EFHKC Dressage Rules

19th Edition, Effective 1 September 2026

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Preamble

The object of Dressage is the development of the horse as a happy athlete in a positive mental & physical state through harmonious education, allowing the horse to be calm, supple, loose and flexible, but also confident, attentive and keen, thus achieving perfect understanding with the rider.

These qualities are revealed by:

- The freedom and regularity of the paces,
- The harmony, lightness and ease of the movements,
- The lightness of the forehand and the engagement of the hindquarters, originating from a lively impulsion,
- The acceptance of the bridle, with throughness without any tension or resistance.

The present Rules for Dressage Events are effective 1 September 2025 and supersede all other versions. They must be read in conjunction with the EFHKC General Rules.

Every eventuality cannot be provided for in these Dressage Rules. In any unforeseen or exceptional circumstances, it is the duty of the President of the Ground Jury in consultation with the Show Organiser to make a decision in a sporting spirit, by approaching as near as possible the intention of the Dressage Rules and the EFHKC General Rules. Should there remain any omissions in the Dressage Rules, such omission shall be interpreted in a manner compatible to the fullest extent with the other provisions of these Dressage Rules and other Rules of the EFHKC, and sporting spirit.

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Code of Conduct

THE FEI CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE WELFARE OF THE HORSE

The EFHKC requires all those involved in national and international equestrian sport to adhere to the FEI Code of Conduct and to acknowledge and accept that at all times the welfare of the Horse must be paramount. Welfare of the Horse must never be subordinated to competitive or commercial influences. The following points must be particularly adhered to:

1. General Welfare:

a) Good Horse management. Stabling and feeding must be compatible with the best Horse management practices. Clean and good quality forage, feed and water must always be available.

b) Training methods.
Horses must only undergo training that matches their physical capabilities and level of maturity for their respective disciplines. They must not be subjected to methods which are abusive or cause fear.

c) Farriery and tack.
Foot care and shoeing must be of a high standard. Tack must be designed and fitted to avoid the risk of pain or injury.

d) Transport.
During transportation, Horses must be fully protected against injuries and other health risks. Vehicles must be safe, well ventilated, maintained to a high standard, disinfected regularly and are driven by competent personnel. Competent handlers must always be available to manage the Horses.

e) Transit.
All journeys must be planned carefully, and Horses allowed regular rest periods with access to food and water in line with current FEI guidelines.

2. Fitness to compete:

a) Fitness and competence.
Participation in Competition must be restricted to fit Horses and Athletes of proven competence. Horses must be allowed suitable rest period between training and Competitions; additional rest periods should be allowed following travelling.

b) Health status.
No Horse deemed unfit to compete may compete or continue to compete, veterinary advice must be sought whenever there is any doubt.

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c) Doping and Medication.
Any action or intent of doping and illicit use of medication constitute a serious welfare issue and will not be tolerated. After any veterinary treatment, sufficient time must be allowed for full recovery before Competition.

d) Surgical procedures.
Any surgical procedures that threaten a competing Horse's welfare or the safety of other Horses and/or Athletes must not be allowed.

e) Pregnant/recently foaled mares.
Mares must not compete after their fourth month of pregnancy or with foal at foot.

f) Misuse of aids.
Abuse of a Horse using natural riding aids or artificial aids (e.g. whips, spurs, etc.) will not be tolerated.

3. Events must not prejudice Horse welfare:

a) Competition areas.
Horses must be trained and compete on suitable and safe surfaces. All obstacles and Competition conditions must be designed with the safety of the Horse in mind.

b) Ground surfaces.
All ground surfaces on which Horses walk, train or compete must be designed and maintained to reduce factors that could lead to injury.

c) Extreme weather.
Competitions must not take place in extreme weather conditions that may compromise welfare or safety of the Horse. Provision must be made for cooling conditions and equipment for Horses after competing.

d) Stabling at Events.
Stables must be safe, hygienic, comfortable, well ventilated and of sufficient size for the type and disposition of the Horse. Washing-down areas and water must always be available.

4. Humane treatment of Horses:

a) Veterinary treatment.
Veterinary expertise must always be available at an Event. If a Horse is injured or exhausted during a Competition, the Athlete must stop competing and a veterinary evaluation must be performed.

b) Referral centres.
Wherever necessary, Horses should be collected by ambulance and transported to the nearest relevant treatment centre for further assessment and therapy. Injured Horses must be given full supportive treatment before being transported.

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c) Competition injuries.

The incidence of injuries sustained in Competition should be monitored. Ground surface conditions, frequency of Competitions and any other risk factors should be examined carefully to indicate ways to minimise injuries.

d) Euthanasia.

If injuries are sufficiently severe a Horse may need to be euthanized on humane grounds by a veterinarian as soon as possible, with the sole aim of minimising suffering.

e) Retirement.

Horses must be treated sympathetically and humanely when they retire from Competition.

5. Education:

The FEI urges all those involved in equestrian sport to attain the highest possible levels of education in areas of expertise relevant to the care and management of the Competition Horse. This Code of Conduct for the Welfare of the Horse may be modified from time to time and the views of all are welcomed. Particular attention will be paid to new research findings and the FEI encourages further funding and support for welfare studies.

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CHAPTER I PACES AND MOVEMENTS

Article 301 – Object and General Principles of Dressage

1. As stated in the Preamble, the object of dressage is the development of the Horse into a happy Athlete through harmonious education.
2. The Horse thus gives the impression of doing, of its own accord, what is required. Confident and attentive, submitting generously to the control of the Athlete, remaining absolutely straight in any movement on a straight line and bending accordingly when moving on curved lines.
3. The walk is regular, free and unconstrained. The trot is free, supple, regular and active. The canter is united, light and balanced. The hindquarters are never inactive or sluggish. The Horse responds to the slightest indication of the Athlete and thereby gives life and spirit to all the rest of its body.
4. By virtue of a lively impulsion and the suppleness of the joints, free from the paralysing effects of resistance, the Horse obeys willingly and without hesitation and responds to the various aids calmly and with precision, displaying a natural and harmonious balance both physically and mentally.
5. In all the work, even at the halt, the Horse must be "on the bit". A Horse is said to be "on the bit" when the neck is more or less raised and arched according to the stage of training and the extension or collection of the pace, accepting the bridle with a light and consistent soft submissive contact. The head should remain in a steady position, as a rule slightly in front of the vertical, with a supple poll as the highest point of the neck, and no resistance should be offered to the Athlete.
6. Cadence is shown in trot and canter and is the result of the proper harmony that a Horse shows when it moves with well-marked regularity, impulsion and balance. Cadence must be maintained in all the different trot or canter exercises and in all the variations of these paces.
7. The regularity of the paces is fundamental to dressage.

Article 302 – The Halt

1. At the halt the Horse should stand attentive, engaged, motionless, straight and square with the weight evenly distributed over all four legs. The neck should be raised with the poll as the highest point and the noseline slightly in front of the vertical. While remaining "on the bit" and maintaining a light and soft contact with the Athlete's hand, the Horse may quietly chew the bit and should be ready to move off at the slightest indication of the Athlete. The halt must be shown for at least 3 seconds. The halt should be shown throughout the salute.
2. The halt is obtained by the displacement of the Horse's weight to the hindquarters by a properly increased action of the seat and legs of the Athlete, driving the Horse towards a

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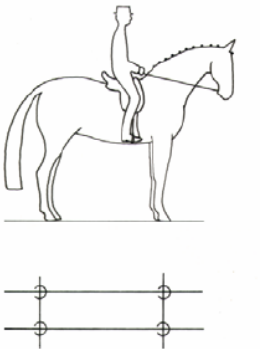
softly closed hand, causing an almost instantaneous but not abrupt halt at a previously fixed place. The halt is prepared by a series of half-halts (see transitions).

3. The quality of the paces before and after the halt is an integral part of the assessment.



Article 303 – The Walk

1. The walk is a marching pace in a regular and well-marked 4-time beat with equal intervals between each beat. This regularity combined with full relaxation must be maintained throughout all walk movements.
2. When the foreleg and the hind leg on the same side move almost on the same beat, the walk tends to become an almost lateral movement. This irregularity, which might become an ambling movement, is a serious deterioration of the pace.
3. The following walks are recognised: Medium walk, Collected walk, Extended walk and Free walk. There should always be a clear difference in the attitude and over tracking in these variations.

    1.1 **Medium walk**. A clear, regular and unconstrained walk of moderate lengthening. The Horse, remaining "on the bit", walks energetically but relaxed with even and determined steps, the hind feet touching the ground in front of the hoof prints of the fore feet. The Athlete maintains a light, soft and steady contact with the mouth, allowing the natural movement of the head and neck.

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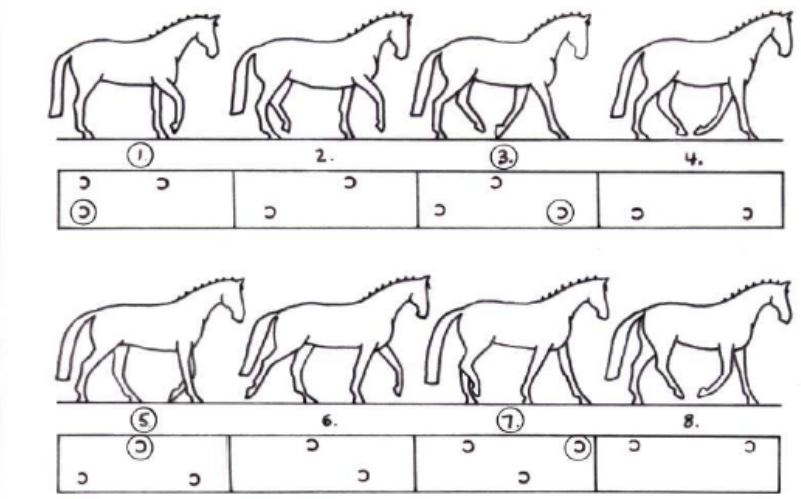
1.2 **Collected walk**. The Horse, remains "on the bit", moves resolutely forward, with its neck raised and arched and showing a clear self-carriage. The head approaches the vertical position and a light contact is maintained with the mouth. The hind legs are engaged with good hock action. The pace should remain marching and vigorous, the feet being placed in regular sequence. The steps cover less ground and are higher than at the medium walk, because all the joints bend more markedly. The collected walk is shorter than the medium walk, although showing greater activity.

1.3 **Extended walk**. The Horse covers as much ground as possible, without haste and without losing the regularity of the steps. The hind feet touch the ground clearly in front of the hoof prints of the fore feet. The Athlete allows the Horse to stretch out the head and neck (forward and downwards) without losing contact with the mouth and control of the poll. The nose must be clearly in front of the vertical.

1.4 **Free walk.** The free walk is a pace of relaxation in which the Horse is allowed complete freedom to lower and stretch out the head and neck. The degree of ground cover and length of strides, with hind feet stepping clearly in front of the footprints of the front feet, are essential to the quality of the free walk.



The walk is a pace in 4-beat rhythm with 8 phases
(numbers in circles indicate the beat).

1.5 **Stretching on a long rein.** This exercise gives a clear impression of the "thoroughness" of the Horse and proves the balance, suppleness, obedience and relaxation. In order to execute the exercise "stretching on a long rein" correctly, the Athlete must lengthen the reins as the Horse stretches gradually forward and downward. As the neck stretches forwards and downwards, the mouth should reach more or less to the horizontal line corresponding with the point of the shoulder. An elastic and consistent contact with the Athlete's hands must be maintained.

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The pace must maintain its rhythm, and the Horse should remain light in the shoulders with the hindlegs well engaged. During the retake of the reins the Horse must accept the contact without resistance in the mouth or poll.

Article 304 – The Trot

1. The trot is a 2-beat pace of alternate diagonal legs (left fore and right hind leg and vice versa) separated by a moment of suspension.
2. The trot, always with free, active and regular steps, should be moved into without hesitation.
3. The quality of the trot is judged by general impression, i.e. the regularity and elasticity of the steps, the cadence and impulsion in both collection and extension. This quality originates from a supple back and well-engaged hindquarters, and by the ability to maintain the same rhythm and natural balance with all variations of the trot.
4. The following trots are recognised: Working trot, Lengthening of Steps, Collected trot, Medium trot and Extended trot.

