

RULES & REGULATIONS



WESTERN DRESSAGE
AUSTRALIA

A

2025
EDITION



The Western Dressage Association of Australia (**WDA-AUS**) is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation formed in 2015 to create a uniform national entity through and by which Western Dressage can be encouraged, conducted, promoted and administered and to be the governing body of Western Dressage in Australia.

The National Board originally sought and gained permission from the Western Dressage Association of America (**WDAA**) to use their Rules as an interim measure until such time as an Australian Rulebook could be developed that would be appropriate to our unique circumstances. An Australian Rulebook was developed & commenced use several years ago. It has since been reviewed and amended due to an International Alliance Partnership Agreement with WDAA. As per a requirement of the partnership agreement, WDA-AUS commenced using the WDAA tests as of 1 July, 2025 in lieu of the 2023 Australian tests.

This 2025 Australian Rulebook which is effective as of 1 July 2025, has been reviewed by the National Board to align the WDA-AUS rules with the WDAA definitions, thus ensuring international consistency. It will also improve judging clarity, reducing discrepancies and ensure movements are evaluated against internationally accepted criteria. Further, to ensure alignment with the WDAA test requirements and judging standards, it was necessary to update WDA-AUS level requirements to match the official WDAA terminology and descriptions. These changes will provide consistency across training, competition, and evaluation, ensuring that riders, coaches, and judges are all working from the same understanding. The Rulebook will be subject to review by the National Board every two (2) years. The current approved version of the Rulebook will be available on the Association's website.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1 Statement of Purpose

The aim of Western Dressage is to further enhance the harmony and partnership between horse and rider and to develop a well-rounded and disciplined horse regardless of breed or type.

Our Mission is:

To develop and govern a national equestrian discipline that supports and encourages the pursuit of classical dressage for any breed of horse and their rider. We value the harmonious partnership between horse and rider, building the relationship through ethical training, lightness of rein, suppleness, accuracy and with the wellbeing of the horse paramount.

Western Dressage provides systematic and progressive training for the western horse and rider in western style tack and attire. It integrates the lightness of the western horse and classical dressage foundations to improve performance for the purpose of enjoying a safe and versatile horse.

The purpose of the Western Dressage Association of Australia is to:

- a) be the governing body of Western Dressage in Australia.
- b) develop and promote Western Dressage as an equestrian discipline in Australia.
- c) provide standards of governance, education, competition of Western Dressage in Australia.
- d) preserve the integrity of the discipline and its execution.
- e) create awareness and communicate to the wider equestrian community the principles of Western Dressage.

1.2 Objectives of the Association

The objectives of the Western Dressage Association of Australia are to:

- a) create a uniform entity through and by which Western Dressage can be encouraged, conducted, promoted and administered and to be the governing body of Western Dressage in Australia.
- b) define and interpret the rules for Western Dressage in Australia in keeping with other national governing bodies for Western Dressage.
- c) promulgate and secure uniformity in such rules and standards as may be necessary for the management of Western Dressage, competitions and related activities, including but not limited to the rules of Western Dressage and coaching and officiating standards.
- d) formulate and implement appropriate policies, including policies in relation to Member protection, risk, codes of conduct, health, safety, youth and senior programs, horse welfare, and such other matters as arise from time to time as issues to be addressed by Western Dressage.
- e) establish and conduct education and training programs for riders, coaches, Judges and officials in the implementation and interpretation of Western Dressage rules and standards.
- f) in conjunction with State Associations and Affiliates further develop the Association and Western Dressage into an organised institution having regard to these objectives.

- g) maintain a points system for end of year awards gained by riders at approved Western Dressage Association of Australia competitions.
- h) give recognition to successful Members, officials and other individuals participating in Western Dressage and issue appropriate awards.
- i) act as an arbiter (as required) on all matters pertaining to the conduct of Western Dressage in Australia, including disciplinary matters.
- j) pursue such commercial arrangements, including sponsorship and marketing opportunities as are appropriate to further the interests of the Association.
- k) represent the interests of its Members and the Association generally in any appropriate forum in Australia and Internationally.

1.3 Organisational Structure

WDA-AUS is the national governing body responsible for setting national standards in all aspects of Western Dressage for Members, State Associations and Affiliates, thereby establishing unity in training and competing in this discipline.

WDA-AUS provides the foundation and structural framework supporting sport development and event organisation by the State Associations and Affiliates.

