



FÉDÉRATION
ÉQUESTRE
INTERNATIONALE

**GENERAL AND
DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC
PROTOCOLS FOR
ASSESSING THE
TIGHTNESS OF
NOSEBANDS**

GENERAL PROTOCOL FOR ASSESSING THE TIGHTNESS OF NOSEBANDS WITH THE FEI MEASURING DEVICE

Introduction

The tightness of nosebands shall be controlled at all FEI Events by the FEI Stewards¹ using the FEI Measuring Device. If not all Horses are examined, Horses may be selected randomly and/or targeted.

The noseband must be fitted in such a way that the FEI Measuring Device can be inserted under the noseband, over the nasal bone, and drawn through from top to bottom. This rule applies to all types of nosebands and to both the upper and lower noseband.

General Protocol:

1. Once the Horse has been selected for the control, the FEI Steward will inform the Handler of the Horse² that the control of the noseband tightness will take place using the FEI Measuring Device. If the Handler of the Horse is mounted on the Horse, the FEI Steward shall ask the Handler of the Horse whether they wish to dismount the Horse for the purpose of the control. The FEI Steward may instruct the Handler of the Horse to dismount, if the Horse appears restless. Whether mounted or dismounted, it is the responsibility of the Handler of the Horse to hold the Horse's reins at all times during the control. A mounting block can be provided to facilitate the Handler of the Horse's dismount and/or mount, should they choose to use it.

The FEI Steward may, in justified circumstances (e.g. in case of particularly excitable and/or nervous Horses), conduct the control in a quiet area such as the stable area.

In exceptional circumstances and upon the approval of the FEI Steward, the Handler of the Horse may conduct the control.

2. Wearing a new pair of disposable gloves for each horse, the FEI Steward shall, in a calm and slow manner, approach the Horse, in general³, from the Horse's left side.

3. The FEI Steward shall in a calm manner place their left hand on the Horse's neck slowly progressing to the Horse's nasal front while holding the FEI Measuring Device in their right hand. In general, using the left-hand thumb and index finger, the FEI Steward shall gently squeeze the sides of the top of the noseband to allow for the insertion of the FEI Measuring Device. Any removable padding under the noseband should be held carefully in place while the tool slides underneath the noseband. In case of use of removable padding, it is the responsibility of the Handler of the Horse to present the Horse with a padding that allows for the insertion of the FEI Measuring Device. The handling of the noseband may vary slightly depending on the noseband type.

4. The FEI Steward shall proceed to gently insert the FEI Measuring Device under the noseband from the top in a downward direction. The left hand shall remain in place gently

¹ Unless otherwise specified in the Discipline Specific Protocols.

² Handler of the Horse: Person presenting the Horse for the control such as the Athlete, the Groom, the Trainer, the Lunger, the Owner and/or any other member of the Athlete's Support Personnel. The Athlete's presence is not required for the validity of the control.

³ The Protocols have been written with the right-handed FEI Stewards in mind, as the majority population. Left-handed FEI Stewards may apply the Protocols in the same manner using their left hand.

positioned over the nose of the Horse while holding the noseband. With the index and/or middle finger on the right hand, the FEI Steward shall proceed to gently slide through the FEI Measuring Device from top to bottom, applying a reasonable amount of pressure for that purpose. Once the FEI Measuring Device has passed through the noseband at the "Wear and Tear Mark" point, the FEI Steward can release the hold on the noseband and retrieve the FEI Measuring Device with their left hand. If the FEI Measuring Device cannot be passed through comfortably, the noseband is deemed too tight.

5. After the FEI Measuring Device has been retrieved by the FEI Steward, the FEI Steward shall inform the Handler of the Horse that the control is complete and step away from the Horse.

6. The disposable gloves used for the control shall be removed and a new pair of disposable gloves shall be worn for each Horse.

7. The FEI Measuring Device shall be cleaned with a disinfectant wipe that is non-irritant, non-toxic, horse-safe and not a risk for doping control prior to its use with the next Horse.

8. Should the Handler of the Horse readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse must re-present the Horse for another control.