    4.1 **Working trot**. This is a pace between the collected and the medium trot, in which a Horse's training is not yet developed enough and ready for collected movements. The Horse shows proper balance and, remaining "on the bit", goes forward with even, elastic steps and good hock action. The expression "good hock action" underlines the importance of an impulsion originating from the activity of the hindquarters.

    4.2 **Lengthening of steps / strides**. In low level tests Horses, "lengthening of steps/strides" is required. This is a variation between the working and medium trot in which a Horse's training is not developed enough for medium trot.

    4.3 **Collected trot**. The Horse, remaining "on the bit", moves forward with the neck raised and arched. The hocks, being well-engaged and flexed, must maintain an energetic impulsion, enabling the shoulders to move with greater mobility, thus demonstrating complete self-carriage. Although the Horse's steps are shorter than in the other trots, elasticity and cadence are not lessened.

    4.4 **Medium trot.** This is a pace of moderate lengthening compared to the extended trot, but "rounder" than the latter. Without hurrying, the Horse goes forward with clearly lengthened steps and with impulsion from the hindquarters. The Athlete allows the Horse to carry the head a little more in front of the vertical than at the collected and the working trot, and to lower the head and neck slightly. The steps should be even, and the whole movement balanced and unconstrained.

    4.5 **Extended trot.** The Horse covers as much ground as possible. Without hurrying, the steps are lengthened to the utmost as a result of great impulsion from the hindquarters. The Athlete allows the Horse to lengthen the frame and to gain ground whilst controlling the poll, the fore feet should touch the ground on the spot towards which they are pointing.

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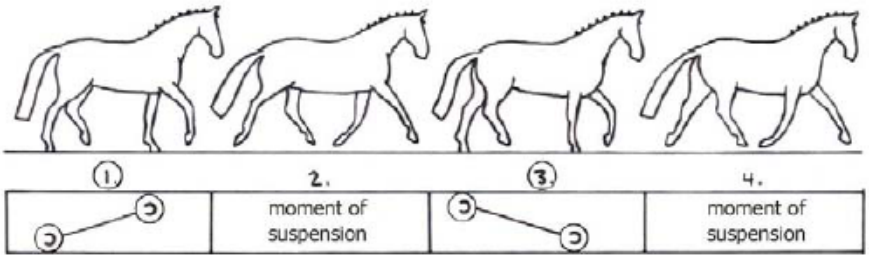
The movement of the fore and hind legs should reach equally forward in the moment of extension. The whole movement should be well-balanced and the transition to collected trot should be smoothly executed by taking more weight on the hindquarters.

5. All trot work in FEI tests is executed "sitting", unless otherwise indicated in the test. (See also Art 338.5)
6. **Stretching on a long rein.** This exercise gives a clear impression of the "thoroughness" of the Horse and proves its balance, suppleness, obedience and relaxation. In order to execute the exercise "stretching on a long rein" correctly, the Athlete must lengthen the reins as the Horse stretches gradually forwards and downward. As the neck stretches forwards and downwards, the mouth should reach more or less to the horizontal line corresponding with the point of the shoulder. An elastic and consistent contact with the Athlete's hands must be maintained. The pace must maintain its rhythm, and the Horse should remain light in the shoulders with the hind legs well engaged. During the retake of the reins the Horse must accept the contact without resistance in the mouth or poll.



The trot is a pace in 2-beat rhythm with 4 phases
(Numbers in circles indicate the beat)

Article 305 – The Canter

1. The canter is a 3-beat pace where, in canter to the right, for example, the footfall is as follows: left hind, left diagonal (simultaneously left fore and right hind), right fore, followed by a moment of suspension with all 4 feet in the air before the next stride begins.
2. The canter, always with light, cadenced and regular strides, should be moved into without hesitation.
3. The quality of the canter is judged by the general impression, i.e. the regularity and lightness of the steps and the uphill tendency and cadence originating from the acceptance of the bridle with a supple poll and in the engagement of the hindquarters with an active hock action – and by the ability of maintaining the same rhythm and a natural balance, even after a transition from one canter to another. The Horse should always remain straight on straight lines and correctly bent on curved lines.
4. The following canters are recognised: Working canter, lengthening of strides, Collected canter, Medium canter and Extended canter.

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4.1 **Working canter.** This is a pace between the collected and the medium canter, in which a Horse's training is not yet developed enough and ready for collected movements. The Horse shows natural balance while remaining "on the bit", and goes forward with even, light and active strides and good hock action. The expression "good hock action" underlines the importance of an impulsion originating from the activity of the hindquarters.

4.2 **Lengthening of strides.** In low level tests "lengthening of strides" is required. This is a variation between the working and medium canter in which a Horse's training is not developed enough for medium canter.

4.3 **Collected canter.** The Horse, remaining "on the bit", moves forward with the neck raised and arched. The hocks, being well-engaged, maintain an energetic impulsion, enabling the shoulders to move with greater mobility thus demonstrating self carriage and an uphill tendency. The Horse's strides are shorter than in the other canters, without losing elasticity and cadence.

4.4 **Medium canter**. This is a pace between the working and the extended canter. Without hurrying, the Horse goes forward with clearly lengthened strides and impulsion from the hindquarters. The Athlete allows the Horse to carry the head a little more in front of the vertical than at the collected and working canter, and at the same time allows the Horse, to lower the head and neck slightly. The strides should be balanced and unconstrained.

4.5 **Extended canter.** The Horse covers as much ground as possible. Without hurrying, the strides are lengthened to the utmost. The Horse remains calm, light and straight as a result of great impulsion from the hindquarters. The Athlete allows the Horse to lengthen the frame with a controlled poll and to gain ground. The whole movement should be well-balanced and the transition to collected canter should be smoothly executed by taking more weight on the hindquarters.

The cadence in the transitions from medium canter as well as from extended canter to collected canter should be maintained.

4.6 **Counter–canter.** The counter canter is a balancing and straightening movement that must be executed in collection. The Horse canters in correct sequence with the outside foreleg leading with positioning to the side of the leading leg. The foreleg should be aligned to the same track as the hind leg.

4.7 **Simple change of leg at the canter.** This is a movement in which, after a direct transition out of the canter into a walk, with 3 to 5 clearly defined steps, an immediate transition is made into the other canter lead.

4.8 **Flying change of leg.** The flying change is performed in one stride with the front and hind legs changing at the same moment. The change of the leading front and hind leg takes place during the moment of suspension. The aids should be precise and unobtrusive.

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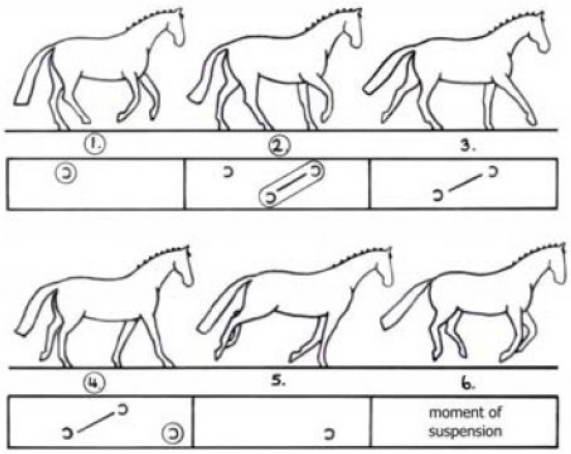
Flying changes of leg can also be executed in series at every 4th, 3rd, 2nd or at every stride. The Horse, even in the series, remains light, calm and straight with lively impulsion, maintaining the same rhythm and balance throughout the series concerned. In order not to restrict or restrain the lightness, fluency and groundcover of the flying changes in series, enough impulsion must be maintained.

Aims of flying changes: To show the reaction, sensitivity and obedience of the Horse to the aids for the change of leg.



The canter is a pace in 3-beat rhythm with 6 phases

Article 306 – The Rein-back

1. Rein-back is a rearward diagonal movement with a 2-beat rhythm but without a moment of suspension. Each diagonal pair of legs is raised and returned to the ground alternatively, with the forelegs aligned on the same track as the hindlegs.
2. During the entire exercise, the Horse should remain "on the bit", maintaining its desire to move forward.
3. Anticipation or precipitation of the movement, resistance to or evasion of the contact, deviation of the hindquarters from the straight line, spreading or inactive hind legs and dragging forefeet are serious faults.
4. The steps are counted as each foreleg moves back. After completing the required number of steps backward, the Horse should show a square halt or move forward in the required pace immediately. In tests where a rein-back of one Horse's length is required, it should be executed with 3 or 4 steps.
5. A rein-back series (Schaukel) is a combination of 2 rein-backs with walk steps in between. It should be executed with fluent transitions and the required number of steps.

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Article 307 – The Transitions

The changes of pace and variations within the paces should be exactly performed at the prescribed marker. The cadence (except in walk) should be maintained up to the moment when the pace or movement is changed or the Horse halts. The transitions within the paces must be clearly defined while maintaining the same rhythm and cadence throughout. The Horse should remain light in hand, calm, and maintain a correct position.

The same applies to transitions from one movement to another, for instance from passage to piaffe or vice versa.

Article 308 – The Half Halts

Every movement or transition should be invisibly prepared by barely perceptible half halts. The half halt is an almost simultaneous, coordinated action of the seat, the legs and the hands of the Athlete, with the object of increasing the attention and balance of the Horse before the execution of the movements or transitions to lower and higher paces. By shifting slightly more weight onto the Horse's hindquarters, the engagement of the hind legs and the balance on the haunches are improved for the benefit of the lightness of the forehand and the Horse's balance as a whole.

Article 309 – The Changes of Direction

1. At changes of direction, the Horse should adjust the bend of the body to the curvature of the line it follows, remaining supple and following the indications of the Athlete, without any resistance or change of pace, rhythm or speed.
2. Changes of directions can be executed in the following ways:
    a. Right-angled turn including riding through the corner (one quarter of a volte of approx. 6 metres)
    b. Short and long diagonal
    c. Half voltes and half circles with change of rein
    d. Half pirouettes and turn on the haunches
    e. Serpentine loops
    f. Counter-changes of hand (in zig-zag) * The Horse should be straight for a moment before changing direction

    * Zig-zag: A movement containing more than 2 half-passes with changes of direction.

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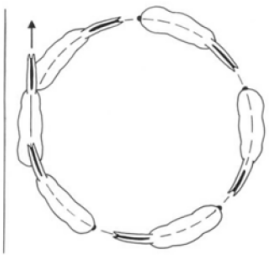
Article 310 – The Figures

The figures asked in dressage tests are the voltes, the serpentines and the figures of eight.

Figures with one (1), two (2) or three (3) loops on the long side or either side of the centre line are called shallow loops. Shallow loops leave/join and cross the lines diagonally, unlike Serpentines which must cross the lines at ninety degrees (90°).

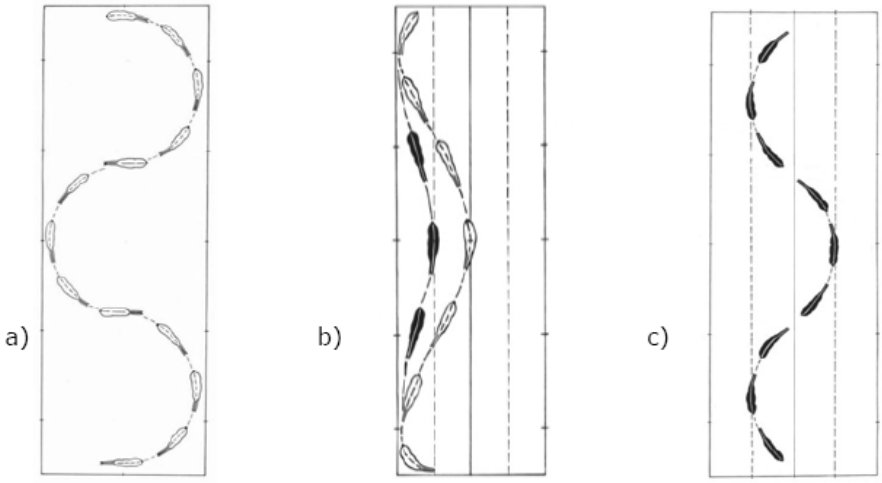
1. **Volte**

   The volte is a circle of 6, 8 or 10 metres in diameter. If larger than 10 metres it is a circle.



