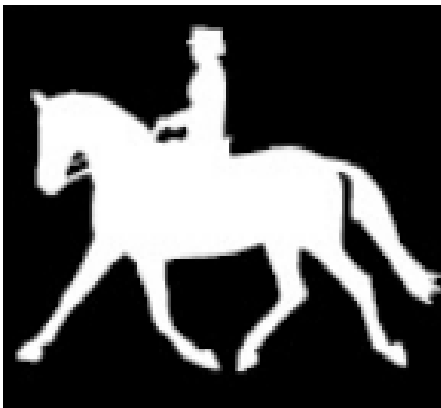


NC 4-H HORSE PROGRAM



DRESSAGE & COMBINED TRAINING MANUAL



Revised 2020

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I. Dressage

Dressage is often referred to as ballet on horseback. It is the uniting of rider and mount to produce pure movement, balance and harmony. Dressage is multi-discipline and can be as basic as elementary equitation patterns and as complex as working cow horse patterns. Flexibility of body and mind are required of both horse and rider. As the dressage levels progress so do the demands put on the horse and the rider. At the introductory levels transitions, accuracy and balance are emphasized. In the higher levels more difficult movements are prescribed that require complete harmony between the horse and rider. The most important things to remember about dressage are 1) it is fun 2) it is multi-discipline. Each ride is evaluated against a standard for each individual test, not against each rider in a division

Objectives of Dressage The objective 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 the rider.

Eligibility The NC 4-H Dressage Division is an invitational division open to any 4-H member that possesses a current horse project eligibility card.

The Levels

- **Introductory Level:** Tests consist of Walk-Trot work, transitions from each and the halt. This is a good level to begin at especially for Junior and Short Stirrup riders.
- **Training Level:** Introduces the horse and rider to the basic principle of dressage competition. Transitions are gradual, circles large and only working gaits from the walk, trot and canter are required. Training Level requires obedience to the aids of the rider without fight or evasion when ridden on light contact.
- **First Level:** Emphasis is on freedom, relaxation and rhythm. The First Level determines that the correct foundation is being laid for successful training of the riding horse. The horse moves freely forward in a relaxed manner and with rhythm, its spine always parallel to the track of the prescribed movement and it accepts the bit and obeys simple aids of the rider.

Dressage Terminology

- **Dressage Test:** A published pattern. A predetermined order of specific movements to be performed by an individual in an allotted time. Movements are required to occur at specific locations in the arena.
- **Arena:** Designated area where a dressage test is performed.
- **Combined Test:** Consists of two phases, a dressage test and stadium jumping.
- **Above the Bit:** A resistance or evasion by the horse accomplished by raising his head to escape the action of the bit.
- **Aids:** Natural aids are the hands, legs, weight and voice. Artificial aids are whips and spurs.
- **Behind the Bit:** An evasion by the horse to avoid the action of the bit by tucking his head behind the vertical.
- **Rhythm:** The regularity of footfall at any pace.

Arena

- a. Small arena dimensions: 40 meters long and 20 meters wide
- b. Large arena dimensions: 60 meters long and 20 meters wide
- c. The measurements are for the interior of the enclosure. The arena should be separated from the public by a distance not less than 15 meters. The enclosure itself should consist of a low fence about 30 cm (12 inches) high when possible. The part of the fence at A should be easy to remove, to allow access or may be left open. The fence should be such to prevent the horse's hooves from becoming entangled in the fence. The letters should be placed outside the enclosure, about 50 cm (20 inches) from the fence. It is desirable to place a special marker on the fence itself, level with and in addition to the letter concerned. If there is only one judge he is placed 5 meters (16 feet) from the end of the arena opposite (at) the letter C.
 - a. Refer to Appendix for arena diagrams.