9. If the FEI Measuring Device cannot be passed through comfortably, the noseband is deemed too tight. If that occurs, the FEI Steward shall proceed as per the following steps:

i. Pre-Competition control

If the control is performed before the Competition i.e. at any time before the Athlete and the Horse combination enter the Field of Play for the purpose of their performance, the FEI Steward shall instruct the Handler of the Horse to readjust the noseband. If the Handler of the Horse is mounted and unassisted by their Support Personnel, the Handler of the Horse must dismount for the purpose of the readjustment. Following the readjustment of the noseband, the FEI Steward shall repeat the control. If the noseband is still deemed too tight, the noseband/bridle must be further adjusted until the control is passed successfully.

If the Handler of the Horse refuses or is unable to readjust the noseband in the manner whereby the FEI measuring Device is passed through comfortably, the Athlete and the Horse combination are not allowed to work the Horse and/or start in the Competition. Failure to comply with the instructions of the FEI Steward may entail sanctions as per the FEI General Regulations.

ii. Post-Competition control

If the control is performed after the Athlete and the Horse combination's performance, and the FEI Measuring Device is unable to pass through comfortably, the Athlete and Horse combination is eliminated from the Competition in question and the Athlete is issued with a Yellow Warning Card (as per Art. 1044.8 of the FEI Veterinary Regulations). No exceptions are allowed and the FEI Officials do not have any discretionary power to amend or deviate from the applicable consequences.

The control can be performed at any time, however, Discipline specific recommendations in that regard are set out further below in order to accommodate the specificities of each Discipline.

In general, the control should cause the least amount of interference, if any, with the Athlete and the Horse's preparation for their Competition.

Noseband Tightness Rules (FEI Veterinary Regulations, Art. 1044.8)

Effective 1 May 2025, the following provisions apply regarding the Noseband Tightness:

The noseband must be adjusted with sufficient laxity, as determined by an FEI approved Measuring Device. The rule applies to all types of nosebands and to both the upper and lower noseband.

The detailed protocol for measuring the tightness of noseband(s) is provided for in the (Discipline specific) Noseband Tightness Measuring Protocol(s).

Excessively tightened noseband(s), as determined by an FEI approved Measuring Device, shall incur the following consequences:

Pre-Competition: The Horse and the Athlete combination is not allowed to start unless the noseband is re-adjusted to allow enough laxity.

During the Competition: The Horse and Athlete combination is eliminated from the Competition in question and the Athlete is issued with a Yellow Warning Card.

Biosecurity Protocol

The FEI Steward conducting the control must wear disposable gloves that are replaced with a new pair after each Horse. The disposable gloves must be made of nitril or latex. Vinyl gloves are not suitable as they do not provide enough grip.

After each Horse the FEI Measuring Device must be cleaned using a disinfectant wipe.

Bridle Fit and Re-adjustment

All Horses participating in FEI Events should be presented with properly fitted and well-maintained tack in order to facilitate the control. Athletes and/or their Support Personnel are advised to check the tightness of their noseband using the FEI Measuring Device before participating in an FEI Event.

In some cases, re-adjustment of the flash strap, the upper noseband strap, and/or puncturing of additional holes in the noseband may be needed.

DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS

FEI™ JUMPING

Although the control can be performed at any time, the following timings of the control are recommended:

Pre-Competition control

- Before the Handler of the Horse starts to warm up the Horse;
- Combined with the Pre-Competition Hind Boot Check, if applicable;
- At any time the Handler of the Horse requests the control.

Should the Handler of the Horse readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse must re-present the Horse for another control.

Post-Competition control

- Combined with the Post-Competition Boot and Bandage Control, if applicable;
- If no Boot and Bandage Control takes place, immediately after the Athlete and Horse combination leave the competition arena after their performance.

FEI™ DRESSAGE

FEI™ PARA DRESSAGE

Although the control can be performed at any time, the following timings of the control are recommended:

Pre-Competition control

- Before the Handler of the Horse starts to warm up the Horse;
- At any time the Handler of the Horse requests the control.

Should the Handler of the Horse readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse must re-present the Horse for another control.

Post-Competition control

- Combined with the Post-Competition Tack Control. The control should be conducted before the bit check.



Although the control can be performed at any time, the following timings of the control are recommended:

Dressage Test

Pre-Competition control

- Before the Handler of the Horse starts to warm up the Horse;
- At any time, the Handler of the Horse requests the control.

Should the Handler of the Horse readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse must represent the Horse for another control.