2. **Serpentine**

   The serpentine with several loops touching the long side of the arena consists of half circles connected by a straight line. When crossing the centre line, the Horse should be parallel to the short side (a). Depending on the size of the half circles, the straight connection varies in length. Serpentines with one loop on the long side of the arena are executed with 5 metres or 10 metres distance from the track (b). Serpentines around the centre line are executed between the quarter lines (c).



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3. **Figure of eight**

   This figure consists of 2 voltes or circles of equal size as prescribed in the test, joined at the centre of the 8. The Athlete should make the Horse straight an instant before changing direction at the centre of the figure.

Work on Two (2) Tracks

1. A distinction must be made between the following movements: Leg-Yielding, Shoulder-in, Travers, Renvers and Half-pass.
2. The aim of movements on two (2) tracks is:

   2.1 To improve the obedience of the Horse to the cooperative aids of the Athlete;

   2.2 To supple all parts of the Horse, thereby increasing the freedom of the shoulders and the suppleness of the quarters, as well as the elasticity of the bond connecting the mouth, the poll, the neck, the back and the haunches; and

   2.3 To improve the cadence and bring the balance and pace into harmony.

Article 311 – Leg-yielding

1. The aim of leg-yielding: To demonstrate the suppleness and lateral responsiveness of the Horse.
2. Leg-yielding is performed in working trot in FEI competitions. The Horse is almost straight, except for a slight flexion at the poll away from the direction in which it moves, so that the Athlete is just able to see the eyebrow and nostril on the inside. The inside legs pass and cross in front of the outside legs.

   Leg-yielding should be included in the training of the Horse before it is ready for collected work. Later on, together with the more advanced shoulder-in movement, it is the best means of making a Horse supple, loose and unconstrained for the benefit of the freedom, elasticity and regularity of its paces and the harmony, lightness and ease of its movements.

   Leg yielding can be performed “on the diagonal” in which case the Horse should be as nearly as possible parallel to the long sides of the arena, although the forehand should be slightly in advance of the hindquarters. It can also be performed “along the wall” in which case the Horse should be at an angle of about 35 degrees to the direction in which he is moving.

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Article 312 – Lateral Movements

1. The main aim of lateral movements – except leg-yielding – is to develop and increase the engagement of the hindquarters and thereby also the collection.
2. In all lateral movements – shoulder-in, travers, renvers, and half-pass, the Horse is slightly bent and moves on different tracks.
3. The bend or flexion must never be exaggerated so that it does not impair the rhythm, the balance and fluency of the movement.
4. In the lateral movements, the pace should remain free and regular, maintaining a constant impulsion, yet it must be supple, cadenced and balanced. The impulsion is often lost because of the Athlete's preoccupation with bending the Horse and pushing it sideways.
5. **Shoulder-in.**

   The shoulder-in is performed in collected trot. The Horse is ridden with a slight but uniform bend around the inside leg of the Athlete maintaining engagement and cadence and a constant angle of approx. 30 degrees. The Horse's inside foreleg passes and crosses in front of the outside foreleg; the inside hind leg steps forward under the Horse's body weight following the same track of the outside foreleg, with the lowering of the inside hip. The Horse is bent away from the direction in which it is moving.
6. **Travers**.

   Travers can be performed in collected trot or collected canter. The Horse is slightly bent round the inside leg of the Athlete but with a greater degree of bend than in shoulder-in. A constant angle of approximately 35 degrees should be shown (from the front and from behind the observer sees 4 tracks). The forehand remains on the track and the quarters are moved inwards. The Horse's outside legs pass and cross in front of the inside legs. The Horse is bent in the direction in which it is moving.

   To start the travers, the quarters must leave the track or, after a corner or circle, are not brought back onto the track. At the end of the travers, the quarters are brought back on the track (without any counter-flexion of the poll/neck) as one (1) would finish a circle.

   Aims of travers: To show a fluent collected trot movement on a straight line and a correct bend. Front and hind legs are crossing, balance and cadence are maintained.
7. **Renvers**.

   Renvers is the inverse movement in relation to travers. The hindquarters remain on the track while the forehand is moved inward. To finish the renvers the forehand is aligned with the quarters on the track. Otherwise, the same principles and conditions that apply to the travers are applicable to the renvers.

   The Horse is slightly bent around the inside leg of the Athlete. The Horse's outside legs pass and cross in front of the inside legs. The Horse is bent in the direction in which it is moving.

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Aims of renvers: To show a fluent collected trot movement on a straight line with a greater degree of bend than in shoulder-in. Fore and hind legs cross, balance and cadence are maintained.

8. **Half-pass.** Half-pass is a variation of travers, executed on a diagonal line instead of along the wall. It can be performed in collected trot (and in passage in a freestyle) or collected canter. The Horse should be slightly bent around the inside leg of the Athlete and in the direction in which it is moving. The Horse should maintain the same cadence and balance throughout the whole movement. In order to give more freedom and mobility to the shoulders, it is of great importance that the impulsion be maintained, especially the engagement of the inside hind leg. The Horse's body is nearly parallel to the long side of the arena with the forehand slightly in advance of the hindquarters.

   In the trot, the outside legs pass and cross in front of the inside legs. In the canter, the movement is performed in a series of forward/sideways strides.

   Aims of half-pass in trot: To show a fluent collected trot movement on a diagonal line with a greater degree of bend than in shoulder-in. Fore and hind legs cross, balance and cadence are maintained.

   Aims of the half-pass in canter: To both demonstrate and develop the collection and suppleness of the canter by moving fluently forwards and sideways without any loss of rhythm, balance or softness and submission to the bend.

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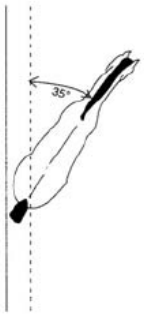
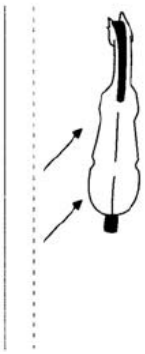
Leg yielding
along the wall

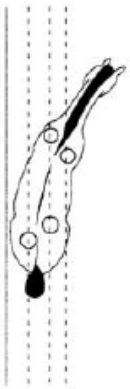


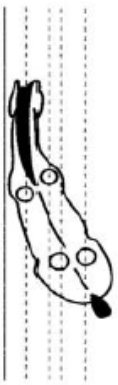
Leg yielding
on the diagonal



Shoulder in

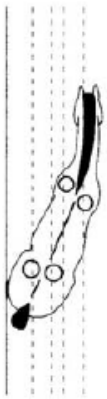
Travers

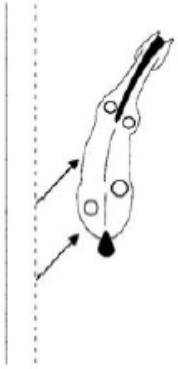




Renvers

Half-Pass





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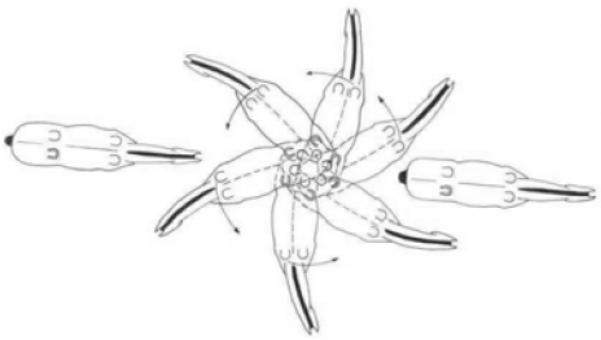
Article 313 – The Pirouette, the Half-pirouette and Turn on the Haunches

1. The Pirouette (half-pirouette) is a turn of 360 degrees (180 degrees) executed on 2 tracks, with a radius equal to the length of the Horse and the forehand moving around the haunches.
2. Pirouettes (half-pirouettes) are usually carried out at collected walk or canter, but can also be executed at piaffe.
3. At the pirouette (half-pirouette) the forefeet and the outside hind foot move around the inside hind foot. The inside hind leg describes a circle as small as possible.
4. At whatever pace the pirouette (half-pirouette) is executed, the Horse, slightly bent in the direction in which it is turning, remains "on the bit" with a light contact, turning smoothly around, and maintaining sequence and timing of footfalls of that pace. The poll remains the highest point during the entire movement.
5. During the pirouettes (half-pirouettes), the Horse should maintain its activity (walk also included) and never move backwards or sideways.
6. In executing the pirouette or the half-pirouette in canter, the Athlete should maintain lightness of the Horse while accentuating the collection. The Horse's hindquarters are well engaged and lowered and show a good flexion of the joints. An integral part of the movement is the quality of the canter strides before and after the pirouette. The strides should show an increased activity and collection before the pirouette and the balance should be maintained at the end of the pirouette.

   Aims of the pirouette and half-pirouette in canter: To demonstrate the willingness of the Horse to turn around the inside hind leg on a small radius, slightly bent in the direction of the turn while maintaining the activity and the clarity of the canter, the straightness and the balance before and after the figure and clear canter strides during the turn. In the pirouette or half-pirouette in canter, the judges should be able to recognise a real canter stride although the feet of the diagonal – inside hind leg, outside front leg – are not touching the ground simultaneously.



Pirouette and half-pirouette in canter

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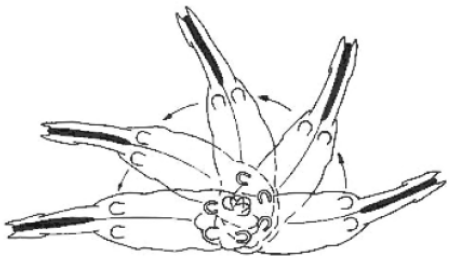
7. The quality of the pirouettes (half-pirouettes) is judged according to the suppleness, lightness and regularity, and the precision and smoothness of the entrance and exit. Pirouettes (half-pirouettes) in canter should be executed in 6 to 8 strides – full pirouettes – and 3 to 4 strides – half-pirouette.
8. Half-pirouettes in walk (180 degrees) are executed out of collected walk with the collection being maintained throughout the exercise. When the Horse exits the half-pirouette it returns to the initial track without crossing the hind legs.



Half-pirouette in walk

9. **Turn on the haunches from walk.**

   For younger Horses that are still not able to show collected walk and for Athletes riding Tests in levels where collected walk is not asked for, the "turn on the haunches" is an exercise to prepare the Horse for collection. The "turn on the haunches" is executed out of medium walk prepared by half halts to shorten the steps a little and to improve the ability to bend the joints of the hindquarters. The Horse does not halt before or after the turn. The "turn on the haunches" can be executed on a larger radius (approx. ½m) than the pirouette in walk, but the demands of the training scale concerning rhythm, contact, activity and straightness are the same.
10. Turn on the haunches from halt to halt (180 degrees). To maintain the forward tendency of the movement one or 2 forward steps at the beginning of the turn are permitted. The same criteria apply as for the turn on the haunches from walk.

Article 314 – The Passage

1. Passage is a measured, very collected, elevated and cadenced trot. It is characterised by a pronounced engagement of the hindquarters, a more accentuated flexion of the knees and hocks, and the graceful elasticity of the movement. Each diagonal pair of legs is raised and returned to the ground alternately, with cadence and a prolonged suspension.
2. In principle, the height of the toe of the raised forefoot should be level with the middle of the cannon bone of the other supporting foreleg. The toe of the raised hind foot should be slightly above the fetlock joint of the other supporting hind leg.

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3. The neck should be raised and gracefully arched with the poll as the highest point and the nose line close to the vertical. The Horse should remain light, and soft "on the bit" without altering the cadence. The impulsion remains lively and pronounced.
4. Irregular steps with the hind or front legs, swinging the forehand or the hindquarters from one side to the other, as well as jerky movements of the forelegs or the hind legs, dragging the hind legs or double beat in the moment of suspension are serious faults.

   Aim of passage is: To demonstrate the highest degree of collection, cadence and suspension in the trot.

Article 315 – The Piaffe

1. Piaffe is a highly collected, elevated, rhythmical diagonal movement giving the impression of remaining in place. The Horse's back is supple and elastic. The hindquarters are lowered; the haunches with active hocks are well engaged, giving great freedom, lightness and mobility to the shoulders and forehand. Each diagonal pair of legs is raised and returned to the ground alternately, with spring and regularity.

