

# HDA & USEF DRESSAGE RULE HIGHLIGHTS

All HDA Schooling Shows are run in accordance with USEF Dressage Rules, with the exceptions noted below. Here is a summary of the primary rules. For complete rules, see the USEF rulebook ([usef.org](http://usef.org)).

## Objectives and General Principles

The objective of dressage is the harmonious development of the athleticism and ability of the horse. Dressage should not only make the horse calm, supple, loose and flexible, but also confident, attentive and keen thus achieving an ideal understanding with his rider.

## Schooling Show Entries

- **Membership:** Membership forms/fees should be sent to the Membership coordinator prior to the closing date. You must be a member of HDA by the closing date for the discounted member entry fee and for scores to count toward year end awards. It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure that his or her membership is current.
- **Entries:** All entry materials must be submitted to in the Schedule Secretary BY the closing date. Please include a completed and signed entry form, online payment or a check for your total entry fees, and a current negative Coggins. MA horses must have a Coggins dated within 12 months of the show date, out of state horses must have a Coggins dated within 6 months of the show date. Once you submit a Coggins, you will not need to resubmit one for the remainder of the season unless it expires.
- **Juniors:** A Junior is under the age of 18 as of January 1st of the competition year and may compete as a junior until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 18.
- **Show schedule:** Day sheets and Rider schedules will be posted on the HDA website ([Heritage-Dressage.org](http://Heritage-Dressage.org)) midweek prior to show date; please no phone calls.
- **Splitting of classes:** Management reserves right to combine, cancel or divide classes if entries warrant.
- **Class limits:** At Introductory and Training level (or WDAA Intro and Basic tests), an individual horse may be entered in a maximum of four classes, not including Lead-line classes. At First Level (WDAA Level 1) and above, including combining First Level with another level, a horse may enter a maximum of three classes, not including Lead-line.
- **Consecutive levels:** Horses may enter no more than two consecutive levels at one dressage competition with the same rider. When competing in consecutive levels, rider must also select consecutive tests. For example, Intro C + Training 1 + Training 2 or WDAA Intro Test 4 + WDAA Basic Test 1 + WDAA Basic Test 2.
- **Refunds:** No refunds after the closing date without a veterinary or medical note. All inquiries regarding refunds should be directed to [heritage\\_dressage@yahoo.com](mailto:heritage_dressage@yahoo.com).

- **Show cancellation:** In the case of extreme weather conditions, every effort will be made to reschedule the show and entries will automatically transfer to the new date. Refunds will be offered on a case-by-case basis.
- **Returned checks:** A \$25 fee will be charged for returned checks for any HDA event.

### Participation in Dressage Competitions

- **Age of horse:** No horse may compete in an under-saddle class if it is under 3 years of age at the time of competition.
- **Stallions:** Stallions are permitted to compete at HDA shows with handlers / riders over the age of 18.
- **Braiding:** Braiding of the horse is optional at all HDA shows.
- **Bridle numbers:** Exhibitors must display their numbers while competing. It is required that the number be displayed on the horse whenever the horse is out of the trailer or stall.

### Dress for the Rider

- **Helmets:** At any HDA event, it is compulsory that all riders mounted at any time or anywhere on the competition/event showgrounds, competing at any level, wear properly fitted, approved, protective headgear.
- **Dress Code:** Recommended dress code through 4th Level is a short riding coat of conservative color with tie, choker, or stock tie, breeches or jodhpurs, boots or jodhpur boots. HDA allows riders to wear half chaps at schooling shows. Western riders are recommended to wear a long-sleeved shirt of any color. Western chaps are optional. Refer to WDAA required and optional attire rules for full details.
- **Waiving of jackets:** In extreme heat/humidity, management can allow competitors to show without jackets and will notify riders. However, exhibitors must wear a regulation hat and solid white or very pale colored long or short sleeve shirt (no sleeveless) without neckwear.
- **Raingear:** Exhibitors are allowed to wear a hat cover and a transparent or conservative color raincoat in inclement weather.
- **Spurs:** For English riders, spurs must be metal and with the shank pointing directly back from the center. The arms of the spur must be smooth. If rowels are present, they must freely rotate. For Western riders, spurs with or without blunt tines permitted, bumper spurs are permitted, and rowels may not have sharp tines. These rules applies whenever mounted on show grounds.
- **Whips:** One whip no longer than 120 cm/47.2 in with lash may be carried in all HDA classes.

### Equipment for the Horse

- **Saddle:** An English style saddle with stirrups is required at all levels. A Western saddle is required in all Western Dressage classes.