Check-in Procedures

- a. You will receive a ride time/schedule at the State 4 -H Horse Show. Familiarize yourself with your ride time(s) and plan your daily schedule accordingly. Times will also be posted at the Show Office.
- b. Pick up your entry packet at the show office.
- c. Familiarize yourself with the dressage and stadium jumping arenas as to location, entry gates and exits.
- d. The stadium jumping course will be opened to walk prior to the first jumping session. **NO HORSES ALLOWED.**
- e. You (or a representative) must check in with the Dressage Ring Superintendent at the entry to the appropriate Dressage arena several minutes prior to your scheduled ride time. **Failure to do so will result in the start of a one minute gate call. Failure to meet the gate call will result in elimination.**
- f. Inform the Show Secretary of any scratches.
- g. Your dressage test score sheets will be available by the conclusion of the Dressage Show. Dressage test score sheets for the Combined Tests will be available shortly after the conclusion of the Stadium Jumping Phase. Penalty Points will be posted Friday after the Thursday Dressage Phase of the Combined Test

General Rules

- a. **THERE WILL BE NO SCHOOLING IN THE DRESSAGE ARENA(s).** Any exhibitor caught schooling in these areas may/will result in elimination.
- b. A competitor failing to enter the arena within 45 seconds of the starting signal will be eliminated.
- c. A horse leaving the arena completely, with all four feet, between the time of entry and final salute, will be eliminated.
- d. Reading Tests:
 - a. If a **Dressage competitor** elects to have their test read to them they must furnish their own reader. Only the designated reader is allowed to provide any verbal instruction to the rider. Any unauthorized assistance including but not limited to verbal directions, whistles and hand gestures is not permitted.
 - b. All tests must be carried out from memory if it is part of the **Combined Test** and all movements must follow in the order laid down in the test.

Scoring System

Each movement is scored using the scale below:

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

Errors of the course resulting in penalty points:

- First offense – 2 penalty points
- Second offense – 4 penalty points
- Third offense – elimination

In the case of marked lameness, the judge will inform the competitor that he/she is eliminated. There is no appeal against a judge's decision.

Tack and Attire

a. Tack and Equipment

An English type saddle with stirrups is required. A plain or smooth snaffle bit and a regular leather cavesson, dropped noseband or a figure 8 noseband is required. Twisted or wire bits are prohibited. Snaffles listed in the Appendix are acceptable. Martingales, side reins and running reins of any kind are forbidden. Spurs are optional. Leg protection, bandages, or blinders are forbidden. A steward may be present to check equipment prior to the horse entering the arena. One whip, no longer than 120 cm (47.2 in) including lash, may be carried when riding on the flat at any time. One whip no longer than 120 cm (47.2 in) may be carried during the Dressage Test.

b. Attire

- ALL RIDERS MUST WEAR APPROVED PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR.** See The NC 4-H Horse Program Rules and Regulations Manual or more information regarding helmet requirements.
- Neatness is required. Hunter attire of conservative and dark solid colors are acceptable. Riders must wear proper footwear. Hairnets should be worn by riders with long hair. Stock ties may be worn. In extreme heat, coats may be excused at the discretion of the

management. Competitors must wear a solid long or short sleeved shirt.

b. Cloverbud Dressage. The Cloverbud dressage class is a non-competitive class for Cloverbud 4-H members. Riders may compete as an English, Western, or Non-trotting entry and will complete one of the following tests based on declaration on entry form:

- a. [USDF Introductory Level Test A](#)
- b. [WDAA Introductory Level Test 2](#)
- c. [NWHA Gaited Dressage Introductory Level Test A](#)

II. Western Dressage

All rules and procedures will follow the general dressage guidelines with the following exceptions:

Tack and Attire

a. Tack and Equipment

- a. A breastplate and/or crupper may be used. Any western type headstall must be used. A western Cavesson (pencil bosal, braided or plain) with space for two fingers placed between the Cavesson and the jowl of the horse is allowed. No metal, studs or any kind or other substance can be used in conjunction with or part of a western leather cavesson². Any snaffle bit may be used on a horse of any age being ridden at any level. Snaffles listed in the Appendix are acceptable. A standard stock saddle, national, working saddle, Aussie, native or western side saddle is to be used but silver equipment will not count over a good working outfit. A horn is not required but western style fenders are required. One whip no longer than 47.2 inches (120 cm) including lash, is permitted in all classes/tests. For details regarding reins and illegal 7 equipment see USEF Rule Book, chapter WD 120 and 121.