- a) State Associations are incorporated Western Dressage Associations representing their Australian state or territory. State Associations assist the national body to advance the aims and objectives of Western Dressage. Each State Association has the primary responsibility for conducting their State Show and High Point Awards for WDA-AUS Members riding and competing in that state or territory. Individual WDA-AUS Members are automatically considered to be Members of the relevant State Association closest to their place of residence.
- b) Other incorporated organisations that wish to conduct Western Dressage events as part of their existing program may apply to become an Affiliate. An annual fee is paid to WDA-AUS and a formal agreement between WDA-AUS and the Affiliate is accepted. These Affiliates may conduct Western Dressage events as approved by WDA-AUS and subject to WDA-AUS Rules and Guidelines.
- c) Overseas Members and organisations are welcome to contact WDA-AUS if they wish to apply for Membership and affiliation.
- d) All Australian Members will be covered by the national insurance program. This includes Public and Product Liability; Associations Liability and Voluntary Workers Personal Accident insurance. This excludes Personal Injury/Accident and Affiliate insurance.
- e) Formal agreements are to be accepted between WDA-AUS and all Western Dressage State Associations and Affiliates.

1.4 Membership

Individual Membership with WDA-AUS is all that is required to participate in Western Dressage in Australia.

Members are responsible for setting and maintaining the image and culture of Western Dressage. As ambassadors for the sport and their Association, they are expected to conduct themselves with dignity, integrity and display good sportsmanship. Results and awards achieved at a competition are less important than the manner used to gain them.

Members must comply with the Association Rules, Statement of Purpose, Policies and Objectives of WDA-AUS. All new and renewal membership applications are considered each month by the Management Committee for approval or non-approval.

- a) SENIOR MEMBERS: Subject to the relevant WDA-AUS rules and conditions, may participate in all events and activities, and compete in all categories of competition including Sanctioned classes, and accrue competition points. Senior Members have the right to be present, speak and vote at General Meetings and to apply to serve

as a National or State Board Member and apply to become a Judge.

For the purpose of this document, existing *Life Members* are included as and considered to be, Senior Members wherever there is any reference to Senior Members in this Rulebook.

- b) **NON-RIDING MEMBERS:** Non-Riding Membership is restricted to individuals who are either currently accredited judges or are actively serving on a National, State, or Affiliate Committee. Subject to the relevant WDA-AUS rules and conditions, Non-Riding Members have the right to attend, speak, and vote at General Meetings. They cannot take part as a rider in any ridden events. Eligibility to apply for committee or judging roles is governed by the relevant WDA-AUS policies and is not conferred by this membership category. ~~ASSOCIATE MEMBERS: subject to the relevant WDA-AUS rules and conditions, have the right to be present and speak at General Meetings but not to cast a vote. They are not able to take part as a rider in any ridden events, nor are they eligible to become a Judge. The fee is less than a full membership and is recommended for affiliate committee members and show secretaries who do not ride.~~
- c) **YOUTH MEMBERS:** must be **between seven (7) years of age and eighteen (18) years** at the commencement of the Membership year and, subject to the relevant WDA-AUS rules and conditions, may participate in all training events and activities, and compete in all categories of competition including Sanctioned classes, and accrue competition points.
- **For example** – a youth turns 18 on their birthday 01 October 2020. The youth is 18 years of age on 1 July 2021 when the membership year for the 2021-22 period starts. The youth is current in their youth membership when they turn 19 on 01 October 2021. **They remain a Youth Member until 30 June 2022**, which is the end of the 2021-22 membership year. On 1 July 2022 the youth becomes a Senior Member. Youth Members do not have the right to cast a vote at General Meetings, nor be able to serve as a Judge or Member of the Board or a Committee except a Committee to represent Youth Members.

Youth are not permitted to handle, ride or exhibit colts or stallions within the perimeter of the grounds at any competitions or any events. Youths seven (7) to ten (10) years of age may not ride horses under the age of four (4) years. Youth participating or competing in any event must have permission from their parent or guardian and must be in the care of a responsible adult who is in attendance for the duration of the event, whilst the youth is at the event.

- d) **EVENT ONLY MEMBERSHIP:** is required by participants in all training events and activities, and to compete in Non-Sanctioned classes, and where the individual is not a WDA-AUS Member or a Member of the host Affiliate organisation. These riders are not eligible for Sanctioned competitions and do not accrue competition points.
- e) **AMATEUR PERMIT:** May be applied for by WDA-AUS members, who are no longer eligible to compete as a Youth and who are not professionals in the horse industry. They are members who ride their horses for the enjoyment of competing against other non-professional members.

