaluated, and then moves on. (See Scorecard III).

A microphone is helpful for calling exhibitors and giving instructions. Frequently the judge will want to offer advice or elaborate when the class is finished.

Seating for exhibitors and an audience should be available.

Where Is The Contest Held?

The contest should be visible. It is best held in or near the show rooms. An area large enough to provide freedom of movement is important. A good choice of locations would be a livestock arena if it is available and close by. Otherwise, seating can be arranged in front of, and along the outside perimeter of, the showmanship area in arena-like fashion.

When Is The Contest Held?

Many shows set aside an extra day for showmanship. This allows the exhibitor to focus completely on the contest. When showmanship must be held the same day as the regular show, it should take place before or after the exhibition judging.

Occasionally, an exhibitor will want to use a bird that is entered in the show for showmanship. Removing birds for showmanship during regular judging should be avoided. Arrangements for the timing of the showmanship class can be worked out with the show superintendent.

Who Should Judge The Showmanship Contest?

Any knowledgeable poultry person with a positive attitude and an interest in youth can judge.

Some shows prefer to use only licensed judges. 4-H leaders, F.F.A. teachers, and seasoned adult exhibitors also make good candidates. The judge must have a good general knowledge of the various breeds and the ability to communicate with young people.

What Should Be Done In Case Of a Tie?

When a numerical scorecard is used, ties may occur. Judges should have a few challenging tie breaker questions or handling skills ready. Questions are used most frequently because of their objective nature.

Being fair is critically important.

What Type of Awards Are Appropriate?

Awards are usually determined by the budget allotted. Trophies, plaques, posters, books, and ribbons are all good selections. County and state fairs usually have premium money available also. In some cases, club members or local businesses may agree to sponsor awards.

Chapter 2 - The Exhibitor

Showmanship is a "people-focused" activity. The bird serves as a prop; while the young person does the performing. The exhibitor's attitude, appearance, speaking ability, care and management skills, and willingness to follow instructions are all on stage.

What Type of Showmanship Skills Should Be Expected From the Child Age 9-11?

Children in the age group want to have fun. It is best to focus on the basics. Concentration spans are limited, so instructions should be brief and to the point. Personal safety, as well as the well-being of the bird, should be stressed.

Fine motor skills and finger dexterity are not fully developed so difficult handling demonstrations should be avoided. Appropriate skills include carrying and posing the bird properly, and placing and removing the bird from the cage.

Most of the group's knowledge has been acquired from example and experience rather than reading. Questions about basic management and responsibility are good. Other areas would include simple anatomy and the ability to identify the breed, variety, sex and class of the showmanship bird. Offer encouragement if a child gives only a partial answer and try to draw out more information.

What Should Be Expected From the Young Person Age 12-14?

This is usually the largest, and frequently the most competitive, group in the contest. Handling capacities are more developed. Passing the bird, examining the wings, under-color, feet and head can all be added to the basic Junior skills.

This group is capable of explaining and elaborating. They can do physical examination and an oral evaluation of their bird. Questions about poultry diseases, parasites, defects, disqualifications, and additional anatomy are suitable.

Ties often occur here. Be prepared.

What Should Be Expected From the 15-19 Year Old Exhibitors?

Abilities vary significantly in this group. Some contestants may have 8 or more years of poultry experience while others are relative newcomers. The wise judge will pick up on this and gear activities accordingly.

In general, these teens are capable of all 10 handling skills (see diagram sheet). They are logical thinkers and problem solvers capable of giving a cure for a disease or a remedy for a management problem. Fifteen to nineteen year-olds have an expanded vocabulary and do well with terms and definitions. They are aware of the make-up of the system and can handle questions about the A.P.A. or the show they are attending.

How Should Personal Conduct Be Evaluated?

The ideal exhibitor thoroughly enjoys the experience. Other personal qualities are a positive attitude, the ability to focus attention, and respect for the judge and other participants.

It is the judge's responsibility to act in a professional manner and to set an example as a responsible authority figure.