- **Bits:** See the USEF rulebook for approved bits and approved bit material.
- **Other equipment:** For English tests, no gadgets, ornaments, or leg protection of any kind is allowed in the show ring. Polo wraps are currently permitted for WDAA tests. Leg protection and some training devices are permitted in the warm up areas. Side reins are allowed only while lungeing and horses must be lunged in assigned warm-up area only. See USEF rulebook for complete rule.

## Execution and Test Judging

- **Ring Stewards:** Ring stewards are there to help keep the show on schedule and to check equipment. You are responsible for knowing your ride time and ring. Please check in with the ring steward for your ring as you enter the warm-up area.
- **Ride times:** No rider is required to ride before their assigned time. If the show is running late, each competitor is responsible to know when they are to ride and remain in close proximity to the ring when their ride time nears.
- **Entering the ring:** Be prepared to enter the ring at your scheduled time or earlier. Once the previous rider has done their final salute, riders may go around the outside of the ring. Riders are allowed up to 45 seconds to enter the ring to start the test once the judge rings their bell, whistle or horn. Judges and scribes appreciate it if the rider tells them their number as they pass by the judge prior to entering.
- **Having a test reader:** All tests through 4th Level may be read. Western dressage tests may be read. Exhibitors should instruct the reader to read each movement only once.
- **Saluting at the entry and finish halt:** When immobile, the unisex salute includes taking both reins in one hand and letting the other arm drop loosely and briefly while inclining the head.
- **Use of voice:** For English tests, use of voice in any way whatsoever, including clucking and trilling, is a fault and will result in deduction of 2 points at that movement each time it occurs. WDAA tests currently permit use of voice. Additionally, do not speak to your reader until you are out of the ring.
- **Going off course:** If a rider goes off course, the judge will ring the bell/whistle/horn and designate to the rider where to resume. The reader may not give direction but may start reading again from the point where rider resumes.
- **Lameness:** The judge will eliminate a competitor for marked lameness. The judge's decision is final.
- **Leaving the ring after the test:** Leave the ring on a long rein at the walk. One or both hands on reins are allowed. At all HDA Schooling Shows the "open gate" policy is in effect, i.e. the part of the ring at "A" will remain open at all times.

## Lead Line Division

- **Definitions:**

- **Lead Line:** The horse and rider will ride a pattern, the horse being led by a handler.
- **A Step Above Lead Line:** The horse and rider will ride a pattern on their own, without a handler.
- **Lead Line Equitation** will be judged based on the rider's position, attentiveness, steady hands and seat, leg position, and feet in the stirrups. Posting diagonal will not be counted.
- **Lead Line suitability** will be judged based on the suitability of horse and rider for the class, manners and obedience of the horse, and attentiveness of horse and rider.
- **Cross-entering:** A horse and rider combo in the Pre-Intro Division (includes both Lead Line classes) may not enter any other class at the show. If you have two riders sharing one horse in the same class, you may switch riders (and numbers) once the first rider has completed the pattern, then place yourself at the end of the lineup. Once a horse and rider combo has entered A Step Above class, they are no longer eligible to enter a Lead Line class. Once a Horse and Rider combo has entered a level above Pre-Intro, they are no longer eligible for the Pre-Intro Division. The Pre -Intro Division classes are not counted towards a horse's maximum number of classes per show.
- **Division of classes:** Classes may be divided at the discretion of the show secretary.
- **Attire:** Riders may exhibit in Western or English attire. Jackets and gloves are optional. Equipment on the horse must correspond with rider's attire, including a saddle adjusted so that the rider's feet are placed properly in stirrups. Handler attire does not need to match. Helmets are required.
- **Handler:** The horse must be led by an individual 16 years of age or older.
- **Judges:** The class will be judged by a licensed instructor. The judge will not have any of their own students in the class.

### Year-End Awards

- **Tests:** The same test must be ridden a minimum of 2 times in HDA shows in that year. If the same test is ridden more than 2 times, only the top 2 scores will be used to calculate the year-end average.
- **Horse and rider:** The rider must be an HDA member at the time of the show. The horse and rider combination must be the same. The horse and rider combination must show in a minimum of two HDA shows in that year.
- **Test awards:** Awards shall be given for the highest average score in each test provided a minimum year-end average score of 55% is achieved. Ties are permitted for year-end awards in individual tests.
- **Divisional awards:** Divisional awards are calculated using the top 2 scores for each test and, if necessary, ties are broken using the overall average across all tests at that level. Divisional awards do not require riding all tests in a division to qualify.

- **Awards across levels:** If a horse and rider combination competes in two levels throughout the year, they can receive year-end awards for individual tests but will only be eligible for divisional awards at the higher level.