

Eastern Draft Horse Association
Approved Rules and Regulations 2009
Rules to Govern Horse Pulling

1. No horse shall be allowed to enter any pulling contest that is not in good physical condition – meaning properly fed and watered. If deemed not fit to pull you will leave the grounds. All decisions left to the discretion of Superintendent of Pull, plus two or more people.
2. All horse to complete in contest other than Free-For-All teams, shall be weighed in at least three hours and not more than 4 hours before time the first class of the day is to start. Check weighing will be permitted before the three-hour period only. Horses must have halters on while on the scale. All horses will be weighed in the presence of a delegate appointed by the fair, or person who is conducting the contest. The delegate shall present a weigh-bill to the teamster, a copy of which is to be kept by said delegate, certifying the horse's name and description, also the exact time of the weighing. The scale shall be balanced with a man standing on same, this man will hold all horses where possible. The man holding the horses shall be appointed by the delegate if he is unable to do this himself. The weighing certificate must be signed by the delegate. Horses must remain on the fair grounds after weighing into a class.
3. Switching horses – Once a team has been weighed in, there will be no switching of horses. Split owner teams will be allowed to compete.
4. The length of a qualified pull shall be determined by the Superintendent of the Pull.
5. Starting load – Maximum load of approximately 4,000 lbs for all weight classes and approximately 5,000 lbs for Free-for-All classes. Added loads in each class at the discretion of the judges depending on the type of pit. At no time after weight has been **increased may it be decreased.**
6. Pulling positions to be determined by the drawing of numbers just before starting of each class.
7. All teamsters to compete shall have their teams ready at the published time. All classes will close at the completion of the first heat in each class.
8. In any class with 15 teams or more, teamsters would have the option of hooking to the first load or passing it.
9. Open Bridles – Open bridles may be used, but they must be bridles, not halters with bits attached.
10. Time Limit – Three (3) hitches with a time limit of five (5) minutes. Time will be taken out while the boat is positioned for the next hitch. The time will be kept by the announcer, or appointed timekeeper.
11. Heading – There will be no heading of the horses whatsoever. Teams to be driven by one teamster only.
12. Use of Reins – The light use of reins on entry to the pit and while team is making its draw, will be limited to that area from the root of the tail to the bottom of the round, IN A SIDE ARM MOTION ONLY. Hands must be in sight at all times. The use of the reins after the boat has stopped or any place on the grounds is prohibited. No swinging of the reins over horse (twirling of lines).
The use of the section of rein between the driver's hand and the bit may be used lightly to position the horse prior to hitching and to encourage the horse to start.
Interpretation of #11: The use of the reins as a whip is prohibited. The light use of the reins may be used to encourage a horse to pull, however any whipping will result in disqualification.
13. Evener Men – Will not go ahead of the evener and will remain silent. No waving of arms.
14. What constitutes a hitch – 1 inch or more.
15. Breakdown – An actual separation, breaking or bending of equipment shall constitute a breakdown. Chains, straps or eveners not properly secured are not considered a breakdown. In event teamster and/or owner wish credit for the distance boat moved before breakage, it will constitute a hitch.
16. Over the Rail – If a horse's foot strikes dirt outside the rail it constitutes a hitch with no credit for the distance pulled. Teams must remain within the rails while hitched to the boat.
17. Any team deliberately driven over the rail will be disqualified from the contest.

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18. Unhitching After Each Hitch – Each team shall be disconnected from the boat and will leave the pit before entering for the next hitch.
19. Measuring – Starting point of the boat shall be properly marked to indicate same starting point for all loads. All reams will be allowed 3 hitches to qualify the load.
20. All reams shall remain in the ring, at all times, until they are dismissed by the Superintendent.
21. In case of a tie on longest distance, the second longest distance already pulled will take the top placing.
22. Changing of Teamsters – No teamster may be changed after pulling the first load in any class except in emergency. Then only when permitted by the judges, with consent of a majority of the other teamsters in that class.
23. Any owner and/or teamster, who has been convicted, or found in violation, of any states statue relating to the use of drugs or stimulants shall be barred from participating in any contest, in any state, for the period prescribed by that state.
24. Unmanageable or Runaway Teams – If any team breaks away from the driver it will be eliminated from the contest and forfeits any premiums earned up to that time. If a team runs away due to a breakdown of equipment, the team will receive ant premiums allotted to the placing they earned in the class prior to the runaway. The judge has the option to allow a team that ran away due to the breakdown to return depending on the circumstances.
25. Appearance – All participates will be properly dressed.
26. Language – All effort shall be made to use proper language in and around the ring.
27. Drinking – Any participant under the influence of liquor will be disqualified from the contest. The drinking of intoxicating beverages in and around the ring is prohibited.
28. Authorized Persons in the Ring – The pit personnel and the owners or his agent only. Only one (1) teamster and two (2) helpers allowed in front of the Runaway bar, except in case of breakdown or injury. A;; authorized persons in the ring will be free of any physical impairments that might hinder their ability to escape in a timely fashion should an emergency arise.
29. Interference of Evener Men – No assistance other than hitching, no waving of hands, no chirping.
30. Changing of classes – Classes shall be a publicized only.
31. New York State Horse Pullers Association rules to govern contests conducted on a dynamometer. Except NY rule #3 will not apply.
32. The use of any devise deemed by the judges or superintendent of the pull, likely to cause harm or abuse to a horse will not be allowed.
33. Any situations that may arise and are not covered by these rules, the decision will be left to the discretion of the judges.
34. Any variation of these rules shall be in the spirit of aforesaid rules and at the discretion of the judges.
35. Pit Care – The pit will be covered the day before the draw, where it is possible.
36. Behavior of all horsemen (driver and helpers alike) to be above reproach at all times OR DISCIPLINARY ACTION BY THE JUDGES WILL BE TAKEN. ANYONE DISPUTING THE DECISION OF THE JUDGES WILL BE IMMEDIATELY DISQUALIFIED.
37. FURTHER DISCIPLINARY ACTION MAY BE TAKEN BY THE EASTERN DRAFT HORSE ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS. THIS MAT BE BY SUSPENSION FROM FURTHER CONTESTS FOR A GIVEN PERIOD OF TIME OR BY ENFORCING A FINE (OR BOTH).
38. Any and all judges for EDHA contests must follow the exact rules as written in the Eastern Draft Horse Association.
39. Teams in the top four positions must pull until a winner is determined. However, owners with more than one team would not have to pull against themselves.