1.5 Standard of Excellence

- a) An ideal Western Dressage horse is responsive, confident, willingly guided and performs all the required movements correctly with authority and finesse.
- b) The horse has a ground-covering stride of reasonable length in keeping with its individual conformation.
- c) The hindquarters are engaged to create the energy required for each movement and enable self-carriage and lightness of the forehand.
- d) The head and neck are carried in a relaxed, natural position appropriate for each individual horse's conformation and the level of training being demonstrated.
- e) The horse requires only subtle, light aids to maintain connection and communication with the rider. When using a snaffle bit the rein contact is light. When using a curb bit or bosal the reins should be slightly draped but

not excessively loose.

- f) The rider is confident, balanced and effective. The rider demonstrates empathy, tact and smoothness to invite and allow the horse to perform at its best.
- g) The horse and rider are seen to work in unison and harmony.

1.6 Objective of Western Dressage Training

The objective of Western Dressage is the correct development of the horse and education of the rider to meet the Standard of Excellence resulting in a calm, confident horse that is a pleasure to ride and works in harmony with the rider. The training develops each individual athlete so that they are able and willing to perform at their optimum level.

- a) The quality of this training is seen in:
 - i) Willingness to move forward, backward and laterally as required by the rider.
 - ii) Compliance and the ability to maintain a consistent frame and light connection to the bit congruent with the level of training.
 - iii) Drive, cadence and regularity of the gaits.
 - iv) Balance, straightness and alignment, especially through transitions.
 - v) Suppleness and elasticity enabling the horse to perform with fluency and smoothness.
 - vi) Engagement of the hindquarters and lightness of the forehand; ease of movement and athleticism.
- b) The horse gives the impression of doing, of its own accord, what is required. The horse is confident and attentive, accepting the aids of the rider.
- c) The rider is composed and focused. The rider uses subtle, correct aids and has light, responsive hands.
- d) The horse and rider develop a useful working partnership and are pleasing to watch.

1.7 Objective of Western Dressage Competition

Western Dressage competition is integral to both the development of the discipline and the individual athlete. Competitions provide a supportive, progressive and structured environment that rewards and recognises achievements and encourages and empowers riders to set new goals. It encourages riders to develop effective riding skills and fosters the Western Dressage culture through shared experiences.

The central element of Western Dressage competition is the Western Dressage Test. These tests reflect and measure the progressive development of the horse and rider.

Non-sanctioned tests, 'Come and Try' and Assisted Rider classes are used to introduce new people to Western Dressage and make it easier for a wide range of people to become involved in the sport.

Western Dressage Tests and Events have patterns designed to develop and demonstrate a useful working partnership between horse and rider.

- a) Each series of Western Dressage Tests are grouped in Levels to show the progression of training. The Levels are Introductory (Walk/Jog only), Basic and Levels One, Two, Three and Four.
- b) All Tests are the Copyright property of the Western Dressage Association of Australia and may not be copied or reproduced or used without the Association's express permission.**
- c) Tests may only be used and ridden subject to WDA-AUS Rules and judging by WDA-AUS approved Judges, with any exceptions and other criteria for Training and Promotional Events and Competitions described in Section 6.
- d) Competition results are determined by the Judge who gives an evaluation of each individual performance of the Test.
- e) Over time, the Judges' scores and feedback influences the training and presentation of competition horses and

consequently acts as a key influence on the evolution of the discipline. The Judge will objectively assess each movement and test with regards to the following qualities and how each of these impact on the overall appearance of harmony between the horse and rider.

- i) **Gaits:** freedom and regularity; elasticity of steps.
- ii) **Impulsion:** engagement – transmission of an eager and energetic, yet controlled positive forward energy generated from the hindquarters into the athletic movement of the horse; suppleness of the back.
- iii) **Rider's Position, Seat & Hands:** well-balanced elastic seat demonstrating vertical, centred alignment, with light independent contact from hand(s).
- iv) **Rider's Correct & Effective Use of Aids:** evidenced by the horse's responsiveness, steady elastic connection cultivating athletic expression. Accuracy – precise placement of the figures and transitions, the effectiveness of the rider's aids determines the accurate fulfillment of the required movements of the tests.
- v) **Harmony:** The horse accepts the aids and influence of the rider with attention, relaxation, and confidence, and demonstrates a willing partnership between horse and rider resulting in a free flowing performance.

