



January 2024 - 2025

## *Dressage Guidelines*



Dressage is derived from the French term meaning "training" and its purpose is to strengthen and supple the horse while maintaining a calm and attentive demeanor. Dressage involves progressively difficult levels incorporating multiple tests within each level. Each test is a series of movements that must be performed by the horse and rider. Each movement is scored by a judge on a scale of 0-10.

This show will have both classic and western Dressage. Animals competing in the Dressage Division must be enrolled as a project animal, and may be the same animal used for Performance, Junior Horse, Competitive Trail, or may be additional animals. This animal does not have to be the same animal used in other projects.

Refer to the current *Pennsylvania 4-H Horse Show Rule Book* for other details and requirements for classes offered. Show management should also refer to *Pennsylvania 4-H Horse Show Management Guidelines* for safety and other considerations when planning 4-H horse shows.

### **Goals for riding Dressage in the PA 4-H Horse Program**

- Develop life skills in youth, including responsibility, teamwork, critical thinking, sportsmanship and positive attitudes of self-worth
- Learn principles of effective communication and movements with your project horse
- Master skills necessary to perform a series of movements incorporated into Dressage tests in order to successfully progress to higher levels
- Incorporate skills mastered to all disciplines, riding styles and uses



## **Descriptions of Levels for Classical Dressage**

### **Introductory Level**

Introductory Level Tests provide an opportunity for the horse and/or rider new to dressage to demonstrate the elementary skills. All trot work is to be ridden rising. The rider should maintain light but steady contact except at the free walk, in which the horse is allowed complete freedom to lower and stretch out its head and neck. The tests have been designed to encourage correct performance and to prepare the horse for transition to USEF tests.

### **Training level**

Training Level introduces the rider and horse to the basic principles of dressage competition. This level requires “obedience” to the aids of the rider without fight or evasion when ridden on light contact. The rider is searching for free, rhythmic, and forward movement. The horse should be relaxed and obedient, stretching into the bit in a calm, receptive manner.

### **First level**

First Level determines that the correct foundation is being laid for successful training of the riding horse. The horse should move forward freely in a relaxed manner and with rhythm. First Level tests require not only the “obedience” and “relaxation” qualities of the Training Level, they require that the horse shows “soft response” to the aids. Examples of this are softening of the lower jaw, some flexion at the poll, lateral bending, lengthening at the trot and canter, and quiet transitions.

### **Riders Choice**

Riders at more advanced levels may choose their tests from this division. Tests may be chosen for this division from Second Level, test 1 through Fourth Level. Tests must still be consecutive. Riders should choose tests they are proficient in. Riders will be entered in the classes they have chosen on their entry form.

### **Equestrians with Disabilities (EWD)**

EWD riders must choose from the most current Special Olympics tests, C1 (Walk) Tests 1 and 2, B1(Walk/Trot) Tests 1 and 2, A1 (Walk/Trot/Canter) Tests 1 and 2, or may request reasonable accommodations for higher tests. Special Olympics tests are available here in the guidelines. Special Olympics tests will be ridden in a Small Arena (20m x 40m)



## **Descriptions of Levels for Western Dressage**

### **Introductory Level**

Tests provide an introduction to the discipline of Western Dressage; the horse performs only at the gaits of walk and jog. The rider may sit or post the jog. The rider should demonstrate correct basic position, use of basic aids, and understanding of the figures. The horse should show relaxation and harmony between the rider. The horse accepts the aids and influence of the rider. The jog should be a natural gait within the horse's scope and should demonstrate a swinging back.

### **Basic Level**

Basic tests confirm that the horse is supple and moves freely forward in a clear and steady rhythm, accepting light contact with the bit. The horse demonstrates a greater understanding of the aids and calm acceptance of the bridle; greater emphasis is placed on relaxation, willing cooperation, harmony, rideability and pure gaits. The horse is beginning to develop more impulsion and balance.

### **Level 1**

Tests confirm that the horse is building on the elements from lower levels and is developing more engagement to show sufficient impulsion as the lengthened jog and lope are performed. The horse demonstrates a more consistent light contact with the bit. These tests introduce some collection and lateral and longitudinal balance, suppleness, and emphasize harmony and rideability.

### **Riders Choice**

Riders at more advanced levels may choose their tests from this division. Tests may be chosen for this division from Level 2, test 1 through Level 4. Tests must still be consecutive. Riders should choose tests they are proficient in. Riders will be entered in the classes they have chosen on their entry form.

### **Equestrians with Disabilities (EWD)**

EWD riders must choose from the most current Special Olympics tests, C1 (Walk) Tests 1 and 2, B1(Walk/Trot) Tests 1 and 2, A1 (Walk/Trot/Canter) Tests 1 and 2, or may request reasonable accommodations for higher tests. Special Olympics tests are available here in the guidelines. Special Olympics tests will be ridden in a Small Arena (20m x 40m)



Equestrian Sport Rules



**EQ LEVEL CI DRESSAGE (WALK) TEST #1**

Competition: \_\_\_\_\_

Bib #: \_\_\_\_\_

Level: CI \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Rider: \_\_\_\_\_

Horse Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Delegation: \_\_\_\_\_

Scale of Marks:

Errors on Course:

- 10 Excellent                      9 Very Good    8 Good
- 7 Fairly Good                    6 Satisfactory 5 Sufficient
- 4 Insufficient                    3 Fairly Bad    2 Bad
- 1 Very Bad                        0 Not Executed

- First Error    0.5 percentage points
- Second Error 1.0 percentage points
- Third Error   Elimination

	TEST	MARKS	POINTS	COEF.	TOTAL	REMARKS
1	A X Enter in Walk Halt, Imobility, Salute	10				
2	C Track Left	10				
3	E Circle Left 20 mtr E Straight Ahead	10				
4	FXH Change Rein in Free Walk on a Long Rein	10				
5	H-C-M Walk	10				
6	MF Simple Loop (5 meters)	10				
7	A-K-E Walk E Circle right 20 mtr	10				
8	MXK Change the Rein	10				
9	A X Down centerline Halt, Imobility, Salute	10				

Leave arena in walk.