   1.1 In principle, the height of the toe of the raised forefoot should be level with the middle of the cannon bone of the other supporting foreleg. The toe of the raised hind foot should reach just above the fetlock joint of the other supporting hind leg.

   1.2 The neck should be raised and gracefully arched, with the poll as the highest point. The Horse should remain "on the bit" with a supple poll, maintaining a soft contact. The body of the Horse should move in a supple, and harmonious movement.

   1.3 Piaffe should show true commitment and must always be animated by a lively activity and characterised by perfect balance. While giving the impression of remaining in place, there may be a visible inclination to advance, this being displayed by the Horse's eager acceptance to move forward as soon as it is asked.

   1.4 Moving even slightly backwards, irregular or jerky steps with the hind or front legs, no clear diagonal steps, crossing either the fore or hind legs, or swinging either the forehand or the hindquarters from one side to the other, getting wide behind or in front, moving too much forward or double-beat rhythm are serious faults.

   Aims of piaffe are: To demonstrate the highest degree of collection while giving the impression of remaining in place.

Article 316 –The Impulsion / the Submission

1. Impulsion is the term used to describe the transmission of an eager and energetic, yet controlled, propulsive energy generated from the hind quarters into the athletic movement of the Horse. Its ultimate expression can be shown only through the Horse's soft and swinging back guided by a gentle contact with the Athlete's hand.

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1.1 Speed, of itself, has little to do with impulsion; the result is more often a flattening of the paces. A visible characteristic is a more pronounced articulation of the hind leg, in a continuous rather than staccato action. The hock, as the hind foot leaves the ground, should first move forward rather than being pulled upwards, but certainly not backwards. A prime ingredient of impulsion is the time the Horse spends in the air rather than on the ground. Impulsion is, therefore, seen only in those paces that have a period of suspension.

1.2 Impulsion is a precondition for a good collection in trot and canter. If there is no impulsion, then there is nothing to collect.

2. Submission does not mean subordination, but an obedience revealing its presence by a constant attention, willingness and confidence in the whole behavior of the Horse as well as by the harmony, lightness and ease it is displaying in the execution of the different movements.

   The degree of the submission is also demonstrated by the way the Horse accepts the bit, with a light and soft contact and a supple poll. Resistance to or evasion of the Athlete's hand, being either "above the bit" or "behind the bit" demonstrate lack of submission. The main contact with the Horse's mouth must be through the snaffle bit.

   2.1 Putting out the tongue, keeping it above the bit or drawing it up altogether, as well as grinding the teeth or agitation of the tail, are mostly signs of nervousness, tension or resistance on the part of the Horse and must be taken into account by the judges in their marks for every movement concerned, as well as in the collective mark.

   2.2 The first thought when considering submission is willingness, that the Horse understands what is being asked of it and is confident enough in the Athlete to react to the aids without fear or tension.

   2.3 The Horse's straightness, uphill tendency and balance enable it to stay in front of the Athlete's legs and go forward into an accepting and self-carrying contact with the bit. This is what really produces the picture of harmony and lightness. The fulfilling of the main requirements/movements of a Dressage test is the main criterion of submission.

Article 317 – The Collection

1. The aim of the collection of the Horse is:

   a) To further develop and improve the balance and equilibrium of the Horse, which has been more or less displaced by the additional weight of the Athlete;

   b) To develop and increase the Horse's ability to lower and engage its hindquarters for the benefit of the lightness and mobility of its forehand;

   c) To add to the "ease and carriage" of the Horse and to make it more pleasurable to ride.

2. Collection is developed through the use of half-halts and the use of lateral movements shoulder-in, travers, renvers and half pass.

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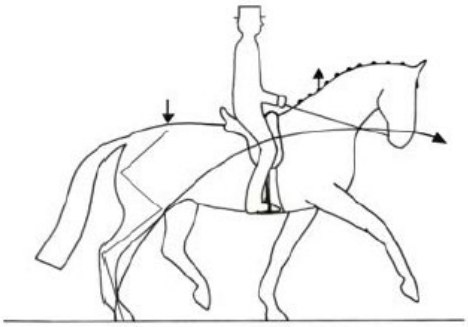
3. Collection is improved and achieved by the use of the seat and legs and containing hands to engage the hind legs. The joints bend and are supple so that the hind legs can step forward under the Horse's body.
4. However, the hind legs should not be engaged so far forward under the Horse, that they shorten the base of support excessively, thereby impeding the movement. In such a case, the line of the back would be lengthened and raised too much in relation to the supporting base of the legs, the stability would be impaired and the Horse would have difficulty in finding a harmonious and correct balance.
5. On the other hand, a Horse with an over-long base of support, which is unable or unwilling to engage its hind legs forward under its body, will never achieve acceptable collection, characterised by "ease and carriage" as well as a lively impulsion originating from the activity of the hindquarters.
6. The position of the head and neck of a Horse at the collected paces is naturally dependent on the stage of training and, to some degree, on its conformation. It is distinguished by the neck being raised without restraint, forming a harmonious curve from the withers to the poll, which is the highest point, with the nose slightly in front of the vertical. At the moment the Athlete applies the aids to obtain a momentary and passing collecting effect, the head may become more or less vertical. The arch of the neck is directly related to the degree of collection.



Article 318 – The Position and Aids of the Athlete

1. All the movements should be obtained with imperceptible aids and without apparent effort of the Athlete. The Athlete should be well-balanced, elastic, sitting deep in the centre of the saddle, smoothly absorbing the movement of the Horse with his loins and hips, supple thighs with the legs steady and stretched well down. The heels should be the lowest point. The upper part of the body should be tall and supple. The contact should be independent from the Athlete's seat. The hands should be carried steadily close together, with the thumb as the highest point and a straight line from the supple elbow through the hand to the Horse's mouth. The elbows should be close to the body. All of these criteria enable the Athlete to follow the movements of the Horse smoothly and freely.

2. The effectiveness of the Athlete's aids determines the precise fulfilment of the required

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movements of the tests. There shall always be the impression of a harmonious co-operation between Horse and Athlete.

3. Riding with both hands is obligatory at FEI Dressage Events. When leaving the arena at a walk on long rein, after having finished the test the Athlete may, at his own discretion, ride with only one hand. For Freestyle tests, see also Directives for Judges – Freestyle tests and Directives for assessing the degree of difficulty in a Freestyle test.
4. The use of the voice or clicking the tongue repeatedly is a serious fault.

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CHAPTER II GENERAL DRESSAGE RULES

Article 319 – Introduction

1. The rules following must be read in conjunction with the General Rules of the EFHKC. In case of any contradiction between the EFHKC General Rules and the rules following hereafter, these specific rules for Dressage competitions shall apply.
2. An Athlete is ultimately responsible for knowing the rules and complying with them. The appointment of a steward or official, whether or not provided for in these rules, does not absolve the Athlete from such responsibility.

Article 320 – Definition of Dressage Competitions

A Dressage competition is composed of one or more contests between individual mounted Athletes or designated teams of mounted Athletes, performing specified Dressage tests.

The term “bell” includes any device used to signal to Athletes.

1. Dressage competitions fall into two categories:
   1.1 Those International competitions held under the rules of the Federation Equestre lnternationale (FEI)
   1.2 Those held under the rules of the National Federation (NF)
2. In the case of Hong Kong, the Equestrian Federation of Hong Kong, China (EFHKC) is the NF. The Dressage Rules following apply to all competitions held in Hong Kong under EFHKC rules, except those staged in connection with the FEI in which FEI rules will apply.

Article 321 – Standards and Tests

1. All tests issued by British Eventing (BE), British Dressage (BD), Equestrian Australia (EA) and the FEI from time to time are adopted for use by the EFHKC.
2. Any other national test may be used with the approval of the Board.
3. An "Open" competition shall be open to all Horses regardless of their grading.
4. In any competition, the test to be ridden shall follow the standards shown above and every test sheet issued to Athletes shall state the level of the test concerned.
5. Freestyle Tests

   BD and EA Freestyle tests of all levels up to and including Medium level are approved for use in events run under EFHKC Rules. However, these competitions do not carry grading points.

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Article 322 – Conditions of Participation

1. Dressage competitions are open to all ages of Athlete unless otherwise stated on the schedule.
2. Para-equestrian Athletes may compete in dressage competitions using compensatory aids according to their degree of disability as defined by their FEI or National Paralympic Committee Para-Equestrian Identity (NPC PE ID) card.
3. Separate competitions for men and women are not allowed.
4. Horses and ponies of 4 years or older are eligible to compete. The age is counted from 1st January of the year of birth (1st August for Southern Hemisphere).
5. Schooling of Horses / Ponies

   On the day of event, no one other than the Athlete may ride the Horse/Pony he is entered with, after arrival on the show ground and official opening of the stables according to the EFHKC approved schedule as well as for the duration of the whole Event. The duration of the whole Event means from 6.00 a.m. on wards of the day of Event until the last competition has completed. Under no circumstances is it permitted to school the Horses/Ponies in other areas than the official training arenas. No schooling is permitted in any area which cannot be supervised by the Stewards. Horses/Ponies may not leave the stables, the Competition area, or the areas supervised by Stewards for any purpose unless authorized by the OC or EFHKC appointed Officials of the Event or a Veterinarian acting in the interest of the health and welfare of the Horses/Ponies.

Article 323 – Commanded Tests

In any competition, except when forming part of a "Combined Event", the Organiser may allow the test to be commanded. No test may be commanded in a Finals or Championship competition class. Tests held under FEI rules may not be commanded. Where a commander is allowed, it is the responsibility of the Athlete to ensure that only the printed text of the test, or extracts thereof, are read out. Failure to observe this rule may lead to the elimination of the Athlete concerned.

Article 324 – Grading of Horses

1. See General Rules, Chapter VI, Rules 129.

Article 325 – Affiliated Competitions

1. Dressage competitions are affiliated in accordance with the General Rules of the EFHKC, provided that Organisers may include competitions with Freestyle tests, Pairs tests or other unofficial tests which will be ungraded.

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Article 326 – Placing of Athletes (see also Art 344 – Classification)

1. In any competition, the Athlete who has been awarded the largest aggregate number of marks by the Judges is placed first; the one with the second largest number of marks is placed second and so on.
2. At least 25% of starters shall be entitled to rosettes or prizes.
3. Where two or more prize winners have been awarded the same aggregate number of marks by the Judges, the winner shall be the entry which has the larger aggregate number of collective marks.
4. In the case of absolute equality, the placings remain tied.

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CHAPTER III ARENAS

Article 327 – Arenas

1. All tests are ridden individually within an area of either 60m x 20m or 40m x 20m according to the instructions on the Test sheet. When the smaller arena is used, the markers R,S,V,P,L and I are not required.
2. Arenas should be set out to the dimensions shown in the diagrams in Art. 328 with the markers positioned as indicated. The arena should be as level as possible and separated from the public by a distance all round of at least 10 metres. Roping should be used when necessary to prevent intrusion.
3. The arena may be marked in any of the following ways:
   - 3.1 By a continuous low white fence, about 30cm high. The part of the fence at A should be easy to remove to allow Athletes access to the arena. The width of the entrance must be at least 2 metres. The construction of the fence should be such as to prevent the Horse's hooves from being caught. The rails may not contain any metal components;
   - 3.2 By intermittent white boards placed at each corner and opposite each marker;
   - 3.3 By a white line painted on the ground, in which case white posts 1.0m in height should be placed at the corners of the arena.
4. The letters outside should be placed about 0.5m from the arena enclosure and clearly marked. A marker should be placed on the fence itself level with and in addition to the letter concerned.
5. Whenever possible, Organisers should appoint a steward to act as gatekeeper to the arena. When there is no gatekeeper the A marker must be placed far enough back to allow the Horses to enter the arena on a straight track.

   When the boundaries of the arena are marked by painted lines, sticks 2.0m apart should be placed to mark the entrance.
6. Irrespective of the arena being a grass or a sand arena, it is desirable to make a pause of 5-10 minutes after every 6 or 7 Athletes, to reconstruct the surface of the ground.
7. It is the responsibility of the Judges to satisfy themselves that the arena is satisfactory; they may have it modified at their discretion.