Post-Competition control

- Combined with the Post-Competition Tack Control. The control should be conducted before the bit check.

Cross Country Test

Pre-Competition control

- Before the Handler of the Horse starts to warm up the Horse;
- At any time the Handler of the Horse requests the control.

Should the Handler of the Horse readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse must represent the Horse for another control.

Post-Competition control

Although the control can be performed at any time, including exceptionally following the Cross Country Test, priority should be given to the actions required for the quick cooling down of the Horses.

Jumping Test

Pre-Competition control

- Before the Handler of the Horse starts to warm up the Horse;
- Combined with the pre-competition Hind Boot Check, if applicable;
- At any time the Handler of the Horse requests the control.

Should the Handler of the Horse readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse must represent the Horse for another control.

Post-Competition control

- Combined with the Post-Competition Boot and Bandage Control, if applicable;
- If no Boot and Bandage Control takes place, immediately after the Athlete and Horse combination leave the competition arena after their performance.

For Pair and Four-In-Hand turnouts the control shall be performed on all Horses from the same turnout.

For safety reason, before the control is conducted the Groom shall dismount the carriage to assist the Driver in holding the Horse(s).

The FEI Steward may, in justified circumstances (e.g. in case of particularly excitable and/or nervous Horses), conduct the control in a quiet area such as the stable area and/or after the Horse has been taken out of the carriage.

Dressage

Pre-Competition control

- Before the Handler of the Horse starts to warm up the Horse(s);
- At any time the Handler of the Horse(s) requests the control.

Should the Handler of the Horse(s) readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse(s) must re-present the Horse for another control.

Post-Competition control

- Combined with the Post-Competition Tack Control.

Marathon

Pre-Competition control

- Before the Handler of the Horse starts to warm up the Horse(s);
- Combined with the In-Harness Horse Inspection;
- At any time the Handler of the Horse(s) requests the control.

Should the Handler of the Horse(s) readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse(s) must re-present the Horse(s) for another control.

Post-Competition control

- Combined with the In-Harness Examination.

Cones

Pre-Competition control

- Before the Handler of the Horse(s) starts to warm up the Horse(s);
- Combined with the In-Harness Inspection Before Cones;
- At any time the Handler of the Horse(s) requests the control.

Should the Handler of the Horse(s) readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse(s) must re-present the Horse(s) for another control.

Post-Competition control

- Combined with the Post-Competition Tack Control.
- If no Post-Competition Tack Control takes place, immediately after the turnout leaves the competition arena after their performance.

Combined Marathon

Pre-Competition control

- Before the Handler of the Horse(s) starts to warm up the Horse(s);
- At any time the Handler of the Horse(s) requests the control.

Should the Handler of the Horse(s) readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse(s) must re-present the Horse(s) for another control.

Post-Competition control

- Combined with the Post-Competition Tack Control.
- If no post-Competition Tack Control takes place, immediately after the turnout leaves the competition arena after their performance.

Biosecurity Protocol

The FEI Steward conducting the control does not need to replace the disposable gloves in between Horses in the same turnout i.e., for Horses in Pair and Four-In-Hand. Similarly, the FEI Measuring Device does not need to be cleaned using a disinfectant wipe in between Horses in the same turnout.



Although the control can be performed at any time, the following timings of the control are recommended:

Pre-Competition control

- Before the Handler of the Horse starts to warm up the Horse;
- Combined with the tack and equipment check before the start of the Competition, in such case a member of the Ground Jury may perform the control;
- At any time, the Handler of the Horse requests the control.

Should the Handler of the Horse readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse must re-present the Horse for another control.

During and/or Post-Competition control

- At crew and water points;
- Before the start of the next Loop.

Although the control can be performed at any time, including exceptionally following the completion of each loop(s), priority should be given to the actions required for the quick cooling down of the Horses.



Although the control can be performed at any time, the following timings of the control are recommended:

Pre-Competition control

- Before the Handler of the Horse starts to warm up the Horse;
- At any time the Handler of the Horse requests the control.

Should the Handler of the Horse readjust the noseband, following a successful Pre-Competition control, before entering the Field of Play for the purpose of the performance, the Handler of the Horse must re-present the Horse for another control.

Post-Competition control

- Combined with the Post-Competition Equipment Check.

The lunge cavesson is exempted from the control.