Collective Marks	MARKS	POINTS	COEF.	TOTAL	REMARKS
Riders Balance + Position	10		X2		
Equestrian Feel and Skill, the Effectiveness of AIDS	10		X2		
The confidence of the Rider and Keeping the Activity of the Horse	10		X2		
Riders Ability to Influence the Direction of the Horse and the Accuracy	10		X2		

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Errors: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage: \_\_\_\_\_



Equestrian Sport Rules



**EQ LEVEL CI DRESSAGE (WALK) TEST #2**

Competition: \_\_\_\_\_

Bib #: \_\_\_\_\_

Level: CI \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Rider: \_\_\_\_\_

Horse Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Delegation: \_\_\_\_\_

Scale of Marks:

Errors on Course:

- 10 Excellent      9 Very Good      8 Good
- 7 Fairly Good      6 Satisfactory      5 Sufficient
- 4 Insufficient      3 Fairly Bad      2 Bad
- 1 Very Bad      0 Not Executed

- First Error      0.5 percentage points
- Second Error      1.0 percentage points
- Third Error      Elimination



	TEST	MARKS	POINTS	COEF.	TOTAL	REMARKS
1	A X Enter in Walk Halt, Immobility, Salute Proceed in Walk	10				
2	C M-X-K K Turn Right in Walk Free Walk on a Long Rein Walk	10				
3	A Walk Continue Down Long Side to C	10				
4	C Circle left 20 mtr	10				
5	H-X-F Change Rein Free Walk on Long Rein	10				
6	A Circle Right 20 mtr	10				
7	A-K-E E Walk Turn Right	10				
8	B Turn Right, Continue to A	10				
9	A X Down centerline Halt, Immobility, Salute	10				

Leave arena in walk.

Collective Marks	MARKS	POINTS	COEF.	TOTAL	REMARKS
Riders Balance + Position	10		X2		
Equestrian Feel and Skill, the Effectiveness of AIDS	10		X2		
The confidence of the Rider and Keeping the Activity of the Horse	10		X2		
Riders Ability to Influence the Direction of the Horse and the Accuracy	10		X2		

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Errors: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage: \_\_\_\_\_



Equestrian Sport Rules



**EQ LEVEL BI DRESSAGE (WALK - TROT) TEST #1**

Competition: \_\_\_\_\_

Bib #: \_\_\_\_\_

Level: B-I \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Rider: \_\_\_\_\_

Horse Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Delegation: \_\_\_\_\_

Scale of Marks:

Errors on Course:

10 Excellent	9 Very Good	8 Good	First Error	0.5 percentage points
7 Fairly Good	6 Satisfactory	5 Sufficient	Second Error	1.0 percentage points
4 Insufficient	3 Fairly Bad	2 Bad	Third Error	Elimination
1 Very Bad	0 Not Executed			

**TEST MARKS POINTS COEF. TOTAL REMARKS**

1	A	Enter Trot	10			
	X	Halt (Over Walk), Immobility, Salute				
	X-C	Procced in Trot				
2	C	Track Right	10			
3	M	Trot	10			
4	B	Circle right 20 mtr,	10			
	B	Trot Straight Ahead				
5	Bt. B&F	Walk	10			
6	KXM	Free Walk on Long Rein	10			
	M	Walk				
7	C	Trot	10			
8	E	Circle Left 20 mtr, Trot	10			
	E	Straight Ahead				
9	A	Down centerline	10			
	X	Halt, Immobility, Salute				

Leave arena in walk.

Collective Marks	MARKS	POINTS	COEF.	TOTAL	REMARKS
Riders Balance + Position	10		X2		
Equestrian Feel and Skill, the Effectiveness of aids	10		X2		
The confidence of the Rider and Keeping the Activity of the Horse	10		X2		
Riders Ability to Influence the Direction of the Horse and the Accuracy	10		X2		

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Errors: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage: \_\_\_\_\_



Equestrian Sport Rules

Special Olympics



EQ LEVEL BI DRESSAGE (WALK - TROT) TEST #2

Competition: \_\_\_\_\_ Bib #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Level: B-I \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Rider: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Horse Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Delegation: \_\_\_\_\_

Scale of Marks: Errors on Course:

10 Excellent	9 Very Good	8 Good	First Error	0.5 percentage points
7 Fairly Good	6 Satisfactory	5 Sufficient	Second Error	1.0 percentage points
4 Insufficient	3 Fairly Bad	2 Bad	Third Error	Elimination
1 Very Bad	0 Not Executed			

	TEST	MARKS	POINTS	COEF.	TOTAL	REMARKS
1	A Enter in Walk X Halt, Immobility, Salute, Proceed in Walk	10				
2	C Track Left H Trot, Continue around the arena to A	10				
3	A Circle Left 20 mtr diameter A F Trot	10				
4	F Walk B Turn Left E Track Right	10				
5	H Trot, continue around the arena to A	10				
6	A Circle right 20 mtr diameter in Trot A Walk	10				
7	K-H Free Walk on Long Rein	10				
8	C Trot, continue around the arena to A	10				
9	A Down centerline X Halt, Immobility, Salute	10				

Leave arena in walk.

