

**Subject:** AQHA novice exhibitors  
**From:** <HustonQtrHorses@aol.com>  
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**To:** <kellied50@yahoo.com>

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Beginning July 1, 2010, American Quarter Horse Association [novice exhibitors](#) will be allowed to show any American Quarter Horse in AQHA novice classes, regardless of ownership. Previously, AQHA rules required novice exhibitors to show a horse owned by a family member (Rule 403(a)(5)), through a lease (Rule 405(c)) or with an official novice permit.

The goal of this rule change is to encourage novice competitors to try a new event on an experienced horse while helping the exhibitor gain confidence and more experience, according to Todd Branson, AQHA director of competition marketing. As current rules state, once the novice exhibitor has earned 25 lifetime points in a class, he or she is ineligible to compete in that class the following year as a novice, with or without a permit.

As novice eligibility now allows, an exhibitor can show a horse in a novice youth or novice amateur class with the owner and his or her immediate family still retaining the ability to show the horse in any class other than the same class as the novice exhibitor. Exhibitors are still required to have a novice amateur or novice youth membership to participate. Memberships can be purchased at the show or prior to the show through [AQHA](#). All novice eligibility requirements as specified in Rule 405A (c) remain unchanged.

Novice exhibitors must still request a novice permit to show a horse that is owned by a non-family member at any of the top 10 AQHA circuit shows that allow permit competition. The top 10 shows are determined by the total number of entries the previous year and can change from year to year.

Competitors showing in AQHA youth- or amateur-division classes must still adhere to AQHA's horse ownership rule 403(A)(5), which states that an amateur must not exhibit in open or amateur AQHA classes horses owned by any third party, but shall only exhibit horses solely owned by the applicant or the applicant's family. However, beginning **January 1, 2011**, youth and amateur competitors will be allowed to show leased horses in their respective divisions.

### **Top 10 shows\* that will require a permit for novice competition in 2010:**

- Oklahoma Quarter Horse Association Redbud Spectacular, Oklahoma City
- Texas Classic, Fort Worth, Texas
- South Florida Quarter Horse Association Gold Coast, Tampa, Florida
- Arizona Sun Country Circuit, Scottsdale, Arizona
- Dixie National Quarter Horse Show, Jackson, Mississippi
- Big A Circuit, Conyers, Georgia
- Florida Quarter Horse Association Gulf Coast Circuit, Tampa, Florida
- Oregon Quarter Horse Association Summer Classic, Central Point, Oregon
- The Stars and Strips Circuit, Conyers, Georgia
- Western Pennsylvania Quarter Horse Association, Harlansburg, Pennsylvania

*\* The All American Quarter Horse Congress is the largest show in terms of entries but does not allow permits or leases.*