# Who Boxed the Best?

Competition rules | Horse first. Always.

*It is not just about getting your horse into the box. It is about how you get there.*

## 01 / Objective

Demonstrate a calm, confident and harmonious loading experience. The emphasis is on willingness rather than obedience through force.

- Minimal use of equipment and training aids.
- Minimal signs of stress, fear and anxiety.
- Minimal application of pressure.
- Clear and considerate communication.
- Trust and confidence between horse and handler.
- Safe and efficient completion of the task.

## 02 / Test procedure

**1.** Start approximately three metres from the entrance of the horsebox.

**2.** The horse must begin from a stationary position.

**3.** The handler initiates loading using a permitted method of communication.

**4.** The horse enters willingly, with all four hooves inside and clear of the ramp.

**5.** The horse remains calmly inside for at least five seconds.

**6.** Recording continues until the test is complete.

**Timing:** begins when the handler first asks the horse to approach and ends when all four hooves are fully inside. The five-second settling period is assessed separately.

**Maximum duration:** five minutes. Stop earlier if the horse becomes uncomfortable or safety is compromised.


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# Safety & equipment

Compulsory requirements for every entry

## 03 / Horsebox and surrounding area

• The horsebox must be correctly and securely attached to a suitable towing vehicle.

• The vehicle must be stationary with the parking brake engaged.

• Position the horsebox on firm, level ground.

• The ramp and floor must be secure and non-slip.

• Clear the surrounding area of objects, structures and obstacles that could cause injury.

• The horsebox must suit the horse’s size and be free from hazards.

• Doors, partitions and fittings must be safely secured in the appropriate loading position.

• The handler must have a safe exit route.

## 04 / Handler safety requirements

• Correctly fitted and fastened equestrian safety helmet.

• Suitable protective footwear with good grip.

• Protective gloves.

• Appropriate clothing that does not restrict movement or create an entanglement hazard.

## 05 / Permitted equipment and training aids

A correctly fitted headcollar, lead rope, suitable protective horse equipment, voice commands, body language and positive reinforcement are permitted. Additional non-aversive aids must be declared and will be considered when assessing assistance.

Liberty loading may be permitted in a safely enclosed environment, provided the handler maintains sufficient control of the horse.

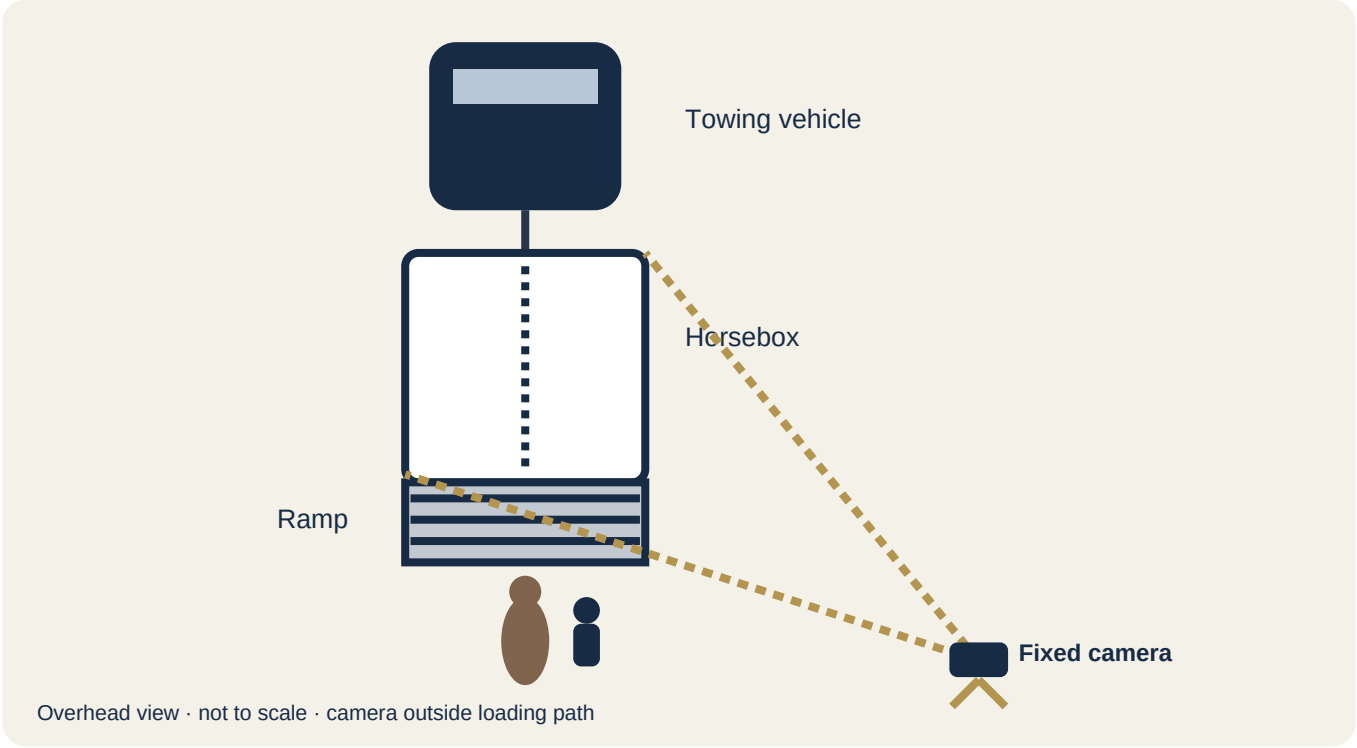
**Safety equipment worn by horse or handler will not reduce the score. Never remove necessary safety equipment to achieve a higher score.**