How Should the Exhibitor's Appearance Be Evaluated?

Neatness counts. Hair should be combed, hands and clothing clean. Shorts, trendy clothes, shirts that advertise, hats and chewing gum are all inappropriate.

Should There Be a Uniform Dress Code?

Showmanship attire should provide safety and comfort. Long sleeves and pants are a good idea to avoid scratches. Some shows require show coats, others mandate long-sleeved white shirts and dark pants.

If a dress code is imposed, it should be kept simple and affordable. Exhibitors should be aware of dress codes well in advance of the show. Judges should be informed if a dress requirement is in effect.

What Types of Questions Are Not Useful?

Very young exhibitors should not be expected to know other breeds in the same class (i.e. American Class or Feather Leg Bantams). However, by age 10 or 11 this is useful knowledge. Questions should not be directed toward specific dates (i.e. date of first poultry show in America). Youngsters should not be expected to know detailed symptoms of diseases. However, asking a general question on how to tell if a bird is not feeling well could be used. Expecting children to know specific names of other breeders or officers in the A.P.A. is not appropriate.

A Few Final Thoughts

- a) The judge should smile a lot - seem happy - be kind.
- b) Judges should be serious when scoring and stick to their reasons.
- c) The judging process should be a learning experience for the young exhibitor.
- d) Judges should keep in mind that the purpose of showmanship contests is to demonstrate the importance of keeping happy, healthy chickens (and young people).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON EXHIBITING AND JUDGING POULTRY

Poultry 1, Scratching the Surface

Publication # 4-H 2146
Minnesota Agricultural Publication
Cooperative Extension
University of Minnesota
3 Coffey Hall, 1420 Eckles Avenue
St. Paul MN 55108

4-H Poultry Showmanship: Leader's Book

Publication # 4-H 2060
ANR Publications
University of California
6701 San Pablo Avenue
Oakland CA 94608-1239

4-H Poultry Showmanship

Publication # 4-H 679
Purdue University (ACS)
Agricultural Communication Service
Media Distribution Center
West Lafayette IN 47906
(317) 494-6794

4-H Poultry Fitting and Showmanship Member's Guide

Publication # 4-H 1520

4-H Poultry Fitting and Showmanship Leader's Guide

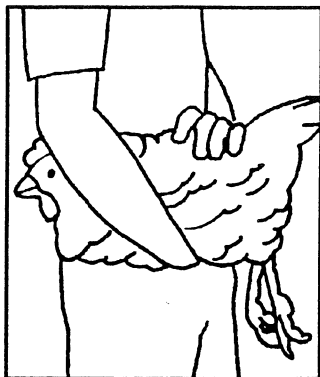
Publication # 4-H 1521
Agricultural Publications
Cooperative Extension
Michigan State University
Linton Hall
East Lansing MI 48824

Poultry Judging (National Poultry Judging Manual)

For the judging of egg production in live birds, grading eggs and evaluating ready-to-cook carcasses.

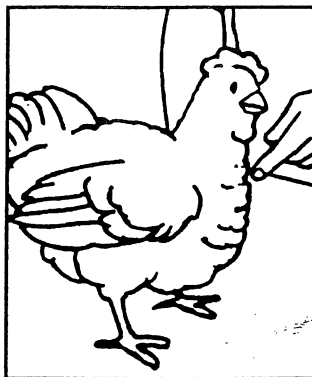
University of Nebraska
Cooperative Extension Service
Lincoln NE 68583 (and other state extension service offices)

Poultry Showmanship Steps



1. Carrying the Bird

Bird kept balanced and upright on the palm of the hand with head between the arm and body or if small against the carrier's body. The other hand rests on the bird's back.