b. Attire

- a. **ALL RIDERS MUST WEAR APPROVED PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR.** See The NC 4-H Horse Program Rules and Regulations Manual or more information regarding helmet requirements.
- b. A long-sleeved shirt with any type of collar: short sleeves may be worn at the discretion of the judge; trousers, pants, a one-piece long sleeved equitation suit provided it includes a collar; boots are required. Optional apparel includes: necktie, kerchief, bolo tie or pin; vest, jacket, coat and/or sweater; spurs of western style (with or without blunt tines) or English dressage style; chaps, shotgun chaps or split riding skirt.

III. Non-Trotting Dressage

All rules and procedures will follow the general dressage guidelines with the following exceptions:

Tack and Attire (Western Non- Trotting Dressage Classes will follow the Western Dressage rules)

a. Tack and Equipment

- a. An English type saddle with stirrups is required. A plain or smooth snaffle bit and a regular leather cavesson, dropped noseband or a figure 8 noseband is required. Twisted or wire bits are prohibited. Snaffles listed in the Appendix are acceptable. Martingales, side reins and running reins of any kind are forbidden. Spurs are optional. Leg protection, bandages, or blinders are forbidden. A steward may be present to check equipment prior to the horse entering the arena. One whip, no longer than 120 cm (47.2 in) including lash, may be carried when riding on the flat at any time. One whip no longer than 120 cm (47.2 in) may be carried during the Dressage Test.

b. Attire

- a. **ALL RIDERS MUST WEAR APPROVED PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR.** See The NC 4-H Horse Program Rules and Regulations Manual or more information regarding helmet requirements.
- b. Neatness is required. Hunter attire of conservative and dark solid colors are acceptable. Riders must wear proper footwear. Hairnets should be worn by riders with long hair. Stock ties may be worn. In extreme heat, coats may be excused at the discretion of the management. Competitors must wear a solid long or short sleeved shirt.

IV. Combined Training Division

The **stadium test** is designed to prove the suppleness, obedience and jumping ability of the horse. At the same time, it demonstrates the competitor's knowledge of pace and the use of his horse in the jumping arena. It is not a test of style or endurance.

Eligibility The NC 4-H Combined Test Division is open to any 4-H member that possesses a current horse project eligibility card and **SUCCESSFULLY** completed a course consisting of at least 8 fences at the district level.

Unauthorized Assistance

All dressage tests must be carried out from memory if it is part of the Combined Test and all movements must follow in the order laid down in the test.

For the stadium portion: Any assistance including but not limited to verbal directions, whistles and hand gestures is not permitted. Spectators, coaches, parents, trainers and assistants must stand in the area immediately adjacent to the arena. Show staff will monitor the designated area. Providing unauthorized assistance will result in the disqualification of the exhibitor on course at the time of the occurrence.

Stadium Jumping Course

- a. **Arena.** The dimensions of the nature of the arena will be different for each event, however, minimum dimensions of 50 meters by 80 meters or an equivalent is recommended. The arena must be defined and preferably enclosed. The track of the course will be winding with changes of direction, so as to constitute a test of handiness. Red or white boundary flags (or cones) shall be used to mark the start and finish lines, and to define the obstacles. Combinations shall in addition be lettered (A, B, etc.). The rider's right should be on the same side as the red flag and the rider's left on the side of the white flag. The starting line may not be more than 25 meters nor less than 6 meters from the first obstacle. The finish line may not be more than 25 meters nor less than 15 meters from the last obstacle.

