



# PONY CLUB

## VICTORIA

Inc AS134135S | ABN: 64 320 020 091

# Dressage Rules

**Effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017**

(supersedes all previous editions—only rules in this edition are applicable)

## Introduction

These rules and guidelines have been produced by the Pony Club Victoria Incorporated (PCV).

This rule book governs all dressage competitions conducted by the PCV, its clubs and zones and supersedes all previous versions.

This book also endeavours to provide a simple picture of what is expected from riders at the various grades.

## Definitions

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In this rule book, the following definitions apply:

- The term “bell” includes any device used to signal to a competitor.
- PCV means Pony Club Victoria Inc.
- FEI means Fédération Equestre Internationale ([www.horsesport.org](http://www.horsesport.org)).
- EA means Equestrian Australia ([www.equestrian.org.au](http://www.equestrian.org.au)).
- Unless stated to the contrary, a reference in this handbook to a rule, in this publication or elsewhere, refers to the rule and all its sub-clauses.
- Unless otherwise specified, reference to a rule number means the rules within this publication.
- The singular includes the plural and vice versa; and words importing one gender include the other.
- Some reference material noted in this book is available from the PCV web site; such material is also available from the PCV state office in a printed format. PCV may charge a fee for printed information.

## Acknowledgements

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## **1. Rules Governing Dressage Competitions**

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### **1.1 Use of Rules**

- 1.1.a Any club or organisation hosting a dressage competition under PCV rules must abide by these rules.
- 1.1.b Rules cannot provide for every eventuality. In unforeseen circumstances it is the responsibility of the appropriate Official(s) in charge to make a decision in the spirit of the sport adhering as closely as possible to the intention of the rules.

### **1.2 Source of Rules**

- 1.2.a These rules follow FEI and EA rules as closely as possible.
- 1.2.b Reference should be made to current EA Rules ([www.equestrian.org.au](http://www.equestrian.org.au)) in the first instance and then FEI Rules ([www.horsesport.org](http://www.horsesport.org)) for further clarification if a rule is not covered in this book.

## **2. Pony Club Conditions**

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### **2.1 Eligibility to Compete**

- 2.1.a To be able to compete, the combination (rider and horse) must prove eligibility, in accordance with *PCV Handbook of By Laws*. Eligibility requirements cover:
  - i PCV club member cards
  - ii Rally attendance
  - iii Grading
- 2.1.b It is the member's responsibility to ensure they are eligible to compete before entering a competition.
- 2.1.c Members are advised to consult with their club DC if they are unsure of their eligibility.

### **2.2 Hors Concours**

- 2.2.a Riders may compete hors concours only in accordance with the *PCV Handbook of By Laws*.

### **2.3 Grading**

- 2.3.a A grading system applies in accordance with the *PCV Handbook of By Laws* and *PCV Grading Guidelines*.
- 2.3.b There are five grades of pony club dressage. The standards expected at each grade of dressage are explained in rule 10.

### **2.4 Uniform**

- 2.4.a Correct uniform must be worn in accordance with the *PCV Gear Rules*.

### **2.5 Competitor's Number**

- 2.5.a Competitor numbers must be in accordance with the *PCV Gear Rules*.

### **2.6 Saddlery and Equipment Requirements**

- 2.6.a Saddlery and equipment (gear) is permitted only in accordance with the *PCV Gear Rules*.

### **2.7 Gear Check**

- 2.7.a Gear (saddlery and equipment) must be checked at all competitions in accordance with the *PCV Gear Rules*.
- 2.7.b It is the competitor's responsibility to abide by the saddlery and equipment requirements in accordance with the *PCV Gear Rules*.
- 2.7.c It is the organising committee's responsibility to provide a steward who must check the saddlery and equipment in accordance with the *PCV Gear Rules* before allowing a competitor to enter the arena.

## **2.8 Medication Control of Horse and/or Rider**

- 2.8.a Medication control rules for both horse and/or rider apply in accordance with the *PCV Handbook of By Laws*.
- 2.8.b The current lists of prohibited and permitted substances are contained in the FEI Veterinary Regulations. In essence, the rules prohibit the use of any substance other than a normal nutrient that, by its nature, could affect the overall performance of the horse.

## **2.9 Warm-up**

- 2.9.a Once on the grounds:
  - i Only the competitor may ride or lunge their horse.
  - ii Competitors must use correct gear (including approved helmet and boots, and visible competitor number) in accordance with the *PCV Gear Rules*.
- 2.9.b A horse may not be ridden or led into a competition arena; this applies also when the arenas are erected on the day(s) prior to the event. If the Arena is a permanent fixture, this rule applies from the time the organising Committee has deemed it a competition area and this time must be well advertised.
- 2.9.c A competitor may be eliminated for a breach of these conditions.

## **2.10 Queries and Protests**

- 2.10.a Queries and protests must be managed in accordance with the *PCV Handbook of By Laws*.

## **2.11 Arenas**

- 2.11.a Refer to rule 11 for applicable arena sizes.
- 2.11.b Refer to rule 7 for plans of the arenas showing the position of the markers.

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### 3. Execution of Tests

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#### 3.1 Fundamental Requirements

- 3.1.a All movements contained in tests must be executed in the order laid down in the test.
- 3.1.b The rider must be mounted on entering and leaving the arena.
- 3.1.c In a movement, which must be carried out at a certain point of the arena, the movement must be executed at that moment when the rider's body is adjacent to this point.
- 3.1.d Judging of all tests begin with the entry into the arena at A but is not influenced by any actions of the competitor prior to their entrance at A.
- 3.1.e Tests end:
  - i Grades 1 to 4: after the salute at the end of the test, as soon as the horse moves forward
  - ii Grade 5: upon exit at A unless otherwise stipulated
- 3.1.f Any incidents before the beginning or after the end of the test have no effect on the marks.
- 3.1.g A competitor must leave the arena as is prescribed in the test instructions.
- 3.1.h Riding with both hands on the reins is obligatory in all dressage competitions except when saluting or leaving the arena after the final salute.
- 3.1.i The use of the voice in any manner, or clicking the tongue once or repeatedly, is a fault and must be penalised by the deduction of two marks from those that would otherwise have been given for the movement where this occurred: not all judges will deduct marks as not all judges may have heard the sound.

#### 3.2 Calling of Tests

- 3.2.a Dressage tests may be called for Pure Dressage. Tests may NOT be called in Dressage State Championships. Tests may NOT be called for Horse Trials, Combined Training or Short Course Dressage.
- 3.2.b Where callers are allowed, it is the responsibility of the competitor to ensure that only the printed text, or extracts thereof, is read out and that no other form of assistance is given.
- 3.2.c The caller may read each movement once or twice only. Failure to observe this rule may entail elimination.

#### 3.3 Entering the Arena

- 3.3.a After the bell has sounded, the rider must enter the arena at A as soon as possible.
  - i Failure to enter the arena within 45 seconds of the bell being sounded will entail a penalty of 2 points per judge.
  - ii Entering at A before the starting signal has been given may entail a penalty of 2 points per judge.