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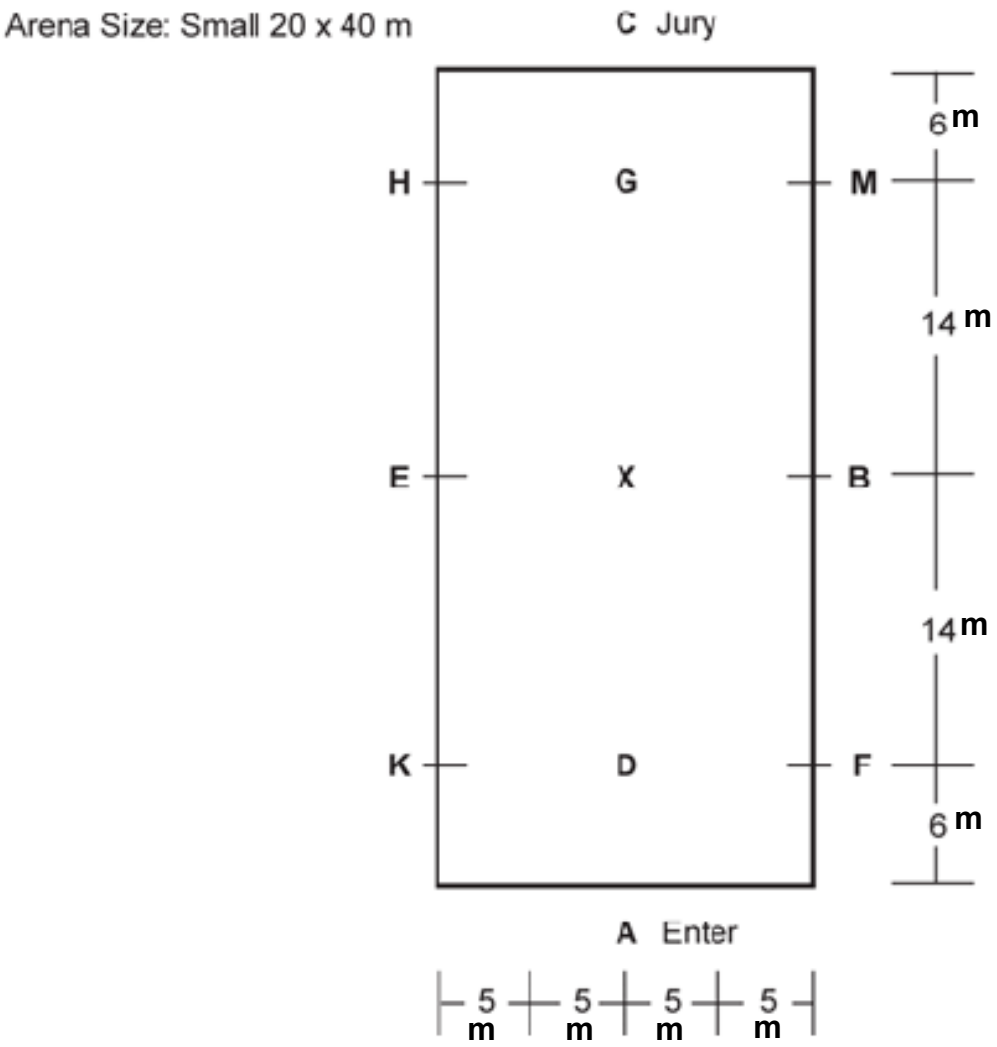
Article 328 – Practice Arena

1. Sufficient level ground and if possible, an arena, must be provided as a practice area for Athletes taking part in the competition.



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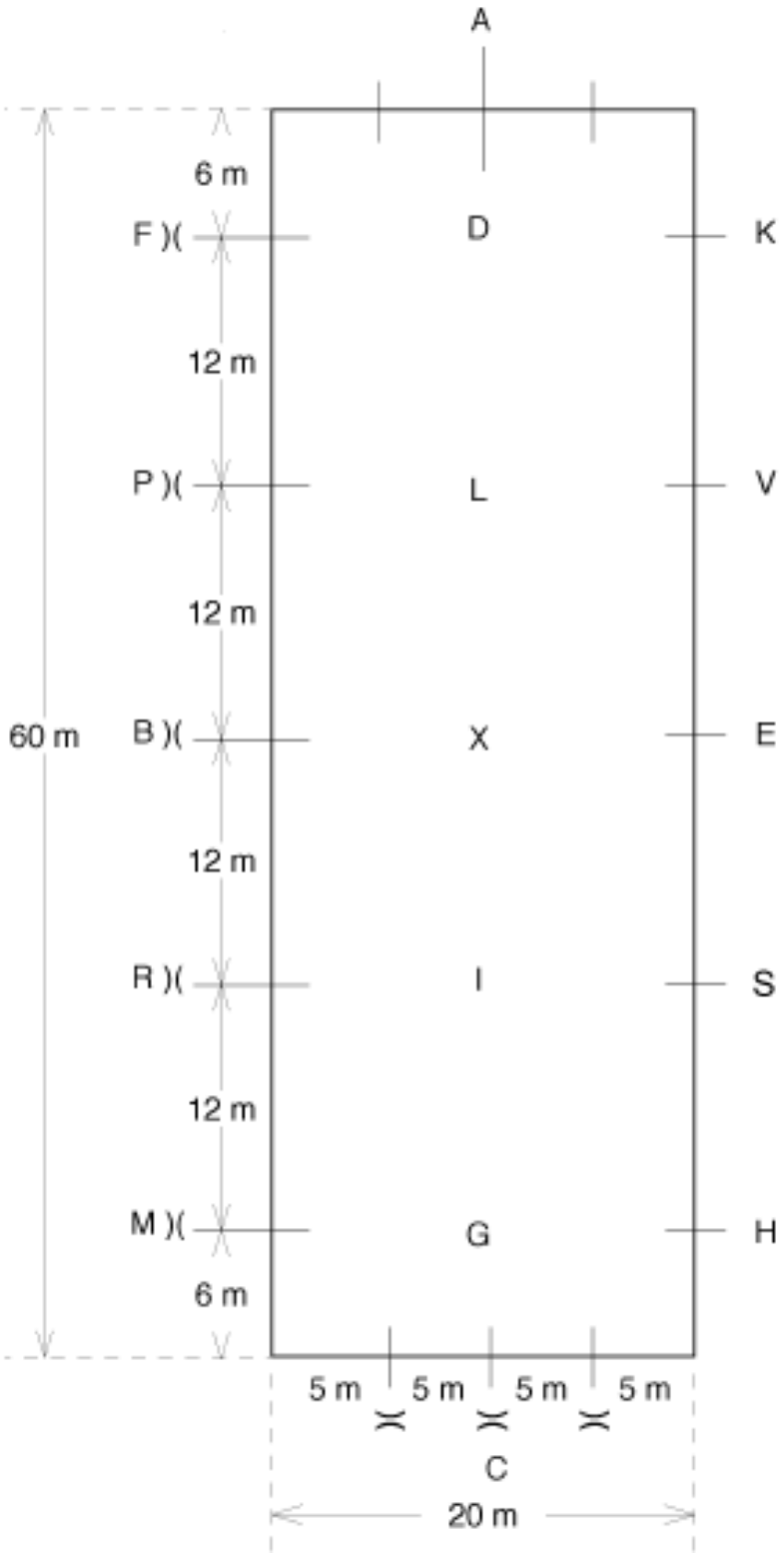
Dressage Arena (20m X 60m)



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CHAPTER IV EQUIPMENT

Article 329 – Saddlery

1. The following are compulsory: a Dressage saddle, which must be close to the Horse, and have long, near vertical flaps. For lower level tests (preliminary and novice) general purpose saddles are permitted. Snaffle bridle (see illustrations for permitted bits and nosebands). Padding is allowed on bridles. No saddle covers are allowed.

2. **Bridle with noseband.** Any permitted noseband may never be as tightly fixed so as to harm the Horse. Any permitted noseband may never be as tightly fixed so as to harm the Horse. Noseband tightness is gauged and checked in line with current protocols as stipulated by EFHKC's Chief Steward.

   2.1 In case of an apparent overtightened noseband during the horse's warm-up, the steward is entitled to conduct a check of the noseband during the warm-up and, in case of the noseband being overtightened, ask the athlete to loosen the noseband. The noseband of the horse will be checked again by the same steward after the horse has finished the test.

   2.2 If the noseband is still too tight after the second check, the steward and/or Chief Steward will inform the President of the Ground Jury. The Athlete will be eliminated from the competition and given a Yellow Warning Card.

3. **Bits.** Snaffle, Bridoon and curb bit must have a smooth surface. Twisted and wired bits are prohibited. Bits must be made of metal or rigid plastic and may be covered with rubber or latex. The minimum diameter for snaffle bits is 12 mm (for Ponies - 10mm).

   3.1 **Double bridles**. Double bridles are permitted in Medium tests and above regardless of the instructions on the test. Double bridles may be worn in the warm up for tests where a double bridle is permitted. A cavesson noseband is compulsory with a double bridle under penalty of elimination.

   The lever arm of a curb bit is limited to 10cm (length below the mouthpiece). The upper cheek must not be longer than the lower cheek and must not exceed five centimetres (5cm). If the curb has a sliding mouthpiece, the lever arm of the curb bit below the mouthpiece must not measure more than 10cm when the mouthpiece is at the uppermost position.

   3.2 The diameter of the mouthpiece of the bridoon and/or curb must be such so as not to hurt the Horse. Minimum diameter of mouthpiece to be 12mm for curb bit and 10mm for bridoon bit.

   3.3 Curb chain. This can be made of metal, leather or rubber.

4. **Whips.** Whips may be carried unless specifically prohibited by the competition schedule. The use of only one whip of a maximum overall length of 1.2 metres for Horses is allowed. It is suggested that a whip of no more than 1 metre is used for ponies. A whip may not be picked up if dropped during a test.

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4.1 A whip may be carried in either hand but in the rein hand when saluting.

4.2 If a whip is misused, in the opinion of the judges, the Athlete will be eliminated.

4.3 When barred in competition a whip with the above relevant stipulations may be used in the warm-up area but must be dropped before entering the space around the Competition Area. Only Athletes or grooms when riding, walking, or lunging a Horse are allowed to carry a whip on the show grounds. Other parties are allowed to carry a whip provided it is not in connection with the training of the Horse.

5. **Gadgets** Martingales, any kind of gadget (such as bearing, side, running or balancing reins, nasal strips etc), any kind of boots or bandages and any form of blinkers, including ear-plugs and any others, are, under penalty of elimination, strictly forbidden.

6. Notwithstanding the above, noise cancelling ear plugs are allowed at prize-giving ceremonies.

7. **Other** Breastplates are allowed in all levels. Cruppers are allowed for ponies.

8. **Decorations**. Any decoration of the Horse with extravagant items, such as ribbons or flowers, etc. in the tail, etc., is strictly forbidden. Normal plaiting of the Horse's mane and tail, however, is allowed. It is not allowed to paint any part of the Horse's body. Using coloured wound-spray and ointment if necessary is permitted, but it cannot be used to obscure an existing wound or injury. It is strictly forbidden to use any type of white substance (like "marshmallow fluff", shaving cream etc.) around the Horse's mouth to imitate foaming.

9. **False tails / tail extensions** are permitted only with the prior permission of the Board of Directors. Requests for such permission should be directed to the EFHKC accompanied by photographs and a veterinary certificate. False tails may not contain any metal parts, except for hooks and eyelets.

10. **Protective fly hoods** are permitted. However, these will be systematically checked by Stewards at the end of the test to ensure that nothing prohibited has been added to or is covered by the fly hoods. The fly hoods should be discreet and should not be attached to the noseband or covering the Horse's eyes.

    Anti-fly impregnated browbands and fly repellent discs are permitted while warming-up and during a test. Ear plugs on Horses are allowed at prize-giving ceremonies only.

11. **Checking of Saddlery**. A Steward must be appointed to check the saddlery and equipment of each Horse and Athlete immediately after it leaves the arena. Any discrepancy will be reported to the Judge at C and result in immediate elimination if confirmed. The checking of the bridle must be done with the greatest caution as some Horses are very touchy and sensitive about their mouths. The Steward must use disposable surgical/protective gloves when checking the bridle (one pair of gloves per Horse).