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# Camera & recording

Fixed rear-diagonal view | Continuous footage




Overhead view · not to scale · camera outside loading path

## 06 / Camera placement and recording requirements

Position the camera diagonally behind the horsebox at approximately 45 degrees, with a clear view of the horse entering completely.

- The camera must remain stationary throughout the test.
- Horse, handler, loading ramp and horsebox entrance must be clearly visible.
- The angle must allow judges to confirm complete entry.
- The towing vehicle and secure attachment must be verified before the test.
- Record continuously: no editing, cuts, speeding up or slowing down.
- Retain original audio; no filters or music may be added.
- All equipment used must be visible.


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# Judging & results

100 points | Welfare before speed

## 07 / Judging criteria

**Calmness and emotional wellbeing** — **30 points**

Relaxed body language, willingness, confidence and minimal visible anxiety.

**Minimal pressure and force** — **25 points**

Light cues, appropriate release, patience and absence of excessive pressure.

**Communication and connection** — **20 points**

Clear requests, mutual understanding and responsiveness.

**Minimal additional equipment** — **15 points**

Minimal reliance on extra aids without compromising safety.

**Time and efficiency** — **10 points**

Smooth, purposeful and timely completion without rushing.

Judges assess body language throughout the test; a stationary or compliant horse is not necessarily relaxed.

## 08 / Disqualification criteria

Excessive force, intimidation or punishment; striking or abusive equipment use; dragging or forcibly pushing the horse; continuing despite significant distress or dangerous behaviour; missing compulsory safety equipment; unsecured or unsuitable horsebox; unsafe loading conditions; moving the camera; edited footage; undeclared external assistance; or compromising horse welfare.

**Stop immediately if the horse or any person is at risk of injury.**

## 09 / Determining the winner

The highest overall score wins. Ties are resolved in this order: calmness and emotional wellbeing, minimal pressure, communication and connection, minimal additional equipment, then completion time.


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# Judges’ score sheet

Who Boxed the Best? | Print one copy per entry

**Competitor name** _____

**Horse name** _____

**Entry number** _____

**Equipment used** _____

**Loading time** _____

**Safety requirements met (Yes / No)** _____

**Recording requirements met (Yes / No)** _____

| Assessment | Maximum | Awarded |
|---|---|---|
| Calmness and emotional wellbeing | 30 | |
| Minimal pressure and force | 25 | |
| Communication and connection | 20 | |
| Minimal additional equipment | 15 | |
| Time and efficiency | 10 | |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | |

## Judges’ comments

HORSE FIRST. ALWAYS.



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