#### 3.4 Leaving the Arena During Test

- 3.4.a A horse leaving the arena with all four feet between the time of entry at A and the time of exit at A will incur elimination if the arena is fully enclosed to the recommended minimum height of 0.3m and the gate at A has been closed.
- 3.4.b A horse leaving the arena with all four feet between the time of entry at A and the time of exit at A will be awarded an error of course for the movement if the surrounds are not at least 0.3m in height or the arena has intermittent boards or line markings.
- 3.4.c If the arena surrounds are 0.3m or over, a horse leaving the arena anywhere, other than through an open gate, will be eliminated.

- 3.4.d A horse leaving the arena with all four feet between the time of entry at A and the time of exit at A, through the gate at A will be awarded an error of course for the movement if the gate has not been closed.
- 3.4.e When a horse makes such an “error of course” by leaving the arena with all four feet between the time of entry at A and the time of exit at A, the judge at C warns him, by sounding the bell. The judge then directs him to re-enter the arena at the nearest practical place, then shows him, if necessary where to recommence the test.

### **3.5 Salute**

- 3.5.a When saluting, all riders must take the reins and whip in one hand, either hand may be used, - drop their free hand by their side and bow their head to the judge.

### **3.6 Dismounting or Fall of Horse and/or Rider**

- 3.6.a The rider must be mounted on entering and leaving the arena in accordance with rule 3.1.b.
- 3.6.b If a rider dismounts after entering the arena without a reason acceptable to the judge, no marks will be given for the movement. A dropped whip, hat, spectacles etc may be handed back to the rider. However, in the case of a dropped whip it is preferable that this is done at the end of the test.
- 3.6.c Any fall of horse and/or rider between the entry at A and the end of the test at the final salute will entail elimination from that competition.
- 3.6.d The fall must be categorised and action taken in accordance with *PCV By Laws*.

### **3.7 Resistance of Horse**

- 3.7.a Resistance which prevents continuation of the test for a period exceeding 20 seconds shall be penalised by Elimination. This also applies to resistance before entering the dressage arena and within the arena surrounds.
- 3.7.b Resistance that may endanger rider, horse, judges or the public will be eliminated for safety reasons earlier than 20 seconds. There is no appeal against this decision.

### **3.8 Unauthorised Assistance**

- 3.8.a Any outside intervention by voice, signs, etc is considered as unauthorised assistance to a rider or horse and is penalised by elimination.

### **3.9 Lameness**

- 3.9.a In the case of marked lameness, the judge informs the competitor they are eliminated
- 3.9.b A horse will not be eligible to compete in any further competitions for the rest of that day. There is no appeal against this decision.

### **3.10 Errors of Course**

- 3.10.a If the bell is not sounded at an error of course and the test requires the same movement to be repeated and the rider makes the same error, the rider is only penalised once. The judge must be aware of the effect of one movement on the next and where mirror images occur, in order to be prompt in notifying the competitor.
- 3.10.b Every error of course, whether the bell is sounded or not, must be penalised except as noted in 3.9.a above:
- The first by 2 marks
  - The second by 4 additional marks
  - The third by elimination

However, if time permits the judge may allow the rider to continue the test to the end awarding marks in the ordinary way.



The use of the voice referred to in 3.1.i above is not an error of course

3.10.c It is not always necessary to ring the bell for an error of course. Below are some instances that will and will not require the ringing of the bell. However, not all cases can be quoted and it is the judge who must decide to sound the bell. In deciding not to ring the bell the judge must consider the effect this will have on the rest of the test.

<p>The judge <u>will ring</u> the bell when the rider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turns right instead of left</li> <li>• Omits a movement</li> <li>• When the movement is the first of a mirror image and the competitor rides;             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rising trot not sitting trot</li> <li>○ An incorrect circle size</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Enters the arena at the incorrect gait</li> </ul>	<p>The Judge need not ring the bell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When the final halt is at X instead of G or vice versa</li> <li>• At the salute, not taking the reins in one hand</li> <li>• Competitor makes an early transition</li> <li>• Does rising trot instead of sitting trot</li> </ul>
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3.10.d The competitor is shown by the judge the point at which they are to re-take the test which could be the movement prior to where the error occurred. Judging will re-commence when the rider reaches the point where the error of course occurred.

3.10.e A competitor must not repeat a movement of the test unless the judge rings the bell for an error of course and instructs the rider to repeat the movement.

3.10.f If the rider has executed a movement and attempts the same movement again, the judge must allocate marks for the first movement only and also penalise the second attempt as an error of course.

3.10.g If the judge has not noted an error, the competitor has the benefit of the doubt and no penalty is given.

3.10.h Penalty points are deducted on the judge’s sheet from the total points scored by the competitor. The judge must note on the test sheet the movement at which the error was made.

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## 4. Elimination

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### 4.1 Summary

4.1.a A competitor eliminated must receive marks for the movements up to the point of elimination so that when they receive their dressage test paper, they can observe their performance to the point of elimination.

4.1.b Reasons for which a competitor can be eliminated from a dressage competition:

- i Failing to attend a gear check prior to competing rule 2.7.b
- ii Competing in a test with incorrect saddlery or equipment rule 2.7.b
- iii Person other than the competitor riding, lunging or warming-up the horse at an official competition rule 2.9.a.i
- iv Competitor in the arena while not actually competing rule 2.9.b
- v Use of gear other than correct competition gear in the warm up arena rule 2.9.a.ii
- vi Leaving the arena before completion of the test if the arena is completely enclosed rule 3.4
- vii Dismounting after entering the arena without reason acceptable to the judge rule 3.6
- viii Resistance which prevents the continuation of the test for a period exceeding 20 seconds. This also applies to resistance before entering the arena rule 3.7.a
- ix For Safety reasons any resistance that may endanger, rider, horse, judge or public rule 3.7.b
- x Unauthorised assistance for horse or rider rule 3.8
- xi Marked lameness rule 3.9
- xii If during the test three errors of course are made rule 3.10.b
- xiii Other reasons in accordance with the *PCV Handbook of By Laws*

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## 5. Judging and Scoring

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### 5.1 Judge's Responsibilities

- 5.1.a A judge is expected to give their time and knowledge to competitors in such a way that the competitor will benefit.
- 5.1.b To provide this service judges must:
- i Fully learn the applicable test and know exactly where each movement starts and ends. A small plan of each movement separately may help.
  - ii Have a clear picture in his mind of what is a reasonable performance for the grade at which he is judging and then allocate scale marks, which best relate to the performance of each movement, in accordance with rules 5.3 – 5.6
  - iii Be in possession of a current Dressage Rule book and be conversant with all rules governing the competition and the layout of the arena.
  - iv Allow plenty of time before the competition commences to:
    - Check that the arena is satisfactory and, if necessary, have it modified at his discretion. Once the competition has commenced, the conditions must stay (as far as possible) the same for the following competitors.
    - Inspect how the judge's car is placed. The judge should sit about 5 metres directly behind C
    - Spectators (including videos and cameras) should be at least 10 metres from the arena
    - Check that the organiser of the competition has provided a penciller and bell (if a car horn is not used). It is desirable that the judge talks to the penciller before commencing, to avoid possible misunderstanding prior to the first competitor.
    - Give full attention to each competitor and mark tests in accordance with rules 5.3 – 5.6 and maintain the same standard for all competitors in a competition and all events.
    - Do not take into account knowledge of riders, horses or previous performance.