b. Course Design

- a. The course may consist of 8-12 jumping obstacles.
 - i. Maiden Division fence heights are 2' – 2'3" with no more than 1 combination. Fences may be trotted or cantered.
 - ii. Beginner Novice Division fence height will be 2'-3 " to 2'-6" with no more than one combination.
 - iii. Novice Division fence height will be 2'-9" to 3'-0" with at least one combination when possible and may have one spread. All fences will have a true ground line or a solid base (i.e. a wall or brush box)
- b. Each obstacle will be flagged with a red flag so that when the obstacle is jumped the red flag is on the rider's right. The flag may be a flag attached to the wing of the obstacle or a red cone placed in front of the wing.
- c. Numbers may be placed on the left side of the obstacle to be jumped. The number will reflect the order the obstacles must be taken for the successful completion of the course.

c. Timing the Course. The stadium jumping portion of the combined test will be timed. The test itself is **not** scored on who is the fastest, but encourages the rider to keep an even pace and ride strategically in order to complete the course in a reasonable time. If a rider completes the course within the optimal time given, no points will be added to the combined score.

- a. **Speed Fault:** This time designates the minimum time allowed for a rider to complete a course before accruing penalties for going too fast.
- b. **Optimum Time:** This time designates the chosen time allowed for a rider to complete a course before accruing penalties for going too slow. Optimum time will be determined by the course designer.
- c. **Time Limit:** This time designates the maximum time allowed for a rider to complete a course before being eliminated.

Procedural Notes

- Competitors must enter the arena when their number is called or during the allotted time period for their specific test.
- Each competitor must enter and leave the arena mounted, except with the permission of the show committee, or in case accident under penalty of elimination.
- Competitors are forbidden to jump or attempt to jump an obstacle in the arena before starting the course.
- Competitors are also forbidden to show the horse an obstacle on the course or risk being eliminated.
- Once the bell or whistle has been sounded, the competitor has 45 seconds to cross the starting line. A false start or failing to start within the 45 seconds results in elimination. Crossing the starting line in the wrong direction prior to starting the course is not penalized as long as the competitor crosses the start line in the proper direction within the prescribed time limit. Unless otherwise posted, crossing the start/finish line during the course is not penalized. Riders must cross the start/finish line at the completion of their course. The direction will be indicated on the posted course. Unauthorized assistance or failing to stop at the signal will also result in elimination.

Scoring System. In the combined test, the winner is the horse and rider combination with the fewest accumulated penalty points from the dressage and jumping phases.

- The good marks from 0-10 awarded by each judge to a competitor for each numbered movement of the dressage test together with the collective marks are added together, deducting any error of course or test.
- For each the judge the percentage of maximum possible good marks obtainable is then calculated by dividing the total good marks received (minus any error of course or test) by the maximum possible good marks obtainable and then multiplying by 100 and rounding the result to two decimal digits. This value is shown as the individual mark
- In order to convert percentage into penalty points, the percentage must be subtracted from 100. The result is rounded to a one decimal digit and is the score, in penalty points, for the test. Any jumping penalty points are added to the dressage points.

Jumping points are accumulated as follows:

Fault	Penalty Point Value
First Refusal	4 points
Second Refusal	8 points
Third Refusal	Elimination
Knocking down an obstacle	4 points per knockdown
Speed Fault (too fast)	0.4 points per second
Exceeding optimal time (time fault)	0.4 points per second
Exceeding time limit	Elimination
Falling of horse and/or rider	Elimination
Jumping obstacle out of order	Elimination
Error of course not corrected	Elimination
Unauthorized assistance	Elimination

V. Championship, Tie-Breakers, and Awards

Championship Points. Championship Points for the Combined Training and Dressage Champion and Reserve Champion are awarded per the chart below. Class placing same for all classes regardless of # of entries

Place	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pt.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Value										

The following championships will be offered:

- Dressage Champion & Reserve Champion
- Combined Training Champion & Reserve Champion

Tie-Breakers

Tie breakers for ties within a dressage class:

- Highest total collective marks
- Highest single collective mark
- Judge's decision

Tie breakers will be awarded in the following priority when determining the Dressage Champion and Reserve Champion:

- Combination of all test scores
- Highest percentage score in a dressage test

Awards. High Score awards will be presented in the following:

- Introductory level dressage
- Training level dressage
- First level dressage
- Non-trotting dressage
- Western dressage
- Combined Training High Score

VI. Entry Information

Copies of the Dressage Tests will be available from the following links:

Combined Training Tests: <http://useventing.com/competitions/dressage> (2018 tests will be used)

Introductory Level and Training and First Level dressage division tests: <https://www.usdf.org/downloads/forms/index.asp?TypePass=Tests> (2019 tests will be used)

Non-Trotting tests: <https://www.nwha.com/library.html> (2019 tests will be used)

Western Dressage tests: <http://westerndressageassociation.org/wdaa-tests/> (revised 2019 tests will be used)

Entering a Combined Test AUTOMATICALLY enters you in the appropriate Dressage Test. You may enter additional, different Dressage Tests at additional cost.

Multiple entries combined tests- an exhibitor may enter two horses, a horse and pony, or two ponies in the same combined test however both equine must be qualified at the same qualifying show by the exhibitor. You may only compete in **two** levels that are consecutive. Example: Maiden & Beginner Novice Tests or Beginner Novice & Novice Tests BUT NOT Maiden & Novice

Multiple entries Dressage Division- an exhibitor may enter up to two horses, a horse and pony or two ponies in the same dressage test. The horse and/pony must be eligible to be shown at the North Carolina State 4-H Horse Show. You may only compete in **three** classes that are consecutive. Example: Intro A, Intro B, and Training level 1 BUT NOT Intro B, Training level 1 and First level 1

VII. Appendix

Dressage Tack

Permitted Bits (from USEF's current Dressage Rulebook page 474)

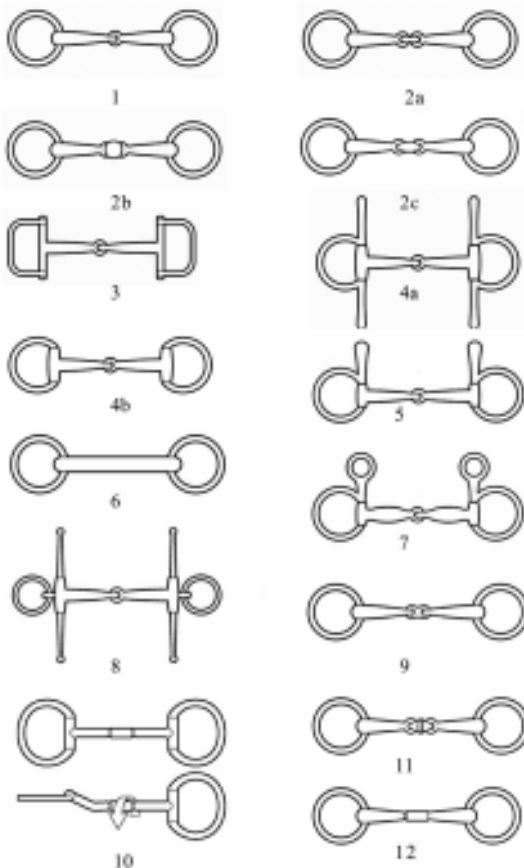
<https://www.usef.org/forms-pubs/F3p8pgrWgAo/dr-dressage-division>

Figure 1

A. PERMITTED SNAFFLES*

(Bits pictured and described below are required for all tests and classes at Second Level and below and optional in Third and Fourth Level Tests.)

(Refer also to Annex A posted on the USEF website for additional information on permitted and prohibited bits)



1. Ordinary snaffle with single - jointed mouthpiece.
2. (a, b, c) Double-jointed snaffles.
3. Racing snaffle (D-ring).
4. Snaffle.
 - a) with cheeks, with or without keepers.
 - b) without cheeks (Egg-butt).
5. Snaffle with upper or lower cheeks.
6. Unjointed snaffle (Mullen - mouth).
7. Snaffle with cheeks. (Hanging or drop cheek; Baucher). This may be a D-ring or other ordinary snaffle as pictured in Nos. 1-6.
8. Fulmer.
9. French snaffle.
10. Snaffle with rotating mouthpiece.
11. Snaffle with rotating middle piece.
12. Happy Mouth with roller.

