

## 5 Biggest Mistakes Show Riders Make

Have you been watching a show and noticed that some riders continue to win and place and others seem to do all right things but never place. Points are important and there could be a one point difference between first and second place. Don't throw points away on simple things that can net you a first place ribbon or championship.

Most judges award points or score hunter rounds based on a score of 100. A summary of the scores are generally found as follows:

### SCORES:

- 90-100 Excellent
- 80-89 Good to Very Good/or an excellent horse with minor mistakes
- 70-79 Average/or a good horse with minor mistakes
- 60-69 Poor or a below average performance with minor mistakes, no major faults
- 50-59 One Major Fault: Hind Knockdown, Adding astride in an In & Out
- Very bad fence, Dropping a leg, Trotting on course, Cross canter
- 40-49 Serious Major Fault: Front Knockdown, Refusal, Extremely dangerous jumping
- 30-39 Two or more serious faults
- 10-29 Very Unsafe and dangerous; but avoids elimination
- 0 Elimination



Laura is a [Senior Judge](#) and knows that riders make mistakes that can lose the class for them. With a little foresight and some knowledge these mistakes can be avoided.

### 1. Not being prepared

Preparation is important. Doing your homework and training will give you the edge on show day. Being prepared is more than rising to the occasion on show day. It is important to understand the requirements of the class and rules or specifications of the division. So often people enter shows on a lark and hope for the best. Be prepared and show your horse on show day.



## 2. Not knowing the course

This is a big mistake and once you have arrived at the show there is no reason for you to go off course. Sometimes courses can be challenging and require special attention. Usually they flow from one jump to the next.

If you have trouble remembering your course then take some extra time to study the diagram and watch some riders. Watching other riders may help you remember the course. This is of course important to remember that the riders you are watching are doing the same course as you.

## 3. Using your voice

Nothing draws attention to a mistake like using your voice. An otherwise excellent round can be marked down a few points by an unnecessary ‘cluck’ or a misplaced ‘whoa’.

## 4. Beginning circle/ End Circle



Remember the judging starts the minute your horse enters the ring and continues until you leave the ring. Beginning with a proper prepatory circle is key. If you begin and your horse goes on the wrong lead, bucks or misbehaves these things will all be judged against you.

A judge may forgive an error in a green horse class but if the horse is jumping in a competition should it not know its leads? If a horse gets the wrong lead right at the beginning of the class, how will the judge forget that the horse/rider missed a lead.

## 5. Turn out

Remember that your round starts from the moment you enter the ring until you exit the ring. This has a bearing on your performance. As you enter the ring the judge will immediately form an opinion of you and your horse.

The old saying you ‘only have one chance to make a good first impression’ is very true in the hunter ring. This means that fresh braids, not over night braids.