### 5.2 Conflict of Interest

- 5.2.a Each judge must make a decision that allows for the competition to be judged under the fairest possible conditions. At times conflict of interest are unavoidable, however consideration needs to be given to the following scenarios before accepting a judging position:
- i A family member.
  - ii A close relative of the competitor.
  - iii The owner of the horse.
  - iv The regular coach of the competitor.
  - v A person having held a riding clinic for any competitor within two weeks prior to an event may not judge a horse or rider who participated in the clinic.
  - vi A person who is provided with private billeted accommodation with the competitor or family of a competitor they are scheduled to judge.

### 5.3 Judging the Horse's Movements

- 5.3.a A judge must quickly evaluate a competitor's performance then allocate marks and make relevant comments on the test paper.
- 5.3.b A judge who passes over faults without penalising in mark or remark is not assisting the competitor to recognise their lack of proficiency or false methods. This type of judging is

ultimately unfair to the competitor as it inhibits their development and generally lowers competitive standards.

- 5.3.c The purity of movement is the foundation of dressage and definitions of paces and movements. Refer to rule 9 for these definitions.
- 5.3.d Expectations for the various grades are in rule 10.

#### 5.4 Marking

- 5.4.a Opinions in marking naturally vary among judges. However, some judges are very severe and mark a movement without considering the grade at which the competitor is competing. Consequently, the competitor's confidence may be unduly damaged. Conversely, damage may be caused by over marking a movement, which results in the competitor obtaining a false sense of the level of training achieved.
- 5.4.b The aim in all judging should be that no one will be completely discouraged nor will they be carried away with the over-inflated impression of their own ability.
- 5.4.c High and low marks must be awarded where the performances warrant their use.

#### 5.5 Marking Movements and Scoring

- 5.5.a The judge must allocate a mark from 0 – 10 for each numbered movement.

#### 5.6 Scale of Marks

- 5.6.a The scale of marks is as follows:

10	excellent	4	insufficient
9	very good	3	fairly bad
8	good	2	bad
7	fairly good	1	very bad
6	satisfactory	0	not executed
5	sufficient		

- 5.6.b The marks 10 and 0 must be awarded where the performances warrant their use in accordance with rule 5.4.c.
- 5.6.c The "0 not executed" mark means that nothing of the required movement has been performed.
- 5.6.d Fractions of marks must not be given.

#### 5.7 Scoring

- 5.7.a Where a coefficient is indicated on the test paper scorers must double the mark for that movement and place in the total column.
- 5.7.b Add the marks in the total column to give the good marks given by the judge.
- 5.7.c Deduct the errors of course from the total.
- 5.7.d Check additions for errors.
- 5.7.e Place results on the scoreboard as soon as possible.
- 5.7.f Make the test sheets available for competitors after approval by the judges. Test sheets are confidential.
- 5.7.g **Scores:**
  - i One test competition – Highest score (final mark) is the winner.
  - ii Multiple test competition – Add final mark from each test together. Highest overall score is the winner.
- 5.7.h **Separating Equality of scores**
  - i **Individual: single test competition.**
    - i. The higher total collective marks will decide the higher placing.
    - ii. If these marks are equal, the placing remains tied.

- ii Multiple test competition: placings determined as specified in the schedule. If equal places then:
  - iii. Highest score in the highest numbered test.
  - iv. If these scores are equal, places will be determined as for a single test competition, using the highest numbered test.
  - v. If there is still a tie this process is repeated with the next highest numbered test until a winner is determined or until there are no further tests to compare, in which case the placing remains tied.

## 5.8 Unmarked Movement

- 5.8.a If a mark has not been recorded on one of a judge's sheets and the judge cannot recall the movement, or cannot be found, the mark allotted will be the average of the collective marks.

## 5.9 Pencillers

- 5.9.a Each judge must be provided with a competent penciller who should know the test and have legible handwriting.

## 5.10 Dressage Test Paper

- 5.10.a Organising committees must provide the judge with:
  - i One dressage test paper per competitor per section.
  - ii Duplicate test papers in accordance with rule 6.1.c.
- 5.10.b The judge must sign the test papers and treat them as confidential until given to the competitors, at which time a test paper becomes the competitor's private property.
- 5.10.c Competitors must be given their test paper immediately after all of their section scores have been posted.

## 5.11 Test Paper Advice to Competitors

- 5.11.a On receiving the paper, the judge's marks indicate how the competitor has fared but not how to train for the future. However, in assessing what future training is required, the competitor should look at the remarks beside each movement, which identify the deficiency in the movement and may also offer helpful advice.
- 5.11.b There is limited space and time for the judge to make remarks on the test paper. Therefore, a judge must identify the deficiency and choose only what he thinks the competitor has a chance to correct and then, frame the remarks as constructively as possible.
- 5.11.c Directives are given on the test paper for each movement which will help judges and riders understand what is required for each movement.
- 5.11.d If a movement is given low marks, it is for a reason. The judge should state the reason concisely. Likewise, praise should be given wherever possible. There is nothing like praise to encourage a competitor on to better things.

## 5.12 Expected Standards

- 5.12.a Refer to rule 10.

## 6. Organising Committees

### 6.1 Duties

- 6.1.a Refer to the *PCV Handbook of By Laws* for organising committee duties and also zone approval requirements.
- 6.1.b Competitor number requirements must be in accordance with the *PCV Gear Rules*.
- 6.1.c Duplicate tests must be given to the zone chief instructor immediately after the competition. A minimum of 6 randomly selected dressage test papers from each section is required.
- 6.1.d Give competitors their test papers in accordance with rule 5.10c.

### 6.2 Creating Sections

- 6.2.a Depending on the number of entries and in liaison with dressage judges, each grade may be divided into sections in order to make the running and timing of the competition manageable.
- 6.2.b If sections are created, each section competes in its own right and places are awarded for each section.

### 6.3 Test Timing

Dressage tests are not timed. These suggested time intervals may be useful when planning the running of the competition.

#### Grade Interval between tests

1	8 minutes
2	8 minutes
3	8 minutes
4	7 minutes
5	7 minutes

### 6.4 Schedules

All programs/schedules to include the following:

- i Statement that Dressage is to be held under current PCV Rules – Refer to the PCV By Laws.
- ii Timetable of grades/events/classes.
- iii The Dressage Test for each grade.
- iv Disclaimer of liability.

