



Barron & Rusk County 4-H Drill Team Guide

*most communication will be through the Barron County 4-H Drill Team Facebook Group

Content:

- Drill Team Descriptions with state score sheet and expectations
- Flag Team Description
- General Rules
- Basic Terms
- Safety Considerations & Skills Evaluation
- Calendar 2026

Drill Teams

Senior Drill Team (6th grade-13th grade)

Minimum Riders to have a team: 6

Minimum/Maximum Riders for state competition: 8-10

- Performs a chosen drill routine with music, theme and attire that is **eight to twelve** minutes long
- Preliminary sign up for state competitions at February Horse Project Meeting
- Last day to sign up for Drill Team is May 3rd
- Complete Senior Team Skills Evaluation (**May 17th** and **May 24th**)
- Attend 75% of scheduled training centers (calendar included)
- Acknowledge safety guide (sign acknowledgement on last page) by May 3rd
- Drill Captain/Co Captains will be voted on at one of the June Training Centers
- Drill Team strives to maximize all categories that the WI State Competition judges/requires (see next page)

Junior Drill Team (3rd grade-5th grade and novice riders)

Minimum riders to have a team: 4

- Performs a chosen drill routine with music, theme and attire that is **five to eight** minutes long
- Last day to sign up for Jr. Drill Team is **May 3rd**
- Complete a Skills Evaluation (**May 17th and 24th**)
- Attend 75% of scheduled training centers (calendar included)
- Acknowledge safety guidelines by **May 3rd**
- Captain/Co-Captains will be announced at one of the June Training Centers

Drill Team (General Information)

- Senior/Junior teams will practice simultaneously during training center dates
- Should there not be enough riders to fulfill both or either team, there is an option to consolidate all grades to form one team for that 4-H year and adjust the routine accordingly
- Coaches reserve the right to decide which team a horse and rider will participate in based on ability as well as age
- Along with two to three coaches, assistance will be needed with
 - Music and sound system
 - Inventory and costumes when applicable
 - Record keeping

Wisconsin State Fair Champion Challenge Drill Team Competition Score Card – Freestyle Drill

County _____ Team # _____ Begin Time _____ End Time _____

Category	Judging Info	Points	Comments
Execution			
Spacing	Horse spacing consistent	Max 30 pts	
Alignment	Lines should be straight. Circles should be evenly round and centered	Max 30 pts	
Timing/Coordination	Team members work well together. Moving as a unit.	Max 30 pts	
Performance			
Manners of Horses	Good manners – no kicking, biting, bucking, rearing.	Max 10 pts	
Horsemanship	Riders show good horsemanship	Max 15 pts	
Originality/Variety	Original drill with varied maneuvers & patterns	Max 10 pts	
Attractiveness of Patterns	Symmetry, definition & flow of transitions	Max 15 pts	
Difficulty			
Precision/Briskness	Precise movements & transitions – not sloppy/broken gaits	Max 15 pts	
Degree of Difficulty	Closeness of horses, difficulty of maneuver, speed	Max 25 pts	
General Impression	Horses & equipment clean? Coordinated & appealing?	Max 10 pts	
Crowd Appeal	Does the crowd react to the team? Exciting to watch? Is the routine creative?	Max 10 pts	
Faults/Penalties			
Broken/Dropped tack/equipment	Broken/dropped tack or décor	Max -5 pts	
Collision	Horse & rider's collide	Max -15 pts	
Fall	Horse &/or rider falls	Max -10 pts	
Doesn't meet time requirement -	Under 8 min or over 12 min	-3 /minute	
Music Timing	Music ends before/after drill	-3	
Regroup	Team stops to regroup	-10	
Point totals:			Max 200 points

Flag Team

Training Center Dates - To Be Determined

Optional to drill team members (present and former)

- Must complete a skills evaluation with a flag
- Must be able to ride and control a horse one handed (Training centers must be attended)
- Team presents our colors during the National Anthem at the start of each show day during our fair or other agreed upon events
 - Riders may choose any or all days of fair they would like to participate in
- Pattern remains the same yearly for ease of participation
- Attire-White long sleeve shirt, blue jeans (rider provided) along with a red bandana, red saddle pad cover and red leg wraps (provided by the horse project)
- Respect for the flag: Flag should never touch the ground unless in an emergency situation

General Performance/Practice Rules

- Captain performs whistle cues during practices and performances
 - **At Start:** 1-get ready, 2-go
 - **During Routine:** 1-change formation
- Listen for instruction
- Be flexible and accept that your “spot” or “position” may change from session to session
- When trotting the rider should “sit” the trot–No posting
- If you make a mistake do not stop (unless an emergency situation), catch up or improvise to the next formation
- Do not stop unless the whole group is told to stop
- Do not pull out of line unless it is to avoid a collision