SECTION 2: COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Overview

Western Dressage competition and events are conducted by WDA-AUS State Associations and Affiliates upon approval. These competitions and events are open to riders on all types of equines including horses, ponies, mules and donkeys (collectively referred to as 'horses' throughout this document) subject to WDA-AUS Rules, Policies and Guidelines.

Each participant, and if a minor, the consenting parent or guardian, authorises the use of any picture, still or video which may be taken in conjunction with their participation in these WDA-AUS events and activities for WDA-AUS official uses.

Where appropriate, spectators are invited to positively engage with the performances. Acclamation and verbal encouragement of riders during their performance is allowed and therefore is not considered to be unauthorised assistance.

2.1.1 Incentive Program

The WDA-AUS management committee has introduced an incentive program relating to Championship and State Shows. State Associations and Affiliates are able to apply in writing via email to secretary@westerndressage.com.au seeking sponsorship for either a Championship or State Show (not both and also not for a standard show). The current amount offered is \$500 and is limited to only once per membership year. If used for sponsoring a Western Dressage Level, it may only be a Sanctioned Level. The amount will be reassessed each financial year and will be based on the financial viability of WDA-AUS.

2.2 Competition Show Categories

There are five (5) categories of shows.

- i) Online Show
 - ii) Standard Show (can include Come & Try classes)
 - iii) Championship Show
 - iv) State Show
 - v) National Show
- Each category has set requirements that must be complied with.
 - All Awards must be listed in the Show Program. This includes any additional Awards included in Championship, State and National Show competitions.

- Tie Break rules must be referenced in the Show Program, refer to Section 8.7.
- National and State competition points are awarded to placegetters in accordance with the category of show.
- The competition show year commences on July 1 and ends on June 30 each year.
- All Level tests are scored to three (3) decimal places.
- In the case of equal scores in a test, all tied riders will receive the same place and the rider/s with the next highest score will be awarded the next placing. Example: 1st placegetter / 2nd placegetter / Tied 3rd place – two placegetters / 4th placegetter etc. Refer to Section 8.7 e) for tied Level Champion and Placegetter determinations.

2.3 Competition Show Requirements

2.3.1 Online Shows

Online Western Dressage competition encourages riders to develop effective riding skills and provides riders with the opportunity to compete in a progressive and structured environment. Online competition ensures that all riders across the country, no matter how isolated, have the chance to compete and earn competition points.

These events are limited to a maximum of two (2) per year and can only be conducted by the WDA-AUS National Management Committee.

Competition points (1/2 points) for sanctioned classes are allocated for the National and State end of year high point awards and WDA-AUS Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program.

Test selections should be limited to two (2) only. For example: All Levels – Tests 2 & 4.

MANDATORY CLASSES

- ▶ Introductory Level (Non-Sanctioned) minimum of 2 tests
- ▶ Basic Level (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level One (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level Two (Sanctioned) 2 tests only

Optional classes include:

- ◆ Level Three (Sanctioned) 2 tests only, ~~subject to eligibility of riders for this level~~
- ◆ Level Four (Sanctioned) 2 tests only, ~~subject to eligibility of riders for this level~~

AWARDS – ONLINE SHOW

Ribbons must be awarded for 1st to 5th place in each class (Open and Youth), including ties.

Rosettes must be awarded to each Level Champion and Reserve Champion. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Champion and Reserve Champion Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

Level placings 3rd to 5th do not apply.

The style, size and colour must be as per Section 2.5 and the 2023 Ribbon & Sash Ordering 'how to' guide on the Event Organiser website page.

CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION OPEN

- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages across the two tests at each level for **Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)
- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentage across two tests at each level for **Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)

YOUTH CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION

- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination – best two scores from any Sanctioned level class)
The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.

- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination - best two scores from any Non-Sanctioned class)
The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.

2.3.2 Standard Shows

WDA-AUS State Associations and Affiliates may apply to conduct standard show competitions. These can be held over one or two days and can include 'Come and Try' classes. There is no limit on the number of standard shows held each competition year.

Competition points (1 x) for sanctioned classes are allocated for the National and State end of year high point awards and WDA-AUS Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program.