### 6.5 Table of Recommended tests for various competitions

	Grade 5	Grade 4	Grade 3 (40 m arena)	Grade 3 (60 m arena)	Grade 2	Grade 1
Horse Trials and Combined Training competitions, and introductory levels of dressage	Tests: A, B, C and D	Tests: A, B and C	Test A	Tests: A, B and C	Tests: HT1, HT2, A, B and C	Tests: HT1, HT2, HT3, A, B and C
Dressage competitions	As above	As above plus tests D and E	As above plus test D	As above plus tests D and E	As above plus tests D, E & F EA 2.1, 2.2 & 2.3	As above plus tests D, E, F & G EA 3.1 & 3.2

## 7. Arenas

### 7.1 Set Up

- 7.1.a Arenas must be in accordance with rule 11.
- 7.1.b Arenas must be set out to the dimensions in figures 7.1 and 7.2.
- 7.1.c The arena should be level and separated from the public (including photographers and video operators) by a distance all round of 15 metres where possible but at least by 10 metres. Bunting may be used when necessary to prevent intrusion.
- 7.1.d The arena should consist of a low fence, at least 0.3 metres high.
- 7.1.e Are to be placed a minimum of 4 metres apart, preferably 10 metres if room permits.
- 7.1.f Should be positioned where judges do not face the sun.

### 7.2 Arena construction

- 7.2.a Arenas must be as safe as possible. Examples of material to be used include plastic chain (with intermittent breaks), plastic pipes or planks, ground markings and painted 10cmx2.5cm wooden boards placed on the ground at corners and markers. Event Organisers and Clubs should construct Dressage arenas without using the materials listed below.

- Driven-in stakes
- Unbreakable rope
- Unbreakable chain
- Unbreakable tape
- Line marking of rope on ground
- Thin poles on the ground

Rope and chain must not be continuous and must have intermittent breaks.

### 7.3 Markers

- 7.3.a The letters outside the enclosure must be placed 0.5 metres from the fence and clearly marked. It is desirable to place a special marker on the fence itself, level with, and in addition to, the letter concerned.
- 7.3.b The judge must be positioned about 5 metres from the arena at C in accordance with rule 5.1.b.iv
- 7.3.c The centre line must have the letter A in line (not off set) with C at least 10 metres (preferably 15 metres) back from the arena to allow horses a straight track to enter the arena.

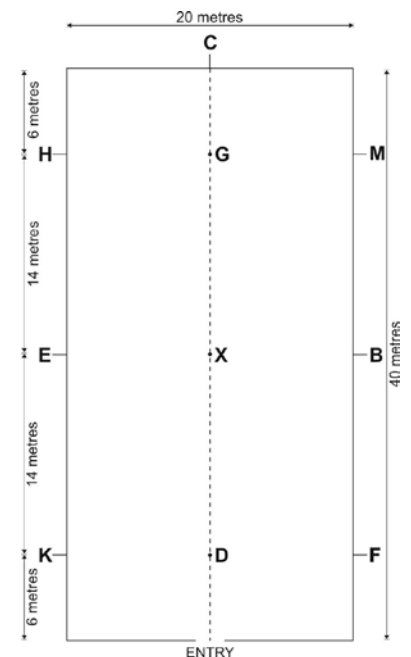


Figure 7.1 (above)  
40 m x 20 m arena

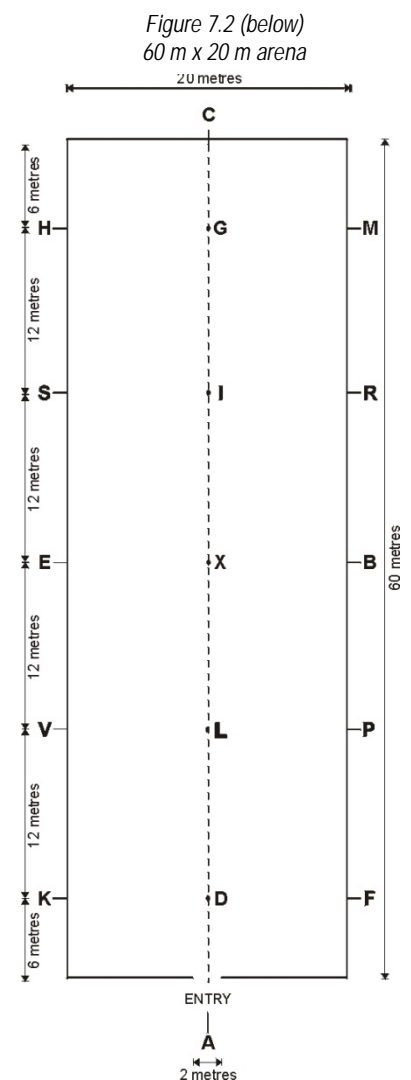


Figure 7.2 (below)  
60 m x 20 m arena

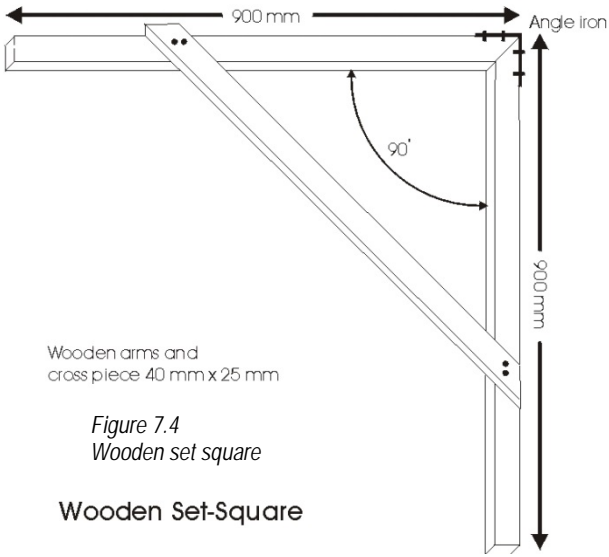
## 7.4 Setting out an Arena

- 7.4.a Place a peg in the ground at one corner of the arena. Measure one long side of the arena and place a peg at that distance. These are pegs A and C in figure 7.3.
- 7.4.b Extend the line A–C by, say, three metres to D and measure back from C towards A the same distance, to B, putting temporary pegs at D and B.
- 7.4.c Using about a 10 metre length of twine tie a small loop at both ends, then find the exact middle and tie another loop there. Place one loop over the peg at B and the other loop over the peg at D. Holding the middle loop, tighten the string, first to the right and then, as a check, to the left, to obtain points E and F. Peg these points. If it has been done correctly, E, C and F will be a straight line at right angles to A–C. Extend this line 20 metres from C and the third corner of the arena is fixed. Repeat this procedure at A to find the fourth corner.
- 7.4.d Variant (a)
- i Using the above method for marking out a right angle, the setting out can be started from a chosen short side or the centre line for the arena if either is preferred as a base to work from.
- 7.4.e Variant (b)
- i Since the main problem in setting out is to establish lines at right angles, a useful tool for someone frequently engaged in this work is a wooden set square as shown in figure 7.4. If the apex of the set square is placed on the ground at a corner peg and one arm is sighted to lie along the base line, the other arm will point in a direction at right angles to it and the next corner peg can be sighted in this alignment.
  - ii Using a set square, some of the subsidiary measuring is eliminated. Furthermore, the ends of the long sides of the arena can be quickly laid out by using one or more lines prepared with small loops at each end through which suitable pegs can be inserted to pin them down as required.
  - iii Such prepared lines become stock material and should be checked for length each time they are brought out in case shrinking or stretching has occurred.