Basic Terms

- **Caller**-is Captain/captains, has whistle and signals routine start and formation changes
- **Formation**-a specific pattern performed as a group
- **Transition**-a maneuver to setup for the next formation in the routine
- **Rate Your Speed**- refers to asking the rider to either slow down or speedup to keep proper spacing
- **Open Formation**-Single file line horses about one horse length apart. When rider looks through the ears of their horse, they should see the fetlock of the horse in front of them
- **Closed Formation**-Single file line of horses about 3 feet apart. When rider looks through the ears of their horse they should see the top of the tail of the horse in front of them
- **Pivot Point**-inside rider when performing a whip
- **Flanker**-Person on the end/ends of a line
- **Stay Abreast**-all horses moving forward in a straight line (breast of horse inline)
- **Tricycling**-one person in front of or behind a “pair” of riders

Safety Considerations

- Use closed reins
- Learn and practice emergency one rein stop
- Be aware of horse’s body language and close contact to avoid potential mishaps
 - No kicking, biting, bucking or rearing (If your horse threatens to kick out drive it forward)
- We urge that horse and rider have the ability to perform items on the Skills Evaluation checklist PRIOR to signing up for the drill team. We are here to assist riders and horses accomplish any and all of these items.

Skills Evaluation Checklist

The horse and rider should have the ability to perform the items below PRIOR to signing up for the drill team, in addition to the following safety considerations.

- Using closed reins
- Learning and practicing emergency one rein stop
- Being aware of horse's body language and close contact to avoid potential mishaps
 - No kicking, biting, bucking or rearing (If your horse threatens to kick out drive it forward)

Rider Name:

Horse Name:

Ground		
	Leading the horse at a walk	
		Is the youth on the correct side?
		Is the youth between the head and shoulder?
		Is the youth holding the lead rope properly?
	Leading the horse at the trot	
		Does the horse trot for the youth?
		Is the youth able to stay between the head and shoulders at a trot?
	Stop the horse and ask the horse to backup two steps	
		Is the youth to the side of the horse?
		Does the youth check to see that nothing is behind the horse?
		Does the horse attempt to back up?
Mounted		
	Walk the horse from Point A to Point B	
		Is the rider asking the horse correctly?

		Does the horse respond?
		Is the horse calm?
	Stop the horse completely and stand for 5 seconds	
		Does the horse and rider stop safely?
		Does the horse stand still?
	Back the horse at least 2 steps	
		Does the horse try?
		Is the horse agitated?
		Is the rider safe?
	Walk the horse in a figure 8 pattern	
		Does the horse turn (guide) well?
	Trot the horse in a figure 8 pattern	
		Does the horse trot and turn well?
	Perform a one rein stop	
		Does the horse flex and stop moving its feet?
Senior Team		
	Lope a figure 8 with a simple lead change	
		Does the horse lope each direction?
		Is the horse safe and controlled at a lope?
Comments/Considerations		

Horse Drill Team Dates

WHAT	WHEN	WHERE	WHO
Drill Team Presentation at Horse Project Meeting	Sunday, January 25 at 5PM	Barron County Government Center Auditorium	All Horse Project Members
Sign-up for Senior Team (State Competition) Horse Project Member Meeting	Sunday, February 22 2026 at 5PM	Barron County Government Center Auditorium	All Horse Project Members
			Drill team sign up for senior team state competition by February meeting if 8 to 10 riders committed
Last Chance Drill team Sign-up Horse Project Member Meeting *FINAL DEADLINE paperwork and forms	Sunday, May 3 2026 at 5PM	Barron County Government Center Auditorium	All Horse Project Members
			**Drill Team Last Chance Sign-up
Drill Team Practice Nights (6PM-8PM)	Sunday, May 17 & 24 (6PM)	May Locations will be communicated, June/July at Horse Arena Barron County Fairgrounds	Drill team--training centers begin with individual and group skills evaluations and introduction to drill patterns (Cogglins/Registration must be on file with Horse Project)
	Wed. June 3		
	Sun/Wed June 7 & 10		
	Sun/Wed June 14 & 17		
	Sun/Wed June 21 & 24		
	Sun/Wed June 28/July 1		
	Sun/Wed July 5 & 8		
Barron County Fair	July 14 - 19, 2026	Barron County Fairgrounds	Check Fair Schedule for show times
State Fair Drill Team Practice Dates 6PM-8PM Tentative	August 2 and Aug 5?	Barron County Fairgrounds	Senior Drill TEam
Wisconsin State Fair	Sunday, August 10, 2025	Wisconsin State Fairgrounds, Milwaukee	Senior Drill Team State Fair

**Website for current information:
barron.extension.wisc.edu/4h/horse**

Drill Team Contact Info: Suzette Byhre 715-651-9759

Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the 4-H Drill Team information as written in the Barron & Rusk County 4-H Drill Team Guide. I agree to follow all safety guidelines and rules of the Barron & Rusk County 4-H Drill team, the Barron County 4-H Horse Project, my County 4-H program, and Wisconsin 4-H.

Youth Name (printed)

Youth Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Name (printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date