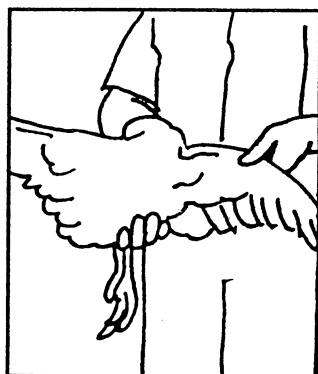
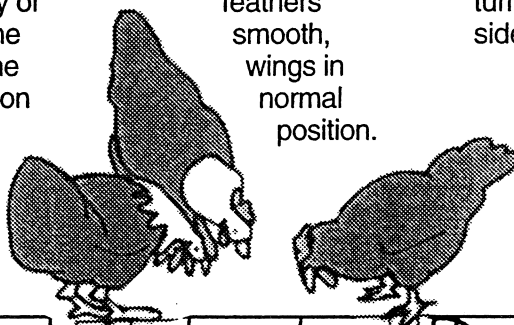
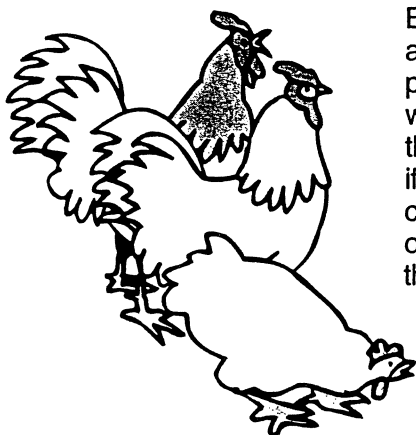
2. Posing the Bird

Bird shown on table in alert position with tail fluffed, head and beak raised, feathers smooth, wings in normal position.



3. Examining Head

Bird raised to shoulder height with free hand used to move head. Bird turned and other side examined.



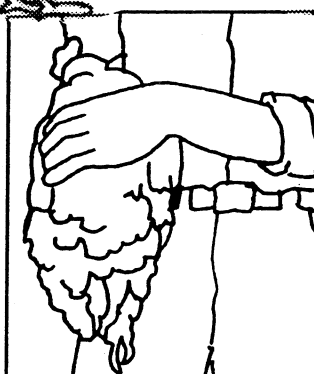
4. Examining Wings

First wing spread by grouping wing tip with free hand and pulling. Second wing examined by placing free hand across body of bird and applying pressure to last wing joint with thumb and fingers to extend wing.



4. Examining Undercolor

Finger tips used to gently pull tops of feathers "against the grain."



6. Showing Width of Body

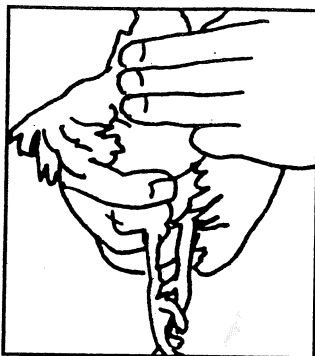
Thumb and index finger of free hand placed across the bird's body directly behind the base of the wings to determine width and shape of the body.



7. Checking the Breast

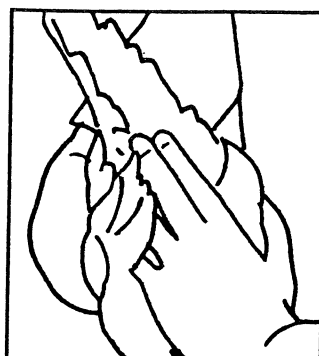
Bird's head held downward with its back against showperson. Free hand used to measure breast bone and examine keel for straightness, breast blisters, indentations or other defects.

Poultry Showmanship Steps (Continued)



8. Measuring Depth of Abdomen

Vent examined and depth of abdomen measured by placing as many fingers of the free hand as possible between the tip of the keel and the pubic bones.