Figure 7.3  
Setting a right angle



Wooden arms and  
cross piece 40 mm x 25 mm

Figure 7.4  
Wooden set square

Wooden Set-Square

## 8. Rider Training

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### 8.1 Gaining a Confident Approach to Riding a Dressage Test

- 8.1.a It is important to realise that dressage means the training of the horse, and a test requires the rider to show the judge how he is progressing with the training.
- 8.1.b In preparing for the test, the major part of the training should be outdoors in open areas. This is more natural for the horse thereby making it easier to retain his free forward movement. The various movements required by the test require practice but following the sequence of the test should be avoided.
- 8.1.c It is a very common fault for riders to work in the arena too much. This will become boring for the horse and so make it difficult to maintain impulsion. Another fault is to always ride the actual sequence of the test. If this is done the horse learns to anticipate what is coming next and it becomes very difficult to make him obedient and attentive to the aids. He takes short cuts and acts before the rider is ready. It is obvious to the judge that the horse is acting on his own initiative and not on the initiative of the rider.
- 8.1.d In order to make horse and rider familiar with the markers, an arena should be used a few times only before the competition for about 15 minutes. The test should only be ridden in the set sequence on a few occasions but the required movements and transitions are practiced in varying positions in the arena.
- 8.1.e During this work, the horse should always be going kindly and smoothly with a still head and even steps. If this is not so, then the rider is expecting too much of the horse, or the horse is not understanding what he should do. Something is wrong so it will be necessary to go back to riding quietly on a longer rein until the horse is settled and going quietly again. Then a fresh start is made, perhaps more gradually and with more careful riding.
- 8.1.f During training, the rider must learn how to enter the arena, salute, ride a circle, ride a half-circle, ride through the corners and ride correctly on the track, and how to leave the arena. He must learn to concentrate on the transitions, where to prepare the horse, where the transition should be carried out and the importance of smooth execution.

### 8.2 Competition Requirements

- 8.2.a Members are advised to read the *PCV Handbook of By Laws* and *PCV Gear Rules* in addition to this rule book before competing.
- 8.2.b Before riding at a competition, the combination (horse and rider) must be graded and have satisfied all eligibility requirements. Gear check must also be undertaken. All of these requirements are in the *PCV Handbook of By Laws*.
- 8.2.c When riding the dressage test, the horse should be taken to the arena going in a manner in which he will perform smoothly. The rider should not expect him to do more than he has successfully done in practice. He may lack impulsion, and hence contact on the bit, but it is hoped his performance will be quiet and obedient. If, on the other hand, the rider actually asks for more than has been successfully achieved in practice, the performance may appear to have more life but, because the rider is using the reins too strongly, thus restricting the movements of the horse, his head will be unsteady and he will take uneven steps and there will be a lack of harmony between the horse and rider. Of the two, the first-mentioned horse would be penalised less than the second.
- 8.2.d The rider must learn the test thoroughly and be familiar with the rules and conditions of the competition. When actually performing a test he must have two things clearly in his mind—the movement he is performing, so that this is done to the very best of his ability, and the movement that comes next, so that he and the horse are ready to go smoothly into the transition. If anything should go wrong, it is no tragedy. The rider must forget about it and put his all into riding the next part of the test.

- 8.2.e If the rider pays attention to all the points detailed in this section, he will be able to enter the arena happily, knowing that he and his horse have undergone a thorough preparation and that they are both happy and confident in what they are about to do. This presents a pleasing picture of relaxed enjoyment of both horse and rider, which is expected by judges, whatever the standard of the competition. In a test early in the training of the horse, such as a first pony club test, little more than this picture is expected.

### **8.3 Future Progression and Training**

- 8.3.a As the standard of the rider increases, upgrading will be required. Refer to the *PCV Handbook of By Laws* and *PCV Grading Guidelines* for grading requirements.
- 8.3.b As upgrading occurs, tests will increase in difficulty. The judge will expect the horse to be more responsive to the aids, to engage the hindquarters better, accepting a light and soft contact on the bit. The paces must be executed with greater evenness and precision. Eventually the horse is asked for collected paces, where he must be really using his back and hindquarters to give him more elastic, brilliant and elevated movements.
- 8.3.c The instructor should encourage members to be content with entering simple tests first, only advancing to a higher level as the horse's training progresses. In this way the horse and rider are not over-faced (riding above their competency) and progress will be smooth, constant and satisfactory.
- 8.3.d Further reading:
- Paces and Movements: rule 9
  - Dressage Tests and Expected Standards: rule 10
  - The Training Scale – this can be found on the EA Dressage Rules – Section 7 Paces and Movements.

## 9. Paces and Movements

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### 9.1 Object and General Principles of Dressage

- 9.1.a The object of dressage is the development of the horse into a happy athlete through harmonious education. As a result, it makes the horse calm, supple, loose and flexible, but also confident, attentive and keen, thus achieving perfect understanding with his rider.
- 9.1.b These qualities are revealed by;
- i The freedom and regularity of the paces.
  - ii The harmony, lightness and ease of movements.
  - iii The lightness of the forehand and the engagement of the hindquarters, originating from a lively impulsion. And -
  - iv The acceptance of the bridle, with submissiveness throughout and without any tension or resistance.
- 9.1.c The horse thus gives the impression of doing, of his own accord, what is required of him. Confident and attentive, submitting generously to the control of the rider, remaining absolutely straight in any movement on a straight line and bending accordingly when moving on curved lines.
- 9.1.d 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. They respond to the slightest indication of the rider and thereby give life and spirit to all the rest of his body.
- 9.1.e By virtue of a lively impulsion and 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.
- 9.1.f 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 soft contact and submissiveness throughout. 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 rider.
- 9.1.g 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.
- 9.1.h The regularity of the paces is fundamental to dressage.

