



# LAWN TRACTOR



**ALABAMA 4-H**  
Alabama Cooperative  
Extension System

Lawn Tractor gives you a chance to show what you know about the care and operation of compact or garden tractors and riding mowers, lawn care, business management, and safety.

## What You Will Learn

- Learn safety on and around lawn tractors.
- Develop skills in mowing different size and contours of lawns.
- Identify lawn care problems and how to handle those problems
- Develop business skills so you can set up a service to help others.

## Rules for Lawn Tractor

1. Compete by yourself. This is not a team event.
2. The written exam is 20 minutes and will consist of at least 20 questions. The exam is made up of questions about tractor operation, maintenance, safety, and lawn management.
3. The Identification of Lawn Mower Parts portion is 15 minutes. At least 10 and no more than 25 numbered items will be identified by each contestant. The items will include compact tractor parts and lawn care equipment.
4. The Identification of Grasses and Weeds portion is 15 minutes. Identify at least five common Alabama grasses and weeds.
5. The lawn tractor driving portion gives 4-H members an opportunity demonstrate their skills in the operation of lawn and garden tractors. Safe work habits and safe equipment operation are stressed throughout the event. There is a time limit of 8 minutes to complete the course.
6. Closed-toe and closed-heel shoes must be worn for safety.

Refer to Alabama 4-H Competitive Events on the Alabama Extension website ([www.aces.edu](http://www.aces.edu)) to review the Competitive Events General Policy and the Age & Eligibility Chart.

## LEVELS OF COMPETITION

### Junior Level I:

9 to 11 years old on December 31 of the current calendar year (compete only at local and regional levels).

### Intermediate:

12 to 13 years old on December 31 of the current calendar year (compete only at local and regional levels).

### Senior Level I:

14 to 15 years old on December 31 of the current calendar year.

### Senior Level II:

16 to 18 years old on December 31 of the current calendar year.

## The Day of the Event

Each county or region will schedule its own Lawn Tractor competition. It may be part of a County Round-Up or Regional/Area Congress.

Designated judges will preside over the event and their decision will be final. Contestants must abide by the rules and requirements. Any judge may disqualify a contestant because of unsafe practices or for acts unbecoming a 4-H member. A contestant will accumulate penalty points by adding the points missed in each part of the contest. Each participant will be given a few minutes to study and get acquainted with the machine and its controls. The tractor may be operated in the immediate area of the contest but not through the course. A lawn tractor will be provided at the contest. Safety is scored throughout the driving part.

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### Disqualification of Entry

- **Unsafe habits and poor operation of the machine will result in disqualification.**
- **Unsafe shoes will result in disqualification.**
- **Senior Level I and II not completing and submitting a community service report.**

### A few steps to remember:

- The first item on the score sheet is a prestart check. You'll complete this according to the contest facilitator's instructions before the contest begins. You will then mount the tractor and let the judge know you're ready to begin driving.
- Using what you have learned from your review of the course diagram and the contest facilitator's instructions, enter the course. Remember to be safe. One of the judges will put an obstacle in front of the machine to test your alertness and reaction to unsafe conditions. This will be done at random points in the course and will be done only one time for each participant.
- Continue through the course to the finish point, which represents a shed for the machine. You will back the machine into this location, turn it off, and dismount. The judge may ask you to move the lawn tractor back to the starting line for the next participant.

## Community Service

Telling a great story, showcasing projects at a community library, speaking at the local nursing home or organizing a community cooking or a building block workshop are great opportunities to serve others. Serving others helps build your academic skills, learn civic responsibility, and develop leadership. It may also give you a good opportunity to meet new people, publicize 4-H, and practice your communication skills. Alabama 4-H is now requiring all Senior Level 4-H members to add a community service component to all 4-H Competitive Events. Each Senior Level 4-H member will have to complete the 4-H Community Service Report as a part of their project. 4-H members will be disqualified if the community service report is not included.

It is important that you decide what service you can provide, not have a parent or 4-H leader make this decision for you. Groups of young people are encouraged to work together to discover how they can serve their community.

### Career Connections

**Skills that are developed through this project have direct connections to exciting and rewarding careers. These include lawn care service and maintenance, landscape designs, lawn mower repair, and others.**



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## Score Sheet

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ Region: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Level: \_\_\_ Junior (Age 9-11) \_\_\_ Intermediate (Age 12-13) \_\_\_ Senior I (Age 14-15) \_\_\_ Senior II (Age 16-18)

### Driving: (Penalty Points)

Type of Penalty	Times of Penalty	Penalties
Each stop or interruption in the continuous movement of the machine, where not required by the course	<b>x 10</b>	
Each reverse change of direction other than necessary.	<b>x 10</b>	
Each occurrence where any part of the machine extends over the boundaries of the course.	<b>x 10</b>	
Each occurrence of hitting a marker.	<b>x 20</b>	
Each occurrence of knocking a marker over.	<b>x 40</b>	
Riding the clutch: Continuously	<b>x 100</b>	
Riding the clutch: Occasionally	<b>x 10</b>	
Each grating of gears.	<b>x 10</b>	
Each engine stalled or raced	<b>x 10</b>	
Each failure to follow directions	<b>x 5</b>	
Each marker passed when operating outside of the two inches allowed mowing around the curb.	<b>x 10</b>	

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### Measurements: (Penalty Points)

Type of Penalty	Times of Penalty	Penalties
Inches (to the nearest inch) from the stop-stake over 1-inch (measured from the most forward part of the tractor)	x 2	
Inches (to the nearest ½ inch) the tractor is off center in the shed.	x 2	
Time in excess of 8 minutes. 100 points.		

**Disqualifications:** Check the appropriate box.

- Unsafe practices operating the tractor
- Not following the instructions given by the contest facilitator or judge
- Wearing shoes that are not closed toed and closed heeled

### Lawn Tractor Operation Course