Collective Marks	MARKS	POINTS	COEF.	TOTAL	REMARKS
Riders Balance + Position	10		X2		
Equestrian Feel and Skill, the Effectiveness of aids	10		X2		
The confidence of the Rider and Keeping the Activity of the Horse	10		X2		
Riders Ability to Influence the Direction of the Horse and the Accuracy	10		X2		

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Errors: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Percentage: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Judges Signature: \_\_\_\_\_





Equestrian Sport Rules

Special Olympics



EQ LEVEL A DRESSAGE (WALK - TROT - CANTER) TEST #1

Competition: \_\_\_\_\_

Bib #: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: A \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Rider: \_\_\_\_\_

Horse Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Delegation: \_\_\_\_\_

Scale of Marks:

Errors on Course:

10 Excellent	9 Very Good	8 Good	First Error	0.5 percentage points
7 Fairly Good	6 Satisfactory	5 Sufficient	Second Error	1.0 percentage points
4 Insufficient	3 Fairly Bad	2 Bad	Third Error	Elimination
1 Very Bad	0 Not Executed			



	TEST	MARKS	POINTS	COEF.	TOTAL	REMARKS
1	A	Enter Trot	10			
	X	Halt, Immobility, Salute, Proceed in Trot				
	C	Track Right				
2	MF	One Simple Loop (5 Meters)	10			
3	Bt. F&A	Canter right lead	10			
4	E	Circle right 20 meters diameter	10			
5	H	Trot				
6	B	Circle right 20 meters, trot rising, letting the horse gradually take the reins out of hands. Gradually take up the reins. Trot and proceed straight ahead	10	X2		
	Before B					
7	A	Walk	10			
8	KXM	Free walk on a long rein	10	X2		
	M	Walk				
9	C	Trot	10			
10	HK	One Simple Loop (5 Meters)	10			
11	Bt. K&A	Canter left lead	10			
12	B	Circle left 20 meters	10			
13	M	Trot	10			
14	E	Turn Left	10			
	B	Turn Right				
15	A	Down Centerline, Salute	10			
	X	through Walk, Immobility, Salute Halt				

Leave arena in walk.

Collective Marks	MARKS	POINTS	COEF.	TOTAL	REMARKS
Riders Balance + Position	10		X2		
Equestrian Feel and Skill, the Effectiveness of aids	10		X2		
The confidence of the Rider and Keeping the Activity of the Horse	10		X2		
Riders Ability to Influence the Direction of the Horse and the Accuracy	10		X2		

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Errors: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage: \_\_\_\_\_





Equestrian Sport Rules



EQ LEVEL A DRESSAGE (WALK - TROT - CANTER) TEST #2

Competition: _____	Bib #: _____			
Division: A _____	Name of Rider: _____			
Horse Name: _____	Delegation: _____			
Scale of Marks:	Errors on Course:			
10 Excellent	9 Very Good	8 Good	First Error	0.5 percentage points
7 Fairly Good	6 Satisfactory	5 Sufficient	Second Error	1.0 percentage points
4 Insufficient	3 Fairly Bad	2 Bad	Third Error	Elimination
1 Very Bad	0 Not Executed			

	TEST	MARKS	POINTS	COEF.	TOTAL	REMARKS
1	A Enter Trot	10				
	X Halt, Immobility, Salute, Proceed in Trot					
	C Track Left					
2	E Circle left 20 meters diameter	10				
3	Bt. K&A Canter Left Lead	10				
4	A Circle left 20 meters diameter	10				
5	Bt. B&M Trot	10				
6	C Walk	10				
	HXF Free Walk on long rein					
7	F Walk	10				
8	A Trot	10				
9	E Circle right 20 meters diameter	10				
10	Bt. H&C Canter right lead	10				
11	C Circle right 20 meters diameter	10				
12	Bt. B&F Trot	10				
13	A Down centerline	10				
	X Halt, Immobility, Salute					

Leave arena in walk.

Collective Marks	MARKS	POINTS	COEF.	TOTAL	REMARKS
Riders Balance + Position	10		X2		
Equestrian Feel and Skill, the Effectiveness of aids	10		X2		
The confidence of the Rider and Keeping the Activity of the Horse	10		X2		
Riders Ability to Influence the Direction of the Horse and the Accuracy	10		X2		

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_

Errors: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Guidelines for setting the Dressage Ring**

Show management should keep safety as the highest priority. Experienced professionals should be consulted as needed for assistance and guidance when planning a Dressage show or classes at 4-H shows. Dressage tests will be offered for both Classical and Western Dressage.

### **Classical Dressage**

Intro Level-all tests will be ridden in a Small Arena (20m x 40m)

Training Level-all tests will be ridden in a Small Arena (20m x 40m)

First Level-all tests will be in a Standard Arena (20m x 60m)

Riders Choice-all tests will be in a Standard Arena (20m x 60m)

Special Olympics tests-all Special Olympics tests will be ridden in a Small Arena (20m x 40m)

Classical Dressage Tests (2023 tests are effective from 12/1/2022 to 11/30/2026) can be found at:

<https://www.usdf.org/downloads/forms/index.asp?TypePass=Tests>



### **Western Dressage**

Intro Level-all tests will be ridden in a Small Arena (20m x 40m)

Basic Level-all tests will be ridden in a Small Arena (20m x 40m)

Level 1-all tests will be in a Standard Arena (20m x 60m)

Riders Choice-all tests will be in a Standard Arena

Special Olympics tests-all Special Olympics tests will be ridden in a Small Arena (20m x 40m)

Western Dressage Tests (The 2022 WDAA tests will be in effect 2022-2026) can be found at:

<https://www.westerndressageassociation.org/wdaa-tests>



**RIDERS MAY ENTER 2 HORSES, WITH EACH ENTERED IN 2 TESTS. BOTH MAY BE CLASSICAL OR WESTERN. A RIDER MAY ENTER ONE OF EACH IF THEY DESIRE.**

## Glossary of Terms

*This glossary contains specific dressage terminology as well as wording that may be found within judges' remarks on score sheets.*

**Aids-** Signals the rider uses to convey instructions to the horse. There are two types:

1. Natural—The hands through the reins, the rider's legs, the rider's seat and balance, and the voice.
2. Artificial—Whips and spurs.