### 9.2 Halt

- 9.2.a At the halt, the horse should stand attentive, engaged, motionless and straight, with the weight evenly distributed over all four legs. The neck should be raised, the poll high and the noseline slightly in front of the vertical. While remaining “on the bit” and maintaining a light and soft contact with the rider’s hand, the horse may quietly chew the bit and should be ready to move off at the slightest indication of the rider.
- 9.2.b 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 rider, driving the horse towards a 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).
- 9.2.c The quality of the paces before and after the halt is an integral part of the assessment

### 9.3 Walk

- 9.3.a The walk is a marching pace in a regular four time beat (left hind, , left fore, right hind right fore) with equal intervals between each beat. This regularity combined with full relaxation must be maintained throughout all walk movements.
- 9.3.b When the fore leg 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.
- 9.3.c The following walks are recognised – Collected, Medium, Extended and Free walk. There should always be a clear difference in the attitude and over-tracking in these variations.
- i **Medium walk.** A clear, regular and unconstrained walk of moderate lengthening. The horse, remaining “on the bit”, walks energetically relaxed with even and determined steps, the hind feet touching the ground in front of the hoof prints of the fore feet. The rider maintains a light, soft and steady contact with the mouth, allowing the natural movement of the head and neck.
  - ii **Collected Walk.** The horse, remaining “on the bit”, moves resolutely forward, with his neck raised and arched and showing a clear self-carriage. The head approaches the vertical position; the 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.
  - iii **Extended walk.** The horse covers as much ground as possible, without haste and without losing the regularity of the steps, the hind feet touching the ground clearly in front of the hoof prints of the fore feet. The rider allows the horse to stretch out the head and neck without losing contact with the mouth and control of the poll. The nose must be clearly in front of the vertical.
  - iv **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 the hind feet stepping clearly in front of the footprints of the front feet are essential to the quality of the free walk.
  - v **Stretching on a Long Rein.**
    - This exercise gives a clear impression of the “throughness “of the horse and proves its balance, suppleness, obedience and relaxation in order to execute the exercise “stretching on a long rein” correctly , the rider must lengthen the reins as the horse stretches gradually forwards and downward.
    - As the neck stretches forward 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 rider’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 any resistance in the mouth or poll.

### 9.4 Trot

- 9.4.a The trot is a two beat pace of alternate diagonal legs (left fore and right hind leg together and vice versa) separated by a moment of suspension.
- 9.4.b The trot should show free, active and regular steps.
- 9.4.c 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 of maintaining the same rhythm and natural balance with all variations of the trot.

9.4.d All trot-work is executed “sitting”, unless otherwise indicated in the test concerned.

9.4.e The following trots are recognised: Working, Lengthening of steps, Collected, Medium and Extended.

- i **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.
- ii **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. The horse’s steps are shorter than in the other trots without losing elasticity and cadence.
- iii **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 rider allows the horse to carry the head a little more in front of the vertical than at the collected and the working trot, and allows him, at the same time, to lower the head and neck slightly. The steps should be even, and the whole movement balanced and unconstrained.
- iv **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 rider allows the horse to lengthen the frame with a controlled poll, and to gain ground. The fore feet should touch the ground on the spot towards which they are pointing. 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.
- v **Lengthening of Steps.**  
In the EA tests for Preliminary and Novice and the test for four year-old horses “lengthening of steps “is required. This is a variation between working and medium trot in which the horse’s training is not yet developed enough for medium trot.

## 9.5 Canter

- 9.5.a The canter is a three 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 four feet in the air before the next stride begins.
- 9.5.b The canter, always with light, cadenced and regular strides, should be moved into without hesitation.
- 9.5.c The quality of the canter is judged by the general impression, i.e. the regularity and lightness of the pace 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.

- 9.5.d The following canters are recognised: Working, Lengthened strides, Collected, Medium Extended including Counter Canter, Simple Change of Leg and Flying Change of Leg.
- i **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.
  - ii **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 complete self-carriage and an uphill tendency. The horse's strides are shorter than in the other canters, without losing elasticity and cadence.
  - iii **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 rider 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.
  - iv **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 rider 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.
  - v **Lengthening of strides.** In the EA Novice tests and test for four-year-old horses, "lengthening of strides" is required. This is a variation between the working and medium in which the horse's training is not developed enough for medium canter.
  - vi **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. The foreleg should be aligned to the same track as the hind leg.
  - vii **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 three to five clearly defined steps, an immediate transition is made into the other canter lead.
  - viii **Flying change of leg.** The aim of the flying changes is to show the reaction, sensitivity and obedience of the horse to the aids for the 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

Flying changes of leg can also be executed in series for instance at every 4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

## 9.6 Reinback

- 9.6.a The rein back is a rearward diagonal movement with a two beat rhythm but without a moment of suspension.
- 9.6.b Each diagonal pair of legs is raised and returned to the ground alternatively, with the forelegs aligned on the same track as the hind legs.
- 9.6.c During the entire exercise, the horse, should remain “on the bit”, maintaining its desire to move forward.
- 9.6.d 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 fore feet are serious faults.
- 9.6.e The steps are counted as each foreleg moves back.
- 9.6.f After completing the required number of steps backward, the horse should show a square halt or move forward in the required pace immediately.
- 9.6.g In tests where a rein back of one horse’s length is required, it should be executed with three or four steps.
- 9.6.h Rein back series (Schaukel or see-saw) is a combination of two rein backs with walk steps in between. It should be executed with fluent transitions and the required number of steps.

## 9.7 Transitions

- 9.7.a 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. Transitions within the pace must be clearly defined whilst 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 and vice-versa.
- 9.7.b (For Pony Club Tests below grade 1 all transitions may be progressive, for example when coming from trot to halt there may be two or three strides of walk before the halt.)

## 9.8 Half Halts

- 9.8.a Every movement or transition should be invisibly prepared by barely perceptible half halt. The half halt is an almost simultaneous, coordinated action of the seat, the legs and the hand of the rider, 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. In 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.

## 9.9 Changes of Direction

- 9.9.a At changes of direction, the horse should adjust the bend of his body to the curvature of the line it follows, remaining supple and following the indications of the rider, without any resistance or change of pace, rhythm or speed.
- 9.9.b Changes of directions can be executed in the following ways:
  - i Right angle turn including riding through the corner (one quarter of a volte of approx. 6 m diameter).
  - ii Short and long diagonal.
  - iii Half voltes and half circles, with change of rein.
  - iv Half pirouettes and turn on the haunches.
  - v Serpentine loops.



- vi Counter changes of hand in zigzag\*. The horse should be straight for a moment before changing direction.

\* Zigzag: A movement containing more than two half passes with changes of direction.

## 9.10 Figures

- 9.10.a The figures asked in dressage tests are the voltes, the serpentines and the figures of eight.
- 9.10.b **Volte.** The volte is a circle of 6, 8 or 10 metres diameter. If larger than 10 metres, it is a circle.
- 9.10.c **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. 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 a 5 m or 10 m distance from the track. Serpentines around the centre line are executed between the quarter lines.
- 9.10.d **Figure of eight.** This figure consists of two voltes or circles of equal size as prescribed in the test, joined at the centre of the eight. The rider should make his horse straight an instant before changing direction at the centre of the figure.