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12. **Warming-up and training arenas.** Paragraphs 1 – 4 above are valid also for warming-up areas. However, boots and bandages are allowed.

    Single direct side reins or double sliding side reins (triangle/dreiek zugel) are permitted when lunging. No other gadgets such as "lungie-bungies" may be used. Lunging is allowed with one lunge line only. Whilst lunging, the Athlete may be mounted and may hold the reins.

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Captions to plates showing permitted bits

Various double bridle bits

Bridoons:

1.	Loose ring bridoon bit
2 a,b,c	Bridoon bit with jointed mouthpiece where the middle piece should be rounded. Egg-butt sides also allowed.
2 d	Bridoon bit with rotating middle piece
2 e	Bridoon Rotary bit with rotating middle piece
3.	Egg-butt bridoon bit
4.	Bridoon bit with hanging cheeks

Curbs :

5.	Half-moon curb bits
6.+7.	Curb bit with straight cheeks and port
8.	Curb bit with port and sliding mouthpiece (Weymouth) A curb bit with rotating lever arm is also allowed
9.	Variation of bits No 6, 7 & 8
10.	Curb bit with S-curved cheeks
11.	Curb chain (metal or leather or a combination)
12.	Lip strap
13.	Leather cover for curb chain
14.	Rubber cover for curb chain

Various snaffle bridle bits

1.	Loose ring snaffle
2.a - e	Snaffle with jointed mouthpiece where middle piece should be rounded
3.	Egg-butt snaffle
4.	Racing snaffle D-ring
5.	Egg-butt snaffle with cheeks
6.	Loose ring snaffle with cheeks (Fulmer)
7.	Snaffle with upper cheeks only
8.	Hanging cheek snaffle
9.	Straight bar snaffle. Permitted also with mullen mouth and with egg-butt rings.
10.	Snaffle with rotating mouthpiece
11.	Snaffle with rotating middle piece
12.	Rotary bit with rotating middle piece

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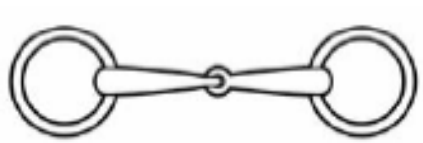
Various double bridle bits:

Bridoons:



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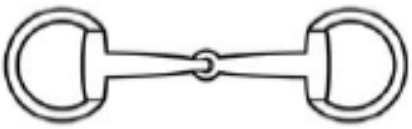

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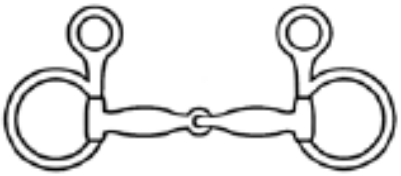

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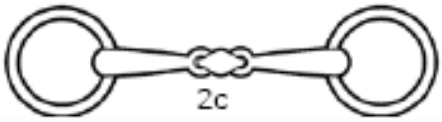

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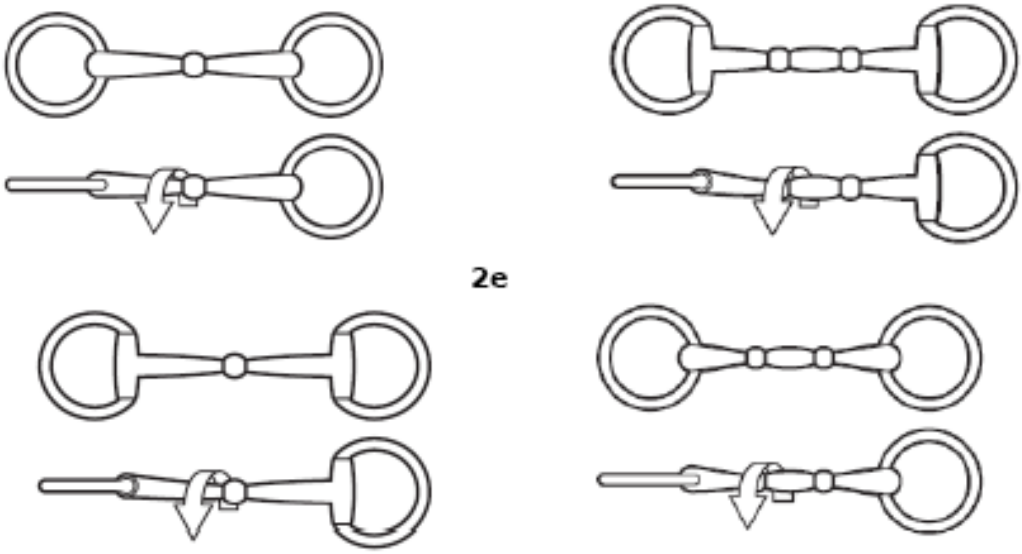

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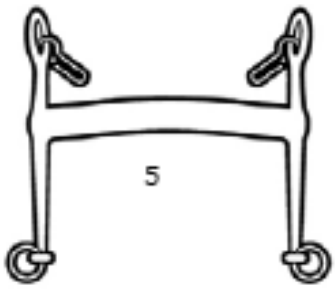
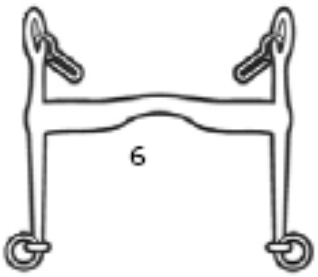
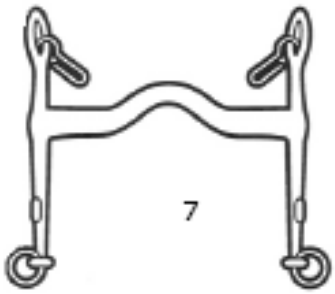
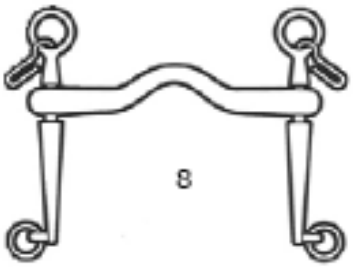
Curbs:

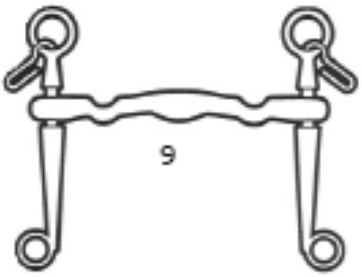


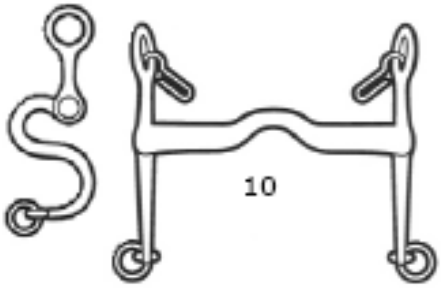


Note: Curb chain hooks must not be fixed.









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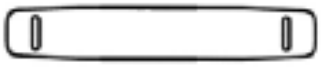

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Various snaffle bridle bits

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2a

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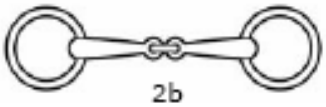

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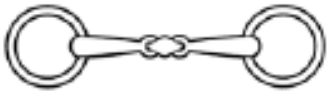

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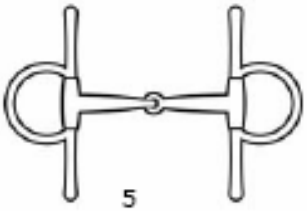

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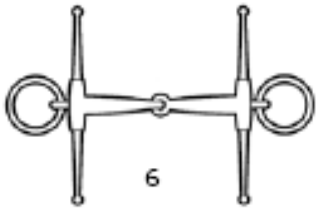

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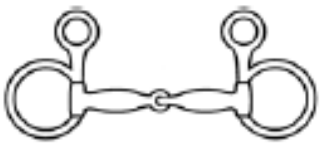

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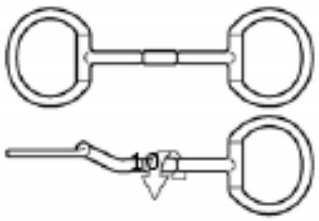

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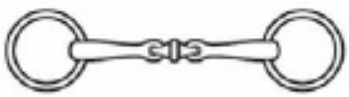

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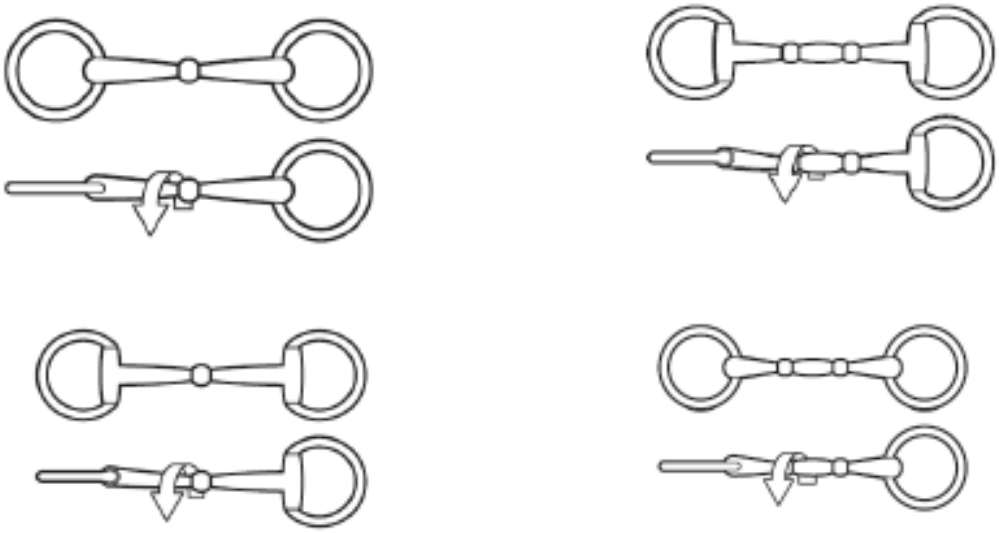
12. Rotary bit



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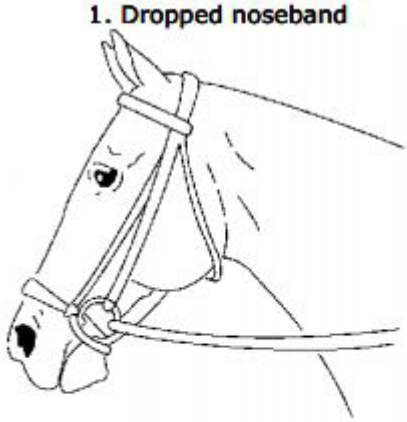
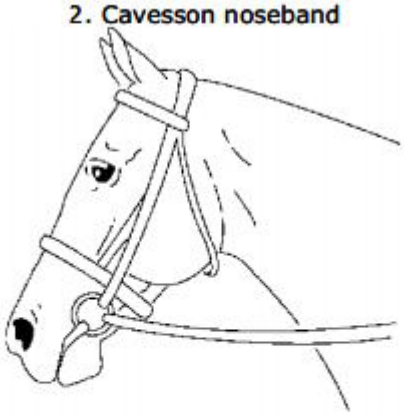
Permitted nosebands

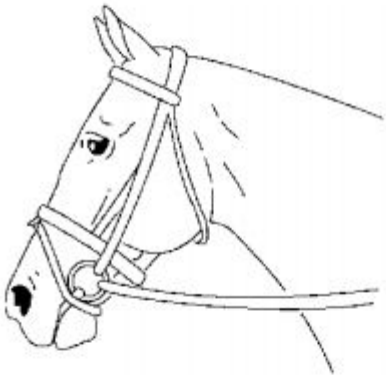
1. Dropped noseband



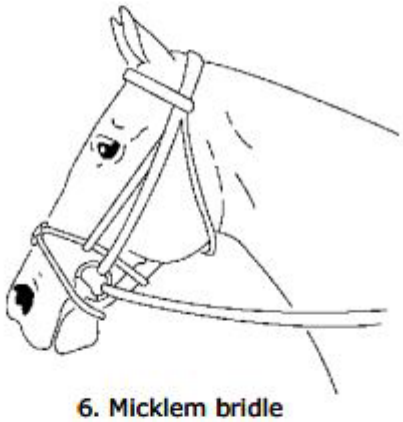
2. Cavesson noseband



3. Flash noseband

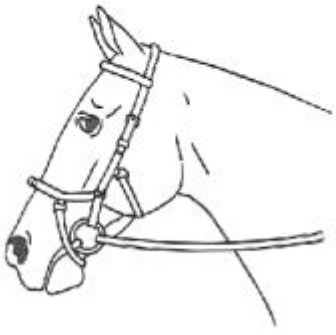


4. Crossed noseband (pictured) / Mexican noseband



5. Combined noseband – no throat lash

6. Micklem bridle



1, 3, 4 and 6 are not permitted when a double bridle is used.
5, when used as a double bridle, the lower strap of the nose band is not allowed.