**Behind the bit, behind the aids, behind the leg-** An evasion in which the horse retracts or shrinks back from the bit/contact, avoiding stepping forward into the contact. The head may or may not be behind the vertical.

**Behind the vertical-** The head position in which the horse's nostril falls behind the imaginary line dropped from the horse's eye (i.e., toward the chest). The horse may or may not be behind the bit.

**Bend-** The laterally arced position in which the horse's body appears to form an even curve from poll to tail. Examples of faulty bend are bending only in the neck, only at the base of the neck, or bent toward the wrong direction.

**Cadence-** A clarity of rhythm in which movements are well marked, rhythmic, and harmonious.

**Cavesson (noseband)-** An adjustable device made of leather used to keep the horse's mouth shut. a dropped noseband, a flash noseband, or a Figure 8 noseband. Nosebands may not contain metal (except buckles).

**Circle-** A round figure, generally in the standard sizes of 20 meters, 15 meters, 10 meters, and 6 meters, with consistent bending of the horse to the inside of the circle from nose to tail. The circle touches the track at only four points, and each quarter circle is the same. (1 meter = 3.3 feet.)

**Collective Marks-** Judging scores awarded after the test is completed for (1) regularity of gaits; (2) impulsion; (3) submission; and (4) the rider's position and seat, correctness, and effect of the aids. Individual tests may have additional collective marks. Collectives are given a coefficient that doubles the score for gaits, impulsion, and submission, and triples the score for rider's position. *\*This process may vary depending on each test and level.*

**Dressage arena-** A rectangular area measuring 20 x 60 meters (standard) or 20 x 40 meters (small). Training level tests are often ridden in the small arena. The arena is enclosed by a low fence, and specific locations are marked by a standard system of letters placed around the outside on markers. The judge sits at C and the rider enters through a removable portion at A. If there is more than one judge, they are placed according to USEF rules.

**Change of rein-** A change of direction; to go around the arena in the opposite direction or to change from one curve to another. The most common way is to change rein across the diagonal.