## 9.11 Leg Yielding

- 9.11.a The aim of leg yielding is to demonstrate the suppleness and lateral responsiveness of the horse.
- 9.11.b The exercise is performed in working trot.
- 9.11.c The horse is almost straight, except for a slight flexion at the poll away from the direction in which it moves, so that the rider is just able to see the eyebrow and nostril on the inside
- 9.11.d The inside legs pass and cross in front of the outside legs.
- 9.11.e 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 freedom, elasticity and regularity of its paces and harmony, lightness and ease of its movements.
- 9.11.f Leg yielding can be performed “on the diagonal” (Fig 9.2) in which case the horse should be as nearly as possible parallel to the long sides of the arena, although the forehead should be slightly in advance of the hindquarters. It can also be performed “along the wall” (Fig 9.1) in which case the horse should be at an angle of about 35 degrees to the direction in which he is moving.

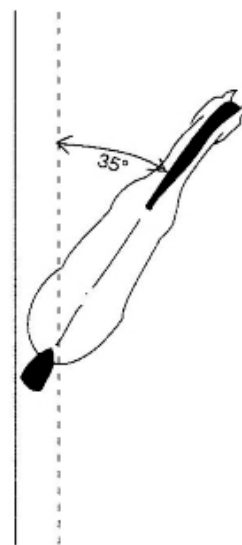


Figure 9.1  
Leg yielding along the wall

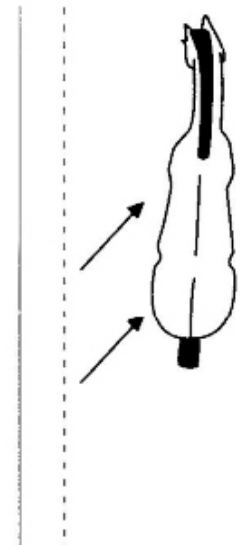


Figure 9.2  
Leg yielding on the diagonal

## 9.12 Lateral Movements

- 9.12.a The main aim of lateral movements (except leg yielding) is to develop and increase the engagement of the hindquarters and thereby also the collection.
- 9.12.b In all lateral movements—shoulder in, travers, renvers and half pass—the horse is slightly bent and moves on different tracks.

- 9.12.c The bend or flexion must never be exaggerated so that it impairs the rhythm, balance and fluency of the movement.
- 9.12.d 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 rider’s preoccupation with bending the horse and pushing it sideways.
- 9.12.e **Shoulder in.** This exercise is performed in collected trot. The horse is ridden with a slight but uniform bend around the inside leg of the rider maintaining engagement and cadence at 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. *Fig 9.3*
- 9.12.f **Travers.** The aim of the travers is to show a fluent collected trot movement on a straight line and correct bend. Front and hind legs are crossing, balance and cadence are maintained. This exercise can be performed in collected trot or collected canter. The horse is slightly bent round the inside leg of the rider 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 one sees four 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 would finish a circle. *Fig 9.4*
- 9.12.g **Renvers.** The aim of renvers is 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.  
 This 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 rider. 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. *Fig 9.5*
- 9.12.h **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 or collected canter or in passage in freestyle. The horse should be slightly bent in the direction in which it is moving and

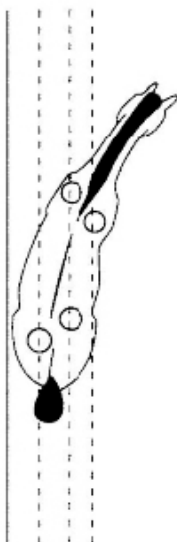


Figure 9.3  
Shoulder in

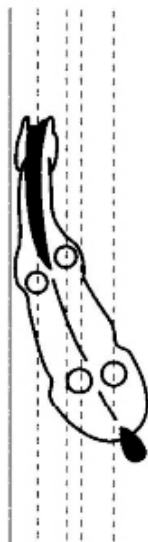


Figure 9.4  
Travers



Figure 9.5  
Renvers

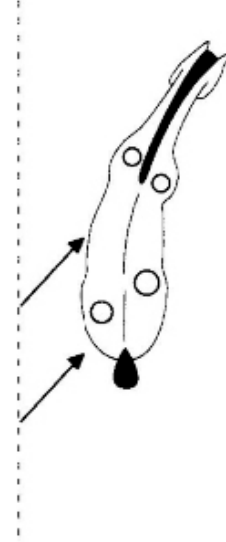


Figure 9.6  
Half Pass

bent around the inside leg of the rider. 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. *Fig 9.6*

### 9.13 Impulsion and Submission

9.13.a **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 to be guided by a gentle contact with the rider's hand.

- i 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.
- ii A prime ingredient of impulsion is the time the horse spends in the air rather than on the ground. Impulsion, therefore, is seen only in those paces that have a period of suspension.
- iii Impulsion is a precondition for a good collection in trot and canter. If there is no impulsion, then there is nothing to collect.

9.13.b **Submission** does not mean subordination, but an obedience revealing its presence by a constant attention, willingness and confidence in the whole behaviour 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 submission is also manifested by the way the horse accepts the bridle, with a light and soft contact and a supple poll. Resistance to or evasion of the rider'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.

- i 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 the movement concerned as well as in the collective mark for "submission".
- ii The first thought when considering submission is willingness, that the horse understands what is being asked of it and is confident enough in the rider to react to the aids without fear or tension.
- iii The horse's straightness, uphill tendency and balance enable it to stay in front of the riders' 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
- iv Fulfilling of the main requirements/movements of a dressage test is the main criterion for submission.

### 9.14 The Collection

9.14.a The aim of the collection of the horse is to:

- i Further develop and improve the balance and equilibrium of the horse, which has been more or less displaced by the additional weight of the rider.

- ii Develop and increase the horse's ability to lower and engage its hindquarters for the benefit of the lightness and mobility of its forehand.
  - iii Add to the “ease and carriage” of the horse and to make it more pleasurable to ride.
- 9.14.b Collection is developed through the use of half halts and the use of lateral movements shoulder-in, travers, renvers and half pass
- 9.14.c 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 the hind legs can step forward under the horse's body.
- 9.14.d However, the hind legs should not be engaged too 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.
- 9.14.e On the other hand, a horse with an overlong base of support, which is unable or unwilling to engage his hind legs forward under its body, will never achieve an acceptable collection, characterised by “ease and carriage” as well as a lively impulsion, originating from the activity of the hind quarters.
- 9.14.f The position of the head and neck of a horse at the collected paces is naturally dependent on the stage of training and, in some degree, on his conformation. It is distinguished by the neck being raised without unrestraint, forming an harmonious curve from the withers to the poll, being the highest point with the nose slightly in front of the vertical.
- 9.14.g At the moment the rider applies his aids to obtain a momentary and passing collecting effect; the head may become more or less vertical.
- 9.14.h The arch of the neck is directly related to the degree of collection.

### **9.15 Position and Aids of the Rider**

- 9.15.a All the movements should be obtained with imperceptible aids and without apparent effort of the rider. The rider 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 and with legs steady and well stretched down. The heels should be the lowest point. The upper part of the body should be tall and supple. 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 rider to follow the movements of the horse smoothly and freely.
- 9.15.b The effectiveness of the rider's aids determines the precise fulfilment of the required movements of the tests.
- 9.15.c There shall always be the impression of a harmonious co-operation between horse and rider.
- 9.15.d Riding with both hands is obligatory in tests.
- 9.15.e Riding with reins in one hand is however permitted in Freestyle Tests.
- 9.15.f When leaving the arena at a walk on a long rein, after having finished the test, the rider may, at his own discretion, ride with only one hand.
- 9.15.g Use of the voice or clicking the tongue repeatedly, is a serious fault, involving the deduction of at least two marks from those that would otherwise have been awarded for the movement.