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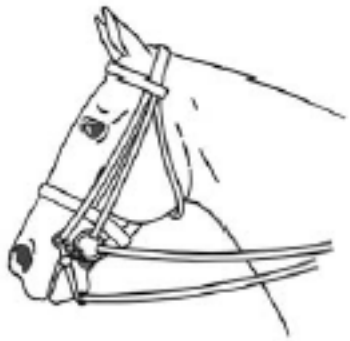
Example of Double bridle with cavesson noseband bridoon bit and curb chain



Example of permitted Dressage saddle

Double sliding side reins (triangle/dreieck zügel)

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Article 330 – Dress

1. Protective headgear (as defined by EFHKC General Rules) must be worn and properly fastened at all times when mounted.
2. The following is compulsory: dark jacket, white or off-white breeches, white stock, white or light coloured gloves, long dark boots or boots and matching chaps, dark coloured headgear.
3. If the weather conditions are such that the Organiser and the President of the Ground Jury permits the absence of jackets, the Athletes must be tidily presented with short or long-sleeved white shirt and white stock or tie.
4. EFHKC Hot Weather Guidelines can be found here.
5. Military/police Athletes may wear civil or service dress. Rules for protective headgear must be followed.
6. **Spurs**. Spurs may be worn at all levels but are optional whenever a double bridle is used.

   6.1 Spurs must be made of metal and there must be a shank pointing directly back from the centre of the spur. The arms of the spur must be smooth and blunt. If rowels are used, they must be blunt/smooth (no sharp edges) and free to rotate. Metal spurs with round hard knobs are allowed ("Impuls" spur) and the knobs may rotate. "Dummy" spurs with no shank are also allowed.

7. **Earphones**. Earphones and/or any other electronic communication devices are strictly prohibited whilst competing and such usage is penalized by elimination. Use of one (1) earphones or similar devices are permitted during training and warming-up.

Article 331 – Weight

No limit/restrictions.

Article 332 – Incorrect Equipment / Dress

Anyone entering the arena with incorrect saddlery, dress or equipment will be eliminated from the class. However, at the discretion of the Ground Jury, the Athlete may be allowed to enter the arena again later, properly equipped and perform the test, Hors Concours.

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CHAPTER V RIDING THE TEST

Article 333 – Duration of Judging the Test

The test is judged from the time the Athlete enters the arena at A until he leaves the arena at A.

Article 334 – Entering and Leaving the Arena

1. Athletes must enter the arena mounted within 45 seconds of the bell being sounded to indicate the start of the test. Failure to enter the arena within 90 seconds will incur elimination.
2. No Horse either ridden or led may enter the arena except when actually competing, on penalty of elimination.
3. All Athletes must leave the arena at A after performing a test. A Horse is eliminated if, during a test, it leaves the arena with all 4 feet when the surround is a continuous low fence. Where the surround is marked by separated boards or a line only, it is left to the discretion of the Judges as to the marks to be deducted.

   Any Horse leaving the arena not under control will be eliminated and for this purpose the test begins when the Horse enters the arena at A and finishes when it leaves the arena at A, after completing the test.
4. Should the construction of the arena make it impossible for the Athlete to ride round the outside, before the Judge's signal to enter is sounded, he may, on the instruction of the Organiser and/or Judge, ride inside the arena.

Article 335 – Execution of Tests

1. All movements contained in a Test must follow in the order laid down in the Test. In a movement which must be carried out at a certain point of the arena, it is at the moment when the Athlete's body is above this point that the movement must be executed.
2. All tests will be ridden with both hands except where stated otherwise on the test sheets.
3. In all tests up to and including Elementary transitions may be progressive.
4. All tests (including Freestyles) begin with the entry at A and end after the salute at the end of the test, as soon as the Horse moves forward. Any incidents before the beginning or after the end of the test have no effect on the marks. The Athlete should leave the arena in the manner that is prescribed in the text of the test. If a Horse leaves the arena with all 4 feet after the salute at the end of the test, but before the time of the exit at A, it will receive marks for the movements of the test up to that point but will be eliminated from the competition.
5. Any outside intervention by voice, signs etc., is considered as assistance to an Athlete or to the Horse. An Athlete or Horse receiving assistance must be eliminated.

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6. At the beginning of a Freestyle test a halt for the salute is compulsory. The test time will start after the Athlete moves forward after the halt.

Article 336 – Reins in One Hand During Test (when instructed)

The reins or whip, if carried, should be held in the outside hand, with the inside arm held down by the Athlete's side.

Article 337 – Salute

Unless stated otherwise in the test, each Athlete must salute the judge at the start and end of the test.

1. The reins must be held in one hand when saluting, together with whip, if carried.
2. Athletes perform a salute by holding his/her free arm straight down to the side and bowing the head.
3. Athletes in military or police uniform can give a military salute.

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CHAPTER VI INTERPRETATION OF TEST INSTRUCTIONS

Article 338 – Interpretation of Test Instructions

1. An Athlete moving along the outer track will continue along it on the same rein, without alteration of pace or manner of riding until instructed to do otherwise. If required to leave the track and return to it (e.g. when circling) the Athlete will continue along the track in the same manner of going as he left it and on the same rein unless instructed to do otherwise.
2. For a "simple turn", to right or left, the Athlete will change direction through 90 degrees by riding a quarter of a small circle (as at a corner) beginning before reaching the marker and finishing on a line at right angles to the track and directly opposite the marker.
3. For "track right" or "track left" at any marker the Athlete will turn in a similar manner but will finish on the outer track. (N.B. the Horse must not begin by swinging out in the opposite direction and then crossing the line of approach).
4. For a "move diagonally across the arena" for a change of rein, say from M to K, the turn from the track should begin at M and the turn into the track should be completed at K. The course between M and K should be in a straight line.
5. For all BE, BD and EA Elementary tests and below, regardless of the instructions on the test sheets, all trot work may be executed sitting or rising at the discretion of the Athlete.
6. For all BE, BD and EA tests higher than Elementary, all trot work must be executed as instructed on the test sheet. Failing instruction, all trot work is executed sitting.
7. In all other tests trot work must be executed as instructed on the test sheet. Failing instruction, all trot work is performed sitting.
8. For a "Change of Pace" at a given marker, the Horse should make the first step in the new pace as the Athlete passes the marker. (it follows that when the transitions are progressive, they must begin a few paces before reaching the marker).
9. A "Simple Change" is always through the walk. Up to and including Elementary standard the downwards transition may be progressive i.e., canter, trot, walk but the upwards transition should be direct, walk to canter. At Medium standard both transitions must be direct, canter, walk, canter.

   If walk steps are not required the movement should be described as a "Change of Leg/Lead through the Trot" and NOT as a simple change.
10. "Give and Retake the Reins" or "Stroke the Horse's Neck" requires the Athlete to push both hands forward up the Horse's neck towards the poll, until the reins are quite loose and then gradually take up the contact again.
11. "Leave the Arena at A", after the final salute the Athlete should move off from the halt at the specified pace, turn right or left and proceed directly to A.

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12. "Free Walk on a Long Rein" is a pace in which the Horse is allowed complete freedom to lower and stretch out his head and neck while the Athlete maintains a light contact through the rein. The Horse takes long strides and is not allowed to become lazy.

13. "Diagonals" – the left-hind and right-fore legs of the Horse are known as the right diagonal; the right-hind and left-fore legs are known as the left diagonal. An Athlete is said to be riding on the right diagonal when, at the rising trot, his seat returns to the saddle as the Horse's left-hind and right-fore come to the ground and vice versa. The Athlete should change the diagonal at every change of direction. It is optional whether he rides on the inside or the outside diagonal but must conform to the same one throughout.

14. When changing the rein at the rising trot from one quarter marker to another, the diagonal may be changed at the beginning or the end of the movement, especially at the extended trot, so as not to interrupt the cadence.

Article 339 – Blank

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CHAPTER VII JUDGING OF DRESSAGE TESTS

Article 340 – Execution of Tests

All movements must follow in the order laid down in the test.

1. **Sound of bell**. After the sound of the bell, the Athlete should enter the arena at A within 45 seconds. During Freestyle tests, in case of technical failure or delay in start of the music, the Judge at C can interrupt the count and re-continue after the problem has been resolved. The Judge at C is responsible for the bell and clock/time.
2. **Salute**. Athletes must take the reins in one hand at the salute.

Penalties, Technical Faults and Errors of Course

3. **Error of course**. When an Athlete makes an "error of course" (takes the wrong turn, omits a movement, etc.) the Judge at C warns him, by sounding the bell. The Judge at C shows him, if necessary, the point at which he must take up the test again and the next movement to be executed, then leaves him to continue by himself.

   However, in some cases when, although the Athlete makes an "error of course", the sounding of the bell would unnecessarily impede the fluency of the performance – for instance if the Athlete makes a transition from medium trot to collected walk at V instead of at K, or, cantering up the centre line from A, makes a pirouette at D instead of at L – it is up to the Judge at C to decide whether to sound the bell or not.

   However, if the bell is not sounded at an error of course and the test requires the same movement to be repeated and the Athlete again makes the same error, the Athlete is only penalised once.

   The decision as to whether or not an error of course has been made will be that of the Judge at C. The other Judges' scores will be adapted accordingly.

4. **Error of test / execution**. When an Athlete makes an "error of the execution of the test" (trots rising instead of sitting, at the salute does not take the reins in one hand, etc.) he must be penalised as for an "error of course". In principle an Athlete is not allowed to repeat a movement of the test unless the President at C decides on an error of course (sounds the bell). If, however, the Athlete has started the execution of a movement and attempts to do the same movement again, the judges must consider the first movement shown only and at the same time, penalise for an error of course.
5. **Unnoticed error**. If the Jury has not noted an error, the Athlete has the benefit of the doubt.
6. **Penalties and deductions.**

   6.1 **Error of Course and error of test/execution**. Every error of course, whether the bell is sounded or not, must be penalised and must be cumulative, except as noted above.

First error	- (minus) 2 Points
Second error	- (minus) 4 Points
Third error	Elimination

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6.2 **Other Errors – Technical Faults** All of the following are considered errors, and 2 percentage points will be deducted per error per judge. All judges must have the same number of penalties recorded. The following are not cumulative and will not result in elimination (including for Freestyle tests):

- If barred, entering the dressage arena with whip;
- Not entering the arena within 45 seconds after the bell but within 90 seconds;
- Entering the arena before the sound of the bell;
- In Freestyle tests, entering the arena after more than 20 seconds of music;
- If the freestyle test is longer or shorter than stipulated on the test sheet, 0.5% will be deducted from the total artistic score.

7. **Reasons for Elimination**.

7.1 **Lameness.** In a case of marked lameness, the Judge at C informs the Athlete that he is eliminated. There is no appeal against this decision.

7.2 **Resistance**. Any resistance which prevents the continuation of the test and lasts for longer than twenty (20) seconds is punished by Elimination. However, resistance that may endanger Athlete, Horse, Officials or the public will result in elimination for safety reasons even if the duration of the resistance does not exceed twenty (20) seconds. This provision also applies from the moment the Combination enters the space around the arena (i.e. before entering the competition arena at A).

7.3 **Fall.** In the case of a fall of Horse and/or Athlete, the Athlete will be eliminated.