**Center line-** The imaginary line traveling from A-C in the center of the arena.

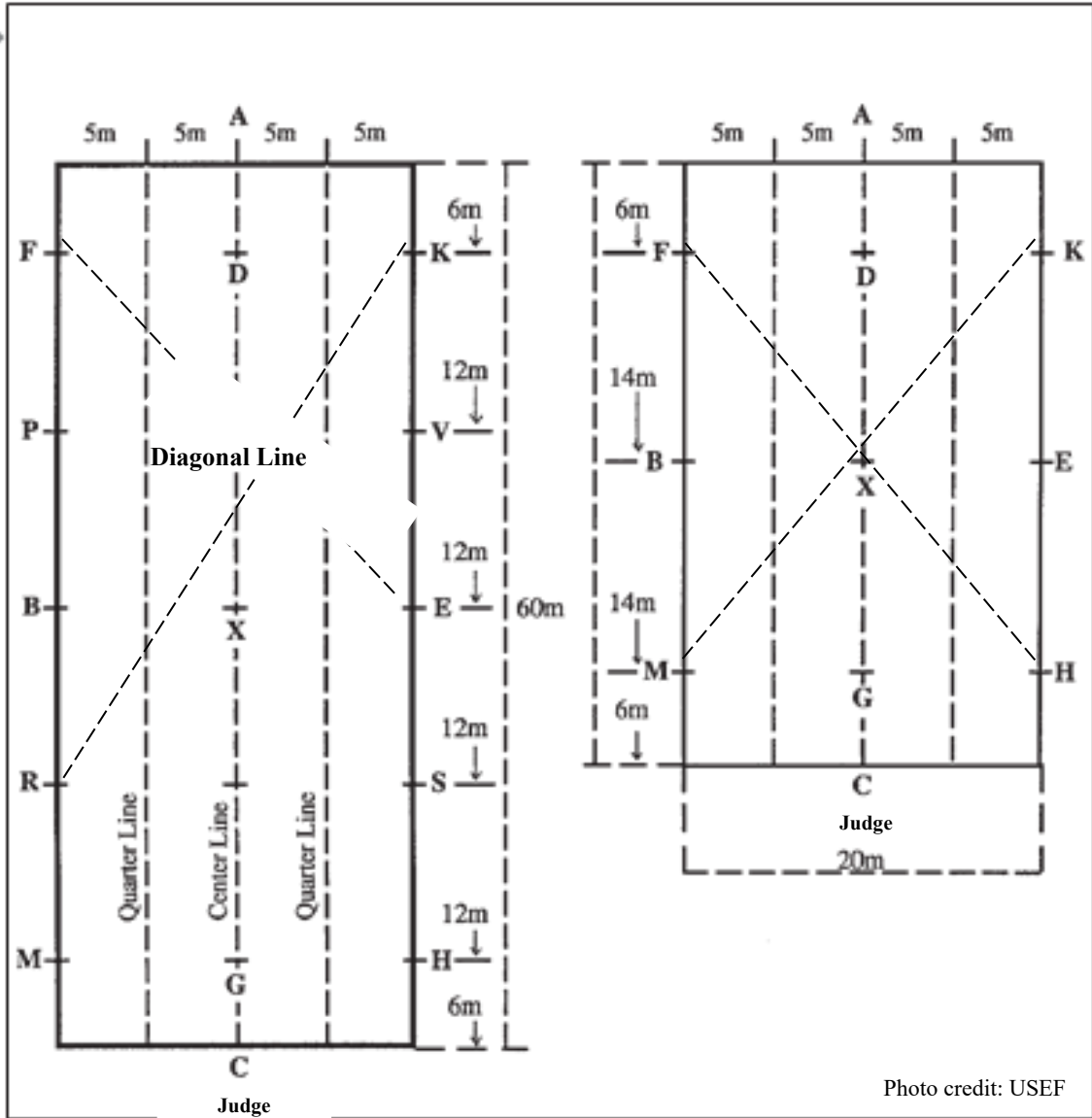


Photo credit: USEF

**Error of the course-** When the rider wrongfully executes the direction of a movement in a test, i.e., takes the wrong turn or omits a movement. A bell or whistle sounds, and the judge shows the rider, if necessary, the point at which the rider must resume the test and the next movement executed. The rider then continues on his/her own. However, it is up to the judge to decide whether to sound the bell or not. Every error is penalized: first time—2 points; second time—4 points; third time—results in elimination; rider may continue the performance to the end, the marks being awarded not to count due to elimination.

**Error of the test-** When a rider wrongly executes a movement, such as rising trot instead of sitting trot, not taking the reins in one hand during the salute, or leaving the arena after the test is completed in another way than prescribed in the test (such as trotting out after completion of the test). If the judge has not noted the error, the rider has the benefit of the doubt. The rider is penalized as for an “error of the course.”

**Extension-** Stretching and lengthening of the topline and stride and, in trot and canter, an increased phase of suspension. The horse covers as much ground as possible with each stride, but maintains the same tempo.

**Free walk-** A pace of relaxation in which the horse is allowed complete freedom to lower and stretch out its head and neck without interference from rein; however, a light contact should be maintained. Free walk on a long rein. The rider maintains light contact with the horse actively seeking the bit.

**Impulsion-** Thrust: the elastic springing of the horse off the ground, beginning in the joints of the haunches flowing into a swinging back and ending in a soft mouth. Impulsion causes very energetic gaits. In order to show impulsion, the horse must be willing to go forward and must travel straight.

**Lateral movements-** Any work on two tracks, such as leg-yielding, shoulder-in, travers, renvers, and half-pass. Used to supple the horse and engage the hindquarters to aid collection.

**Lengthened canter/lope-** While maintaining the same cadence as a working canter, the horse lengthens its steps as a result of increased impulsion from the hindquarters. The rider allows the horse, while remaining on the bit without leaning on it, to lengthen its frame and to gain ground.

**Lengthened trot/jog-** While maintaining the same cadence as a working trot, the horse lengthens its steps as a result of increased impulsion from the hindquarters. The rider allows the horse, while remaining on the bit without leaning on it, to lengthen its frame and to gain ground. The forefeet should touch the ground on the spots toward which they are pointing. The hind feet should overstep the front feet by at least a hoofprint.

**Reading the test by a caller (reader)-** All tests may be called except at any final or championship class. If the tests are announced, it is the responsibility of the competitor to arrange for a person to call the test. Lateness and errors on the part of the caller will not relieve the rider from “error penalties.” Calling is limited to reading the movement exactly as it is written, one time only. Repeating of movements constitutes unauthorized assistance, which is prohibited and is cause for elimination.

**Rhythm-** The order of the footfalls. The beat of the gait. The walk has four beats, the trot has two beats, and the canter has three beats plus suspension.

**Salute-** A movement executed at the halt to signal the beginning and ending of a test. The rider must take the reins and whip in one hand, letting the other arm drop loosely along the body, and then nod the head forward in a slight bow.

**Submission-** The degree of submission is demonstrated by the way the horse accepts the bridle with a light and soft contact and a supple poll, while being responsive to the aids, willing to go forward balanced, and showing acceptance of the task at hand.

**Suppleness-** The physical ability of the horse to shift the point of its equilibrium smoothly forward and back as well as laterally without stiffness or resistance. Suppleness is manifested by the horse's fluid response to the rider's restraining and positioning aids of the rein and to the driving aids of the leg and seat. Best judged in the transitions.

**Suspension-** The moment or phase of the trot or canter in which the horse has no feet on the ground. Tempo The rate of repetition of the rhythm.

**Tempo-** is not synonymous with speed (miles per hour).

**Tracking up/overtracking/overstepping/overstriding-** The hind foot comes down on, or in front of, the print of the forefoot on the same side, at the walk or the trot, as a result of engagement of the hindquarter.

**Transition-** The change from one gait to another. Change of gait and/or speed should be shown clearly at the letter. Gaits should be precise, smooth, and not abrupt. The rhythm of a gait should be maintained up to the moment when the gait is changed or the horse halts. The horse should remain calm and light in hand and should maintain a correct position. Downward. Such as, change canter to trot, or trot to walk. Upward. Such as, change walk to trot, or trot to canter.

