



Rules you maybe didn't know...

Holly Grayton

[Back to Articles...](#)

RULES YOU MAYBE DIDN'T KNOW

There are a few things about the competition warm up ring that should be pretty obvious:

Pass oncoming riders in the warm up ring left shoulder to left shoulder (the same as when driving a car), and if you aren't going to or can't do that for some reason, then call it out loud and clear what you're planning to do that is out of the ordinary.

The person jumping has the right of way: this means they may pass you on your right in order to stay inside the crowd to get to the jump. This also means that there should be no circling in front of the jumps, especially when someone is coming to it. This goes for the riders going to the jumps too – no circling out in front of the jumps in case someone is coming to the next jump over!

Red flags are always on the right side of the jump. We in Canada subscribe to the theory that we should only go one way to the jumps in the warm up ring, so the small red flag on the top of the jump standards should stay on the right side while heading over the jump to ensure the proper direction.

A horse with a red ribbon in its tail indicates that this horse will kick. If you get too close, come up too fast behind or generally squish this horse, you can expect to see a hoof or two heading your way quickly! Best to stay clear of these horses, and if you have one of these types, put a red ribbon in the tail!

These few rules can be summed up by generally being courteous, yield the right of way to people doing the jumping and stay away from trouble!

There are of course some finer details that should also be mentioned.

There are specific tack rules for certain classes that you should be aware of. It is your job as the rider to know the rules. Yes, your trainer should also tell you, but as a competitor it's on you to familiarize yourself with what you can and cannot wear in each class and at the end of it all, it's your time and money on the line.

When at a Equestrian Canada competition that is rated Gold or Platinum, riders must wear beige or white breeches in every class (including on Wednesday). This rule slides a lot, but it's a personal pet peeve. We are here to show! So let's dress up like we mean it.

Some competitions have posted orders of go, others allow for signing up. Regardless of how the orders are made, show up on time! This is one of the hard and fast rules at top shows, and it should be more strictly enforced at the smaller shows and smaller rings. Conflicts between rings



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[Back to Articles...](#)

can happen, so prepare early in the day and communicate with the in-gate staff so they can help. Quite simply, it's rude to keep fellow competitors (and the whole show) waiting!

Getting a jump in the warm up ring can seem tricky – it's an intense place, and some people like to get ready really early while others don't even get on until they nearly have to be in the ring. So rather than concerning yourself with what everyone else is doing, just rely on the math of the situation to claim your jump. If there are three warm up jumps and you are 5 out then you find the rider who is in 2 and wait for that jump (5 out – 3 jumps = 2nd rider's jump).

You aren't entitled to bump someone down because your horse is 'special' or your rider is nervous or you took a jump when it wasn't taken for whatever reason and you are 10 away. You can ask the people who are mathematically entitled to the jump if they'll share, but otherwise it is theirs.

It has to be that way to keep it fair. If you or your horse need to school earlier or when it's quiet, then consider doing so during the course walk or much earlier in the day.

With all of this said, don't be the person that shows up when you're 2 away and disrupt everyone else's warm up – be organized, like the people already out in the ring!

When in the warm up ring, consider the other people in the ring. Texting while riding or talking on the phone can be dangerous. Always keep the warm up ring strictly for the warming up. Walking around the outside of the ring two across chatting with a friend is much the same – most shows have a nice coffee stand to catch up with friends!

The unwritten yet important rules of competitions and warm up rings are really mostly common sense. Be a nice person and treat it seriously!