A Standard Show may not be held within 7 clear days before or after a National Show, Australia wide.

Test selections should be limited to two (2) only. For example: All Levels – Tests 2 & 4.

MANDATORY CLASSES Standard Shows

- ▶ Introductory Level (Non-Sanctioned) minimum of 2 tests
- ▶ Basic Level (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level One (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level Two (Sanctioned) 2 tests only

Optional classes include:

- ◆ Introductory Level (Non-Sanctioned) an extra 2 tests (total of 4 Introductory Level tests but not including Come & Try Introductory Level tests)
- ◆ Basic Level (Non-Sanctioned) 2 tests only (*can be run either concurrently with Sanctioned Basic Level Tests OR run separately. When run concurrently, riders may not enter both*)
- ◆ Level Three (Sanctioned) 2 tests only (at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee *if they have riders eligible for Level Three competition*)
- ◆ Level Four (Sanctioned) 2 tests only (at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee *if they have riders eligible for Level Four competition*)
- ◆ **Come & Try Classes** can be offered as additional classes in Introductory and Basic Level
 - ❖ these are classed as Non-Sanctioned and are restricted to RIDERS
 - who have either never ridden in Come & Try classes at all or have only ridden in Come & Try classes at ONE show previously
 - or who have NEVER shown in Sanctioned or Non-Sanctioned official Western Dressage classes prior to the show
 - ❖ if Riders are entered in Come & Try classes, they may also enter other official classes at the same show (ie. Come & Try Introductory Level Test 1 as well as Introductory Level Test 1 (Non-Sanctioned) etc)

AWARDS – STANDARD SHOW

Ribbons must be awarded for 1st to 5th place in each class (Open and Youth), including ties.

Rosettes must be awarded to each Level Champion and Reserve Champion. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Champion and Reserve Champion Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

Level placings 3rd to 5th do not apply.

The style, size and colour must be as per Section 2.5 and the 2023 Ribbon & Sash Ordering 'how to' guide on the Event Organiser website page.

Prizemoney may be given to overall placegetters, but it is not encouraged.

CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION OPEN

- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages across the two tests at each level for **Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination). Where more than two tests in a level are offered, the two highest test scores are used to calculate the highest average percentage.
- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentage across two tests at each level for **Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)

YOUTH CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION

- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination – best two scores from any Sanctioned level class)
The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.
- Champion & Reserve Champion will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination - best two scores from any Non-Sanctioned class)
- The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.

2.3.3 Championship Shows

WDA-AUS State Associations and Affiliates may apply to conduct only one (1) Championship show competition during an individual competition year. These can be held over one or two days.

Come and Try classes are not permitted at a Championship Show.

A State Association or Affiliate is not permitted to have the same Judge/s officiate at a Championship Show in consecutive years. If extenuating circumstances exist, application may be made to the National Management Committee for consideration.

A Championship Show may not be held within 7 clear days before or after a National Show, Australia wide.

Competition points (1.5 x) for sanctioned classes are allocated for the National and State end of year high point awards and WDA-AUS Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program.

Test selections should be limited to two (2) only. For example: All Levels – Tests 2 & 4.

MANDATORY CLASSES – Championship Shows

- ▶ Introductory Level (Non- Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Basic Level (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level One (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level Two (Sanctioned) 2 tests only

Optional classes include:

- ◆ Basic Level (Non-Sanctioned) 2 tests only (*can be run either concurrently with Sanctioned Basic Level Tests OR run separately. When run concurrently, riders may not enter both*)
- ◆ Level Three (Sanctioned) 2 tests only (at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee **if they have riders eligible for Level Three competition**)
- ◆ Level Four (Sanctioned) 2 tests only (at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee **if they have riders eligible for Level Four competition**)

AWARDS – CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW

Ribbons must be awarded for 1st to 5th place in each class (Open and Youth), including ties.

Rosettes must be awarded to each Level Champion and Reserve Champion. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Champion and Reserve Champion Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

Rosettes must be awarded for Level placings 3rd to 5th. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

The style, size and colour must be as per Section 2.5 and the 2023 Ribbon & Sash Ordering 'how to' guide on the Event Organiser website page.

CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION OPEN & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3rd to 5th

- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3rd to 5th will be awarded to the highest average percentages across the two tests at each level for **Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination). Where more than two tests in a level are offered, the two highest test scores are used to calculate the highest