**Unevenness-** Irregularity of rhythm or gait whereby one diagonal moves deeper than the other.

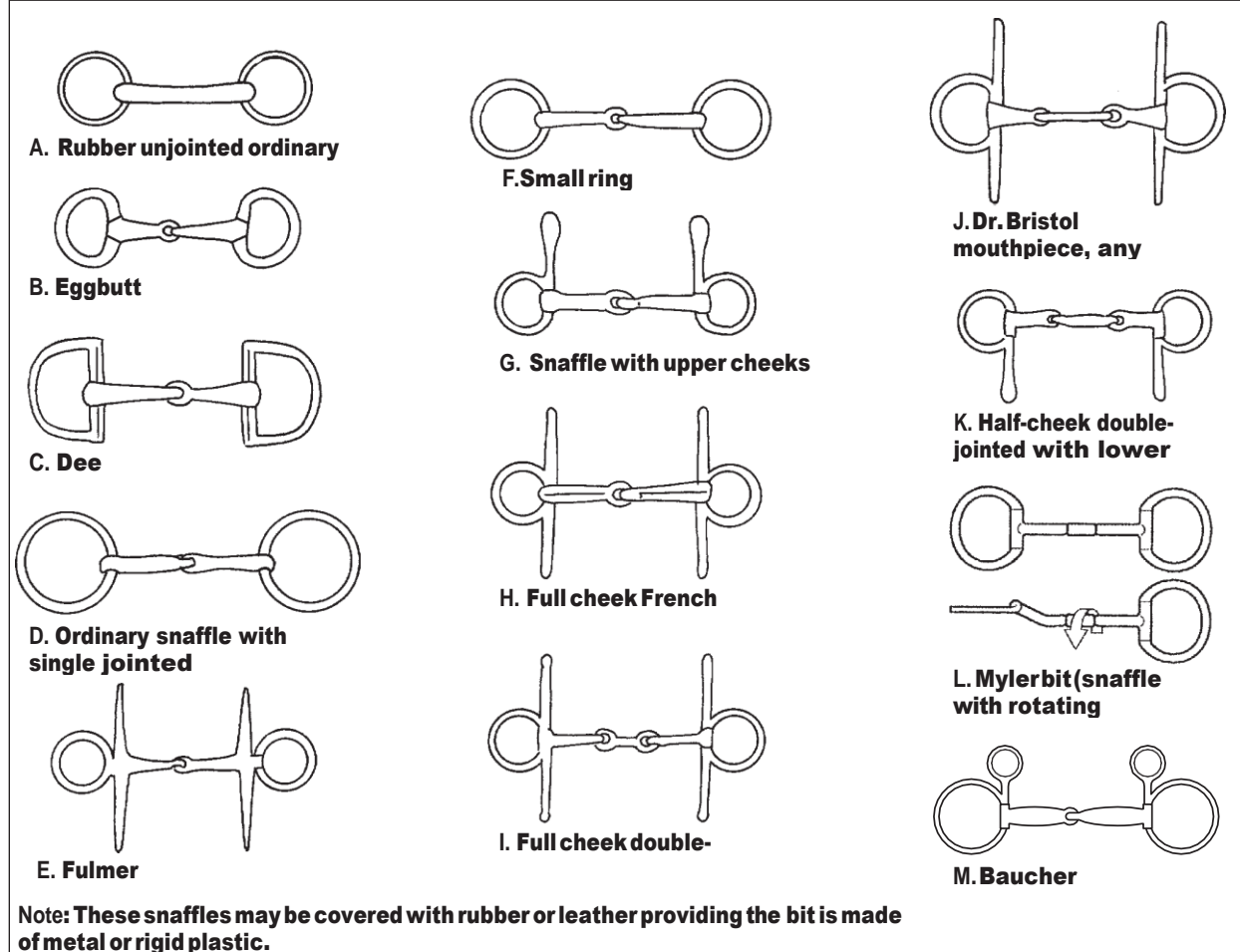
**Voice-** In performing a test, the rider using his or her voice in any way or clicking his or her tongue will result in the deduction of 2 points for each occurrence from the marks that otherwise would have been awarded for the movement.

**Working canter/lope-** A regular canter, in which a horse not yet ready for collected movements shows itself properly balanced and remaining "on the bit," and goes forward with even, light, and cadenced strides and good hock action, with impulsion originating from the activity of the hindquarters.

**Working trot/jog-** A regular trot, in which a horse not yet ready for collected movements shows itself properly balanced and remaining "on the bit," and goes forward with even, elastic steps and good hock action, with impulsion originating from the activity of the hindquarters.

## Equipment

Some examples of permitted snaffles, but not limited to; (Intro through Second Level/Level2)



## Western Bits

A *snaffle bit* may be used on a horse of any age, ridden at any level. All bits must be smooth. Twisted, wire, and roller bits are prohibited. Any standard western curb bit may be used on a horse of any age, ridden at any level. Reins must be attached to each shank. If riding with a snaffle, bosal or hackamore you must use two hands on the reins. If riding with a curb bit you may use one or two hands on the reins. The use of a western cavesson is optional.

*Snaffle bits* in Western classes mean the conventional O-ring, egg-butt or D-ring with a ring no larger than 4". The inside circumference of the ring must be free of rein, curb or headstall attachments, which would provide leverage. The mouthpiece should be round, oval or eggshaped, smooth and unwrapped metal. It may be inlaid, but must be smooth or latex-wrapped. The mouthpiece must be a minimum of 5/16" in diameter when measured 1" from the cheekpiece, with a gradual decrease to the center of the snaffle. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces, which lie flat in the horse's mouth. An optional loose chin strap may be used (leather or nylon only). Reins to be attached above the chin strap.



A *curb bit* has a solid or broken mouthpiece, has shanks and acts with leverage. All curb bits must be free of mechanical device. Shanks may be fixed or loose, and the maximum length should not exceed 8 ½ inches. The mouthpiece must be round, oval or egg shaped, smooth and unwrapped metal, 5/16” to ¾” in diameter, when measured 1” from the cheek piece or shank. Nothing may protrude below the mouthpiece, such as extensions or prongs (including upward prongs) on solid mouthpieces. The mouthpiece may be two or three pieces, which lie flat in the horse’s mouth. The port must not exceed 3 ½” in height, with rollers and covers being acceptable. Broken mouthpieces, half-breeds and spades are permitted. Slip or gag bits, and donut and flat polo mouthpieces are not acceptable.

When a *curb bit* is used in Western classes, a curb strap or curb chain is required (includes Tom Thumb bits). The curb strap or chain must be at least one half inch in width, lie flat against the horse’s jaw, and meet the approval of the judge. A broken strap or chain is not necessarily cause for disqualification. Any bit having a fixed rein that functions with leverage or has a port should be used with a curb chain or strap (i.e. Myler or similar type bits). If riding with a curb bit you may use one or two hands on the reins.