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## 10. Expected Standards

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### 10.1 Grade 5

- 10.1.a Grade 5 is for the youngest groups, say 8–10 years. It can be for beginner riders under 15 years, who are riding their first test and not yet capable of grade 4.
- 10.1.b Grade 5 riders have very few riding skills. All they can do, or try to do, is make the pony go and keep it as nearly as possible on the required track. The better it goes forward for the rider the better it will follow the track and the straighter it will be. It is more important that the pony goes *where* the rider wishes rather than *how*. The judge should not be too concerned with details of position or correctness of the aids. The pony should be quiet and obedient. Incorrect diagonal or leading should not be penalised. Remarks should be simple and generous with their praise and every sheet should somewhere carry remarks that comment on the rider's ability or otherwise to fulfil the two basic requirements: "to keep the pony going at required speed and on the correct line."

### 10.2 Grade 4

- 10.2.a Grade 4 is for beginners 15 years and over and more experienced juniors.
- 10.2.b The judge now expects the rider to be more balanced in their position, with better control of their hands and better application of the aids. The horse should go willingly forward. The rider who tries to get their horse near the corner and on the track should be marked more leniently than the rider who lets the horse take the line it chooses. The fact that the rider has to use the outside rein causing the horse to look to the outside is a minor detail at this grade.
- 10.2.c At this grade, it is not always possible to achieve correct bend and flexion. The horse that goes quietly but lacks impulsion should mark better than one that is pulling and over bent. Riders should be rewarded for trying to do transitions on the markers.
- 10.2.d **Increase the trot.** Riders should show a difference in energy and activity. Judges should show some leniency at grade 4 and early grade 3, as at these levels horses do not have to be on the bit, so will not be able to maintain rhythm and lengthening and will tend to run and quicken the stride. When asked to increase the trot the rider should be able to ride a reasonably straight diagonal, with the horse going forward more energetically, so that there is a difference from the working trot. If the horse does not lengthen the stride this should not be penalised at this grade.
- 10.2.e As the rider progresses through the grades improvement should be made so by grades 1 and 2 the horse is expected to maintain rhythm and lengthen the stride.
- 10.2.f **Free walk.** The horse should stretch out the neck and walk with long, relaxed, marching strides but would not be expected to maintain contact.

### 10.3 Grade 3

- 10.3.a Grade 3 is for more experienced juniors and less experienced senior riders. Experienced senior riders may ride young horses in this stage.
- 10.3.b The rider should be starting to show an ability to influence the horse's way of going. This is possible due to a more balanced position, steadier hands and better understanding of application of the aids. The horse is not expected to be supple enough to go far into the corners as it may take uneven steps and bend its neck excessively and the smooth bend through the whole body is lost. The horse must not be ridden on too short a rein, which would result in short restricted paces, pulling, over bending and stiffness. There must be an obvious effort to ride the horse forward to contact on the bit with some resulting effect on the horse's frame. This does not have to be consistently maintained. At this grade riders should be able to ride accurate figures and transitions on the markers.
- 10.3.c Consistent over bending throughout a movement should be penalised with a mark below 5, as insufficient, with corresponding loss in collective marks. However,

momentary lapses behind the vertical should not outweigh correct work shown in other aspects. Any restriction of the horse's natural stride by the use of too short a rein is insufficient.

- 10.3.d Every sheet should report on the success, or otherwise, of the rider's efforts to round the horse up while keeping him going. This is basic to any further progress in the horse's education.

#### 10.4 Grade 2

- 10.4.a The rider should have a reasonably balanced position, be moderately steady in sitting trot, and demonstrate that they understand correct application of the aids. They should be able to ride forward to contact on the bit and be able to maintain a steady frame most of the time. There should be no drawing up of the legs when giving aids. More emphasis should be given to correct execution of transitions as well as accuracy. The horse should now show correct bend so corners and circles can be ridden without loss of rhythm and tempo. The rider should be improving in their ability to make the horse more active in his movements.
- 10.4.b When doing "moderately lengthened strides" the rider should try to show a clear transition into and out of the movement, strides should lengthen and show a difference without loss of rhythm. The horse should be straight, but some loss of balance should not be heavily penalised.
- 10.4.c Consistent over bending throughout a movement should be penalised with a mark below 5, as insufficient, with corresponding loss in collective marks. However, momentary lapses behind the vertical should not outweigh correct work shown in other aspects. Any restriction of the horse's natural stride by the use of too short a rein is insufficient.
- 10.4.d **Stretch on a Long Rein.** In order to execute the criteria "stretch on a long rein" the rider must lengthen the reins and the horse stretches gradually forward and down, but always maintains a steady contact with the rider's hands. During the taking up of the reins, the horse must accept the shortening of the reins without any kind of resistance in his poll. If the contact is correct the horse is supple, well balanced, relaxed and obedient.
- 10.4.e **Leg yielding.** Refer to rule 9.11.
- 10.4.f **Coefficient:** The number 2 in the coefficient column on the dressage score sheet doubles the mark given for that particular movement, to stress its importance in the training of the horse. As well as the free walk, a coefficient is applied to movements such as medium paces and transitions. This is to encourage riders to be more aware of the importance of these to the horse's basic paces.

#### 10.5 Grade 1

- 10.5.a The judge should look for a well balanced and effective position that enables the rider to apply correct aids and influence the horse to achieve correct unrestricted paces. The horse should show free forward movement while going up to a steady contact on the bit. The roundness in the frame should be maintained throughout the test. Sitting trot should be established enough to obtain active engagement of the hindquarters. Transitions should be smooth and accurate with circles and corners executed correctly. There should be a general impression of harmony and balance of horse and rider.
- 10.5.b Consistent over bending throughout a movement should be penalised with a mark below 5, as insufficient, with corresponding loss in collective marks. However, momentary lapses behind the vertical should not outweigh correct work shown in other aspects. Any restriction of the horse's natural stride by the use of too short a rein is insufficient.

- 10.5.c **Give the Reins.** The rider **while sitting upright** with seat remaining in the saddle pushes the hands forward towards the bit **momentarily** releasing the contact. This is done in the rhythm of the canter and the horse remains in the same outline and balance. The horse **does not** stretch his neck forward but shows he is in self carriage.
- 10.5.d **Coefficient:** The number 2 in the coefficient column on the dressage score sheet doubles the mark given for that particular movement, to stress its importance in the training of the horse. As well as the free walk, a coefficient is applied to movements such as medium paces and transitions. This is to encourage riders to be more aware of the importance of these to the horse's basic paces.