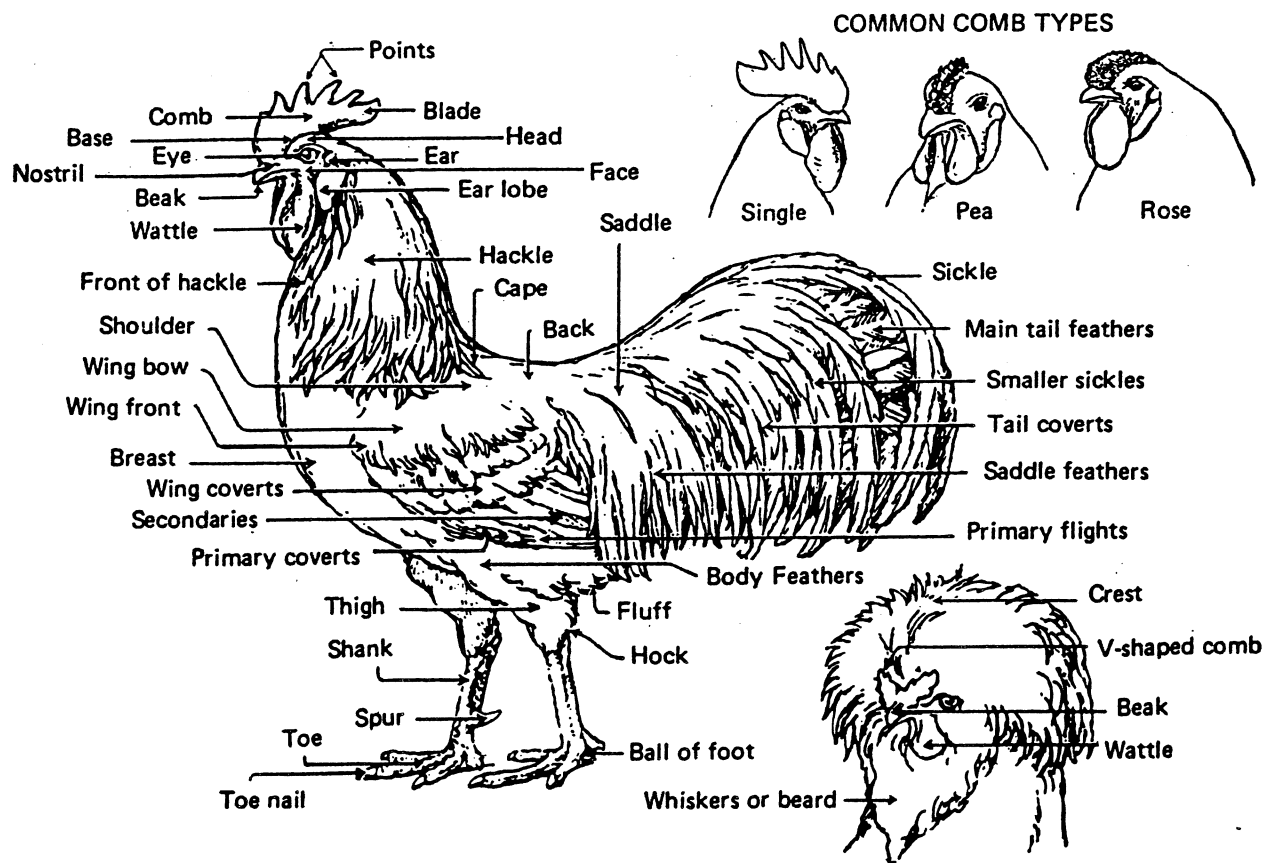
9. Measuring Width of Pubic Bones

As many fingers of free hand as is easily possible placed between the tips of the pubic bones.



10. Examining Feet and Legs

Bird held against showperson's body and freehand used to examine all parts. Bird swiveled to examine front of feet and legs.