A *bosal* or an appropriate hackamore may be used on a horse of any age, ridden at any level. *The hackamore* must be of a flexible, braided rawhide or leather, or rope bosal, the core of which may be either rawhide or flexible cable. Absolutely no rigid material will be permitted under the jaws, regardless of how padded or covered. A hackamore should be used with a complete mecate rein, which includes a tie rein.

### Some examples of western bits:



**HACKAMORE**  
(Non-mechanical or bosal)



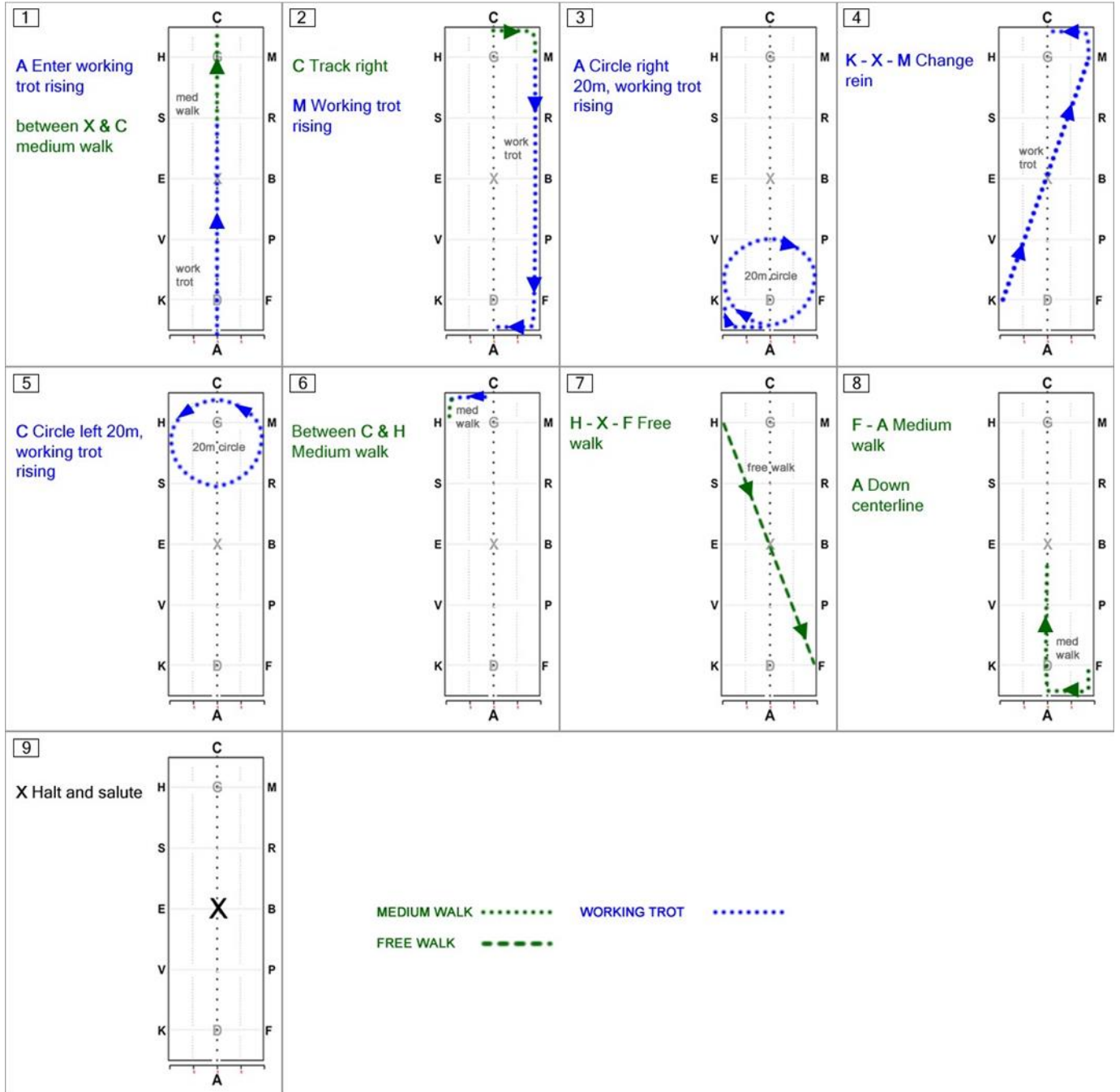
**CURB BIT**



**TOM THUMB**  
Classified as a curb or leverage bit

# Example of How to Ride a Test

## 2019 USDF INTRODUCTORY LEVEL TEST A



## Call Sheet

		Test	Coefficient
1.	A	Enter working trot rising	
	Between X & C	Medium walk	
2.	C	Track right	
	M	Working trot rising	
3.	A	Circle right 20 meters, working trot rising	
4.	K – X – M	Change rein	
5.	C	Circle left 20 meters, working trot rising	
6.	Between C & H	Medium walk	
7.	H – X – F	Free walk	
8.	F – A	Medium walk	
	A	Down centerline	
9.	X	Halt, salute	

## Scoring

During each test each movement is scored on a **0** to **10** scale. The points are totaled and divided by the possible number of points to give you a percentage score.

Points	rating	The Judge's Opinion
10	Excellent	Perfect; no improvement possible (rarely given)
9	Very good	Movement hard to fault, but not quite perfect (rarely given)
8	Good	Outstanding; lovely to watch (occasionally given)
7	Fairly good	Performed nicely, movement above average
6	Satisfactory	Movement correct
5	Marginal/sufficient	Okay, neither good nor bad, noncommittal score
4	Insufficient	Performed but lacking in precision and/or control
3	Fairly bad	No precision, little control or response to aids
2	Bad	No response to aids
1	Very bad	No control
0	Not performed	Rarely given

In addition, for each test, selected movements may be given a coefficient, i.e. they are multiplied by 2 or 3 and added to the marks already totaled for the movements.