7.4 **Leaving Arena During Dressage Test.** A Horse leaving the arena completely, with all four feet, during a dressage competition between the time of entry and the time of exit at A, will be eliminated (notwithstanding arena construction – Article 327.3)

7.5 **Outside assistance**. Any outside help by voice, signs, etc. (earphone and/or electronic communication devices included) from the moment the Combination enters the space around the arena until the test is concluded, is considered as illegal or unauthorized assistance to an Athlete or to the Horse. An Athlete or Horse receiving positive assistance must be eliminated.

7.6 **Bleeding.** If the Judge at C suspects fresh blood anywhere on the Horse from the moment the Combination enters the space around the arena until the test is concluded, he will stop the Horse to check for blood. If the Horse shows fresh blood, it will be eliminated. The elimination is final. If the Judge through examination clarifies that the Horse has no fresh blood, the Horse may resume and finish its test.

If the Horse is eliminated pursuant to the above, or if the Horse is injured during the test and starts bleeding after finishing the test, it should be examined by an official veterinary surgeon prior to the next competition to determine if it is fit to continue in the event the following day. The decision of the veterinarian is not subject to appeal.

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8. **Other reasons for Elimination**:

   - Horse and Athlete combination not being able to fulfill the requirements of the level;
   - The performance is against the welfare of the Horse;
   - Horse and Athlete combination not entering the competition arena within ninety (90) seconds after the bell. Except where a valid reason thereto has been informed to the Judge at C, valid reason may be losing a shoe etc);
   - When barred, carrying the whip longer than three (3) movements.
   - When there is any doubt in regard to fitness to compete after a fall at warm up area or before entering the competition arena.

9. **Penalty Points**.

   It is the responsibility of the Judge at C to decide whether a penalty should be applied and the other judges' sheets should be marked accordingly to ensure consistency.

10. **Execution of movement at certain point**. In a movement that must be carried out at a certain point of the arena, it should be done at the moment when the Athlete's body is above this point, except in transitions where the Horse approaches the letter from a diagonal or perpendicular to the point where the letters are positioned. In this case, the transitions must be done when the Horse's nose reaches the track at the letter so that the Horse is straight in the transition. This includes the execution of flying changes.

11. **Beginning / End of test**. A test begins with the entry at A and ends after the salute at the end of the test, as soon as the Horse moves forward. Any incidents before the beginning or after the end of the test have no effect on the marks. The Athlete should leave the arena in the way that is prescribed in the text of the test.

12. **Freestyle Tests**

    An Athlete must enter the arena within 20 seconds of the music starting.

    At the beginning and end of a Freestyle Test a halt for the salute is compulsory. The test time will start after the Athlete moves forward after the halt.

    Refer further to FEI Guidelines for Assessing the Degree of Difficulty in a Freestyle Test.

Article 341 – Time of Tests

Only Freestyle tests are timed. The time shown on the other Judge's sheet is for information only.

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Article 342 – Marking

1. All movements, and certain transitions from one to another, which have to be marked by the Judges, are numbered on the Judge's sheet.
2. They are marked from 0 to 10 by each Judge, 0 being the lowest and 10 the highest mark.

   The scale of marks is as follows:

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

   "Not executed" means that practically nothing of the required movement has been performed.

   All half marks from 0.5-9.5 may also be used both for movements and collective marks, at the discretion of the Judge.
3. After the Athlete has finished their performance, collective marks are awarded. The Collective marks requirements are fixed by the author of the test.
4. Collective marks, as well as certain difficult movements, can be given a coefficient, which is fixed by the author of the test.

Article 343 – Judges' Sheets

1. Marking sheets, one per entry per Judge, are required. Marks and Judges comments should be entered in ink.

   1.1 The Judges' sheets have 2 columns, the first for the Judge's original mark and the second for the Judge's comments. Any correction made to a mark must be verified by the Judge making the correction.

   1.2 In the comments column the Judge should as far as possible state his reason for his judgment. It is strongly recommended that comments should be given when giving marks of 5 or below.

   1.3 The judge gives the collective marks and the scorers multiply the marks by the corresponding coefficients where applicable and total the marks. Penalty points for errors in the execution of the test are then deducted on each Judge's sheet. The total score for classification is obtained by adding the total points on each of the Judges' sheets and converted to a percentage.

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2. Athletes may be given their Judging sheets after the competition by email but not until the Judges have sanctioned their distribution.
3. Athletes taking part in two dressage classes on the same day judged by the same Judge, shall not have access to their judging sheets before competing in the second class.
4. Judges' marking sheets with remarks verified by the Judge, must be treated as confidential until given to the Athlete, when they become his private property
5. The Organisers of a dressage competition are obliged to make public the percentage awarded by each of the Judges, the total percentage and the classification of results, for each of the entries in the competition. Results should be announced as soon as possible after each Athlete has completed the test.

Article 344 – Classification

1. After each performance and after each judge has given his collective marks and signed the sheets, these pass into the hands of the scorers. The marks are multiplied by the corresponding coefficients, where applicable, and then totalled. Penalty points for errors in the execution of the tests are then deducted on each judge's sheet. After signing and giving away the sheet, or electronically submitting the results (paperless), Judges can no longer change their marks, with the exception of a situation, when a mark is missing, in which case the protocol should be given back to the Judge, who will add the missing mark.
2. The total score for the classification is obtained by adding the total points on each of the judge's sheets and converted to a percentage.
3. The winner is the Athlete having attained the highest total percentage, the second placed Athlete is the one with the next highest total and so on.
4. **Ties.** In the case of equality of percentage for the first three places, the higher collective marks will decide on the better placing. If these marks are tied, the placings remain tied.

Article 345 – Prize-giving

1. Participation in the prize-giving ceremony of placed Athletes is compulsory. Failure to do so entails losing the classification (rosette, plaque, prize in kind, prize money). Exception to this rule can only be granted by the President of the Ground Jury.
2. Rosettes/rugs should be placed on Horses prior to prize-giving.

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CHAPTER VIII ENTERING FOR A DRESSAGE EVENT

Article 346 – Entering for a Dressage Event

1. Organisers shall provide every riding establishment wishing to participate with an entry form for each of the dressage competitions to be ridden in the show and with copies of each test to be ridden. This should be done at least 7 days prior to the show date, whenever possible.
2. Athletes wishing to enter must fill out all details required by the Organiser and listed on the entry form.
3. "Nomination" of Athlete or Horse will be accepted only at the discretion of the Organiser, who shall inform the persons concerned of the latest date on which they must declare actual name of Horse and Athlete.

   All entries must be made before the deadline specified by the Organisers. Late entries may only be accepted at the discretion of the Organisers.
4. Entry fee for a competition is payable at the time fixed by the Organiser and entrance to the arena may be refused to anyone who has not paid the required fee.
5. Athletes wishing to ride "hors concours" (out of competition) in any dressage competition must obtain prior permission from the Organisers. They will normally ride before all other Athletes. They will not be eligible for any grading points, prize or rosette. Payment of the entry fee is normally due, but may be waived at the discretion of the Organisers.
6. Making an entry for any dressage competition implies full acceptance of these Rules.
7. It is the responsibility of Organisers and Athletes to ensure that all entries are eligible to compete.

Article 347 – Competition Etiquette

Athletes will assist Stewards in the efficient running of events by:

1. Reporting their presence to the Collecting Ring Steward while riding-in, if possible 15 minutes before their starting time and being on hand nearer the time to receive the Steward's signal to go to the arena.
2. Riding where close to the arena, as soon as the previous Athlete has made his exit.
3. Beginning their test without delay on receiving the Judges' signal to start.
4. On a signal being given for error of course, proceeding immediately to the Judges, to receive instructions.
5. By ensuring that they are conforming to the rules regarding dress, saddlery and tack.

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Article 348 – Interpretation of Score Sheets

Every movement (as shown in the test sheet) is given a mark by the Judges consistent with its quality and the way it is ridden. (See FEI Dressage Handbook) To facilitate understanding of any mark awarded by the Judges, Athletes should note that Judges will penalise the following common faults according to their importance, in every individual movement and will also take account of them in the collective marks:

1. *Basic Faults*
   - 1.1 Irregular or unlevel paces
   - 1.2 Horse consistently without impulsion (e.g., but not limited to, failure to overtrack at extended paces)
   - 1.3 Horse consistently resisting and disobedient
   - 1.4 Horse moving consistently crooked
   - 1.5 Athlete's faulty or slanted seat and ineffectual aids
2. *Major Faults*
   - 2.1 Unsteady head (tossing or side-to-side movement out of rhythm)
   - 2.2 Faulty head carriage (above, below or behind the bit, tilted consistently to one side). Lolling tongue
   - 2.3 Break in the gait called for in test sheet. or uncalled for in test sheet, or uncalled for change of lead at canter
   - 2.4 Lack or loss of rhythm or of harmony between Horse and Athlete
   - 2.5 Horse not bent and flexed as required by movement being ridden (e.g. on curved lines, circles, two-track movements)
   - 2.6 Faulty geometry (e.g., corners taken too wide; circles too large or irregular shape; serpentines with unequal or irregular loops etc.)

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CHAPTER IX GROUND JURY

Article 349 – Judges

1. All dressage competitions held under EFHKC rules shall be judged by one suitably qualified Judge and, wherever possible, a Ground Jury of at least two suitably qualified Judges.
2. Judges should be positioned around the arena as follows:

   C - on the short side, 5m out from the arena on the prolongation of the centre line;

   M - on the short side, 5m out from the arena, 2.5m in from the prolongation of the long side;

   H - on the short side, 5m out from the arena, 2.5m in from the prolongation of the long side;

   B - on the long side 5 -10m out from the arena in line with marker B;

   E - on the long side 5 -10m out from the arena in line with marker E;

   The President of the Jury should be positioned at C.
3. No judge may officiate at an event if his duties will involve a conflict of interest. The following may not serve as Judges:
   - 3.1 Owners or Athletes of Horses taking part in the competition;
   - 3.2 Close relatives of those mentioned in paragraph 3.1 above;
   - 3.3 Chefs d'Equipe whose Athletes are entered in the competition;
   - 3.4 Trainers of Athletes or Horses entered in the competition.
4. Such Judges must be:
   - 4.1 Qualified to judge by the EFHKC and listed on its current panel of Dressage Judges, on a list appropriate to the level of competition being staged.
   - 4.2 Foreign National Judges of the appropriate level and approved by the Board of Directors of the EFHKC and appointed by the Organisers of the competition to judge at an event.
   - 4.3 Judges of International standard, listed by the FEI as International 3* Dressage Judges or higher, may judge alone, subject to prior permission of the EFHKC.

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Article 350 – Listing of Judges

Judges are listed under four categories as follows:

1. *List D*

   Qualified to judge as a member of a Jury BE 90 & 100, all BD and EA tests of Preliminary and Novice standard.

2. *List C*

   Qualified to judge alone all BE, BD and EA tests of up to and including Novice tests or as a member of a Jury BE, BD and EA Elementary tests with a higher list Judge.

3. *List B*

   Qualified to judge alone all BE, BD and EA tests of up to and including Medium tests and as a member of a Jury BHS BD and EA Advanced Medium / Advanced tests and FEI WDC (except Prix St Georges/ Intermediate 1).

4. *List A*

   Qualified to judge alone all BE, BD, and EA, tests up to and including Advanced tests and FEI WDC and FEI tests up to and including Prix St Georges/ Intermediate 1.

Article 351 – Appointment or Promotion of Judges

Appointment or promotion may only be recommended subsequent to the candidate achieving a suitable level of theoretical knowledge and practical experience and being recommended as suitable by the Senior Discipline Judge or by a visiting assessing Judge appointed by the Board of Directors.

For Removal or downgrading of EFHKC Listed judges, see Article 109 of the EFHKC General Rules.

Article 352 - Minimum Judging Requirements

In order to retain accreditation, listed dressage judges are required to judge a minimum number of competitions every season at or below their level. The minimum requirement is three (3) EFHKC recognised competitions per season in Hong Kong.

Recognised competitions include EFHKC affiliated shows, FEI, Interschool, Eventing Dressage or Riding School shows. Competitions falling outside these will be considered on a case by case basis.

Judges who do not meet this compulsory requirement, and / or cannot show cause, will be downgraded at least one (1) level or levels as deemed appropriate by Rules Sub Committee.

Judges who have been downgraded who wish to reattain accreditation will need to satisfy the requirements as per Article 351 for their respective level at the next opportunity.

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