POULTRY SHOWMANSHIP SCORE SHEET I

Name _____
Age _____ Other _____

	Scoring	Score
Appearance and Attitude of Showperson		
a) Clean, conventional clothing	5	
b) Follows instructions of judge. Keeps attention focused on bird and judge.	5	
c) Considerate of other exhibitors	5	
Appearance of Bird		
a) Clean, unbroken feathers	5	
b) Good body condition (correct size for age and breed)	10	
c) An outward appearance of good health	10	
d) Tame and manageable (obvious signs of training at home)	5	
Showmanship		
a) Removing and returning bird to cage, carrying bird to judging table	10	
b) Posing and presenting the bird to judge or transferring to another person	10	
c) Display and examination of various parts; head, wings, body width, feet and legs, abdominal capacity	10	
Knowledge of Poultry in general and specifically of breed exhibited. (Each competitor should be asked at least two questions)		
a) Give the breed, variety, and sex of your bird.	5	
b) What was the original purpose of this breed (eggs, meat, dual purpose, or exhibition)?	5	
c) How did you prepare your bird for this show?	5	
d) Explain the type of feed you use.	5	
e) Other	5	
TOTAL	100	

POULTRY SCORECARD II

		Suggested Scoring	Actual Score
1	Appearance of Animal		
	A. Cleanliness	5	
	B. Fleshing and Finish	5	
	C. Feather Condition	5	
	D. Tame and Manageable	5	
	Total Points Section 1	20	
2	Appearance and Attitude of Showperson		
	A. Clean and neat	5	
	B. Considerate of other exhibitors	5	
	C. Follows judge's instructions	5	
	D. Handles bird gently, appropriately, and considerately	10	
	Total Points Section 2	25	
3	Showing the Bird		
	A. Picks up correctly	5	
	B. Carries properly	5	
	C. Poses the bird correctly	5	
	D. Displays and examines various parts	5	
	E. Returned to the cage properly	5	
	Total Points Section 3	25	
4	Knowledge of bird (questions or statements)		
	A. Knows general breed information	5	
	B. Knows the correct names of major parts	5	
	C. Can define disqualification & give examples	5	
	D. Can define defect and give examples	5	
	E. Can identify strong and weak points of bird	5	
	F. Can give sex, weight, purpose of bird	5	
	Total Points Section 4	30	
	Final Score	100	

POULTRY SCORECARD III

[illegible]

POULTRY SCORECARD IV

Name: _____

Age: _____

	Does Well	Needs Practice
The Exhibitor		
1. Listens Carefully		
2. Follows Judge's Directions		
3. Appears Neat and Orderly		
4. Enjoys the Experience		
The Bird		
5. Clean, free from lice and broken feathers		
6. Shows evidence of training; tame		
The Presentation		
7. Holds bird properly		
8. Is able to put bird into cage and remove		
Knowledge		
9. Can identify variety, breed, sex of bird		
10. Can explain basic care of bird		

Comments:

POULTRY SHOWMANSHIP

Poultry Showmanship competition prepares the project member to demonstrate the knowledge and skills that have been developed over the years of their project work; to:

- Recognize the desired characteristics of exhibition poultry
- Select and prepare poultry for a show
- Present poultry to the best advantage
- Describe poultry, using the correct terminology
- Organize and present information before an audience
- Describe important points of proper poultry management

The commercial poultry industry needs well-trained young people to fill positions in the industry. Poultry project work provides advanced project members with a sound base

from which to prepare themselves for a lifelong career in some phase of the poultry industry. Industry people in local operations can advise youth on training needed.

**SUPERVISOR
OF QUALITY
CONTROL**

**ENGINEER --
HOUSING
EQUIPMENT**

**RESEARCH &
DEVELOPMENT**

The project experience alone, can be the basis for hiring young people for some entry-level jobs. Vocational and technical schools add valuable training. A college degree is required for other career choices. For very specialized, technical, research and teaching jobs, an advanced degree may be needed.

**BUSINESS
MANAGEMENT**

**DIRECTOR
OF HUMAN
RESOURCES**

The poultry industry offers careers that fit the interests of almost anyone. Just a few examples are shown here.

**SALES --
FEEDS
EQUIPMENT
PHARMACUTICALS**

**EGG
DUCK
TURKEY
BROILER
GAMEBIRD
PRODUCER**

**FINANCIAL
ADVISOR**

**EDUCATOR
JOURNALIST
VETERINARIAN**

Young people who do well in showmanship are among the more dedicated poultry project members. They are a good reservoir of potential adult leaders for our poultry youth programs in the future.