### **Collective Marks**

Collective marks are scores for impression of the ride as a whole and may be given a coefficient. They include:

1. Gaits (freedom and regularity)

2. Impulsion (desire to move forward, elasticity of the steps, suppleness of the back, engagement of hindquarters)
3. Submission (attention and confidence; harmony, lightness, and ease of movements; acceptance of the bridle; lightness of the forehand)
4. Rider's position and seat; correctness and effect of the aids

### **Elimination**

1. Fall of horse and or rider
2. Illegal attire
3. Use of illegal equipment
4. Unauthorized assistance; Any intervention by a third party, including members of show management, with the object of facilitating the task of the competitor, including coaching from outside the arena.
5. Third error of the course
6. Horse's tongue tied down
7. Late entry into the arena (must enter within 45 seconds)
8. All four feet of the horse leave the arena during the test
9. Cruelty
10. Marked lameness
11. Resistance of longer than 20 seconds (balking)
12. Concern for safety of rider, other exhibitors, or their entries
13. Performing movements which are not allowed
14. Evidence of blood on a horse in the competition arena or outside the arena
15. Failure to wear correct number

# Example Score Sheet

NO. 4-H

**CONDITIONS:**

Area: Standard or Small

Average Time: 5:00 (Std.) or 4:00 (Small)

Maximum Possible Points: 250

		Coefficient				
	TEST	DIRECTIVE IDEAS	POINTS	#	TOTAL	REMARKS
1 A X	Enter working trot Halt, Salute Proceed working trot	Straightness on centerline, transitions, quality of halt and trot	7		7	STRAIGHT C. LINE IMMOBILE + D. SLIGHTLY ↑ B.I.T
2 C E X	Track left Turn left Circle left 20m	Quality of turns at C and E, quality of trot, roundness of circle	7		7	Bal. TRANS. TROT NICELY 4-WARD - good
3 X B	Circle right 20m Turn right	Quality of trot, roundness of circle, quality of turn at B	7		7	Ditto
4 - A 5	Circle right 20m, developing right lead canter first quarter of circle					
4	(Score for transition)	Calmness and smoothness of depart	6		6	PROMPT - BRACING AGA. HAND
5	(Score for circle)	Quality of canter, roundness of circle, straightness A to E	6		6	nds. more jump HAND. SLIGHTLY E. A-E
6 E-B B	Half circle 20m, near centerline working trot Straight ahead	Quality of canter, trot and bend, balance and smoothness of transition, straightness B to A	7		7	nicely 4-wrd nds TROT STRAIGHT!
7 A	Medium walk	Quality of transition and medium walk	5		5	TRANS. UNBALANCED Tentative TROT - MARK
8 K-B	Free walk	Quality of free walk, straightness, and transition	5 <sup>+</sup>	2	10	Relaxed - nds To MARCH MORE
9 B-M M	Medium walk Working trot	Quality of medium walk and working trot, transitions	6		6	Better m.w. - TRANS Widening
10 - C 11	Circle left 20m, developing left lead canter first quarter of circle					
10	(Score for transition)	Calmness and smoothness of depart	5		5	prompt + Round
11	(Score for circle)	Quality of canter, roundness of circle, straightness C to E	6		6	Jump Better than DIR. nd To maintain STRAIGHT
12 E-B B	Half circle 20m, near centerline working trot Straight ahead	Quality of canter, trot and bend, balance and smoothness of transition, straightness B to C	5		5	Stumbled into TROT Unbal - TROT better! B-C
13 C Before C	Circle left 20m, rising trot, allowing the horse to stretch forward and downward Shorten the reins	Quality of stretch over back, forward and downward into a light contact while maintaining balance and quality of trot	6	2	12	nicely stretch ↓ - nds. To reach 4-wrd more
14 E X G	Half circle 10m to X Straight ahead Halt, Salute	Quality of trot, quality and bend of half circle E-X, straightness on centerline, quality of transition and halt	8		8	nicely Bend + m.w. 1/2 D - STRAIGHT D. ATTENTIVE

Leave arena at A in walk on a long rein

COLLECTIVE MARKS:					
GAITS (freedom and regularity)	5	2	10		Energize walk Canter nds nice jump
IMPULSION (desire to move forward, elasticity of the steps, suppleness of the back, engagement of the hindquarters)	6	2	12		
SUBMISSION (attention and confidence, harmony, lightness and ease of movements, acceptance of the bridle, lightness of the forehead)	6	2	12		BAL!
RIDDER (position and seat, correctness and effect of the aids)	6 <sup>+</sup>	3	18		Legs!!

**FURTHER REMARKS:**

Precisely Ridden, Demo.  
Understanding of Dressage Basics.  
Polish TRANS; use Legs To maintain STRAIGHTNESS +  
Impulsion thru out TEST. Develop your obvious  
potential!! 😊

Subtotal: 149  
Errors: (-)  
Total Points: 149 (Max: 250)  
59.60%

B

## References

### **Publications:**

Oregon State 4-H Dressage Manual

<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/4-h1311.pdf>

February 2009

Dressage Today

656 Quince Orchard Rd.

Gaithersburg, MD 20878-9907

2019 USDF Dressage Test Diagrams Introductory Level

United States Dressage Federation (USDF)

220 Lexington Green Circle, Ste. 510

Lexington, KY 40503

[https://mayidesign.com/dressagetests/2019%20USDF%20INTRO%20LEVEL%20TESTS\\_comp  
lete.pdf](https://mayidesign.com/dressagetests/2019%20USDF%20INTRO%20LEVEL%20TESTS_complete.pdf)

### **Organizations:**

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