Permitted Nosebands (from USEF's current Dressage Rulebook pages 478)
<https://www.usef.org/forms-pubs/F3p8pgrWgAo/dr-dressage-division>

Figure 3

PERMITTED NOSEBANDS AND BRIDLES (nosebands are compulsory)

(Refer also to Annex A posted on the USEF website for additional information on permitted and prohibited nosebands and bridles)

1. Dropped noseband



2. Cavesson noseband



3. Flash noseband

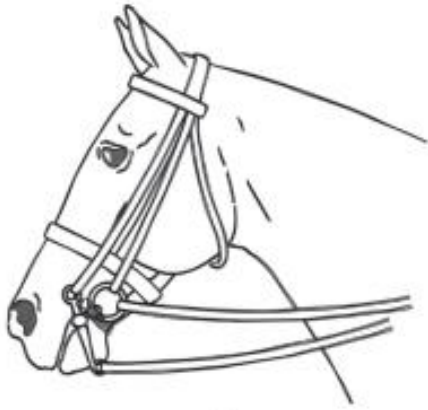


4. Mexican (crossed figure-8) noseband

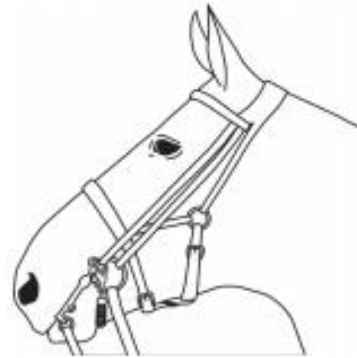
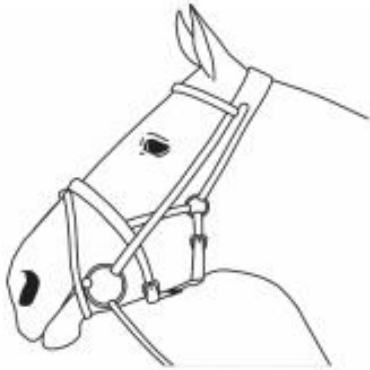


1, 3 and 4: These nosebands are not permitted when a double bridle is used.

- Western Dressage equipment (USEF Western Dressage Rulebook)
http://www.westerndressageassociation.org/docs/WDAARules-2014-Final-Jan-2015_54c7c4a0175f5_e.pdf

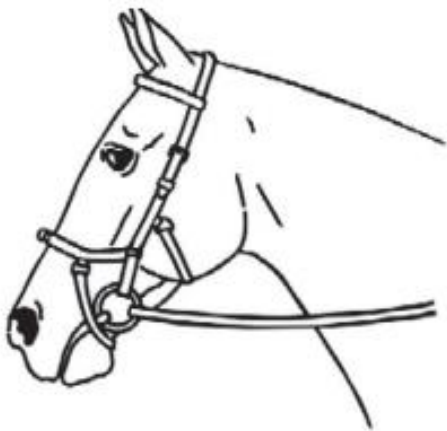


Double bridle with cavesson noseband, bridoon bit and curb with curb chain



5. Combined noseband (no throatlatch). Permitted for use in at any level (including USEF High Performance classes) and in warm-up with either a snaffle or double bridle, as appropriate for the level. When used as a double bridle, the lower strap of the noseband (flash attachment pictured with the snaffle), is not permitted.

6. Micklem Bridle. Permitted for use at any level where snaffles are permitted. Not permitted for use as a double bridle. Bit clips may not be used with this bridle.



Dressage Arenas

Diagram (from USEF's current Dressage rulebook page 527)

<https://www.usef.org/forms-pubs/F3p8pgrWgAo/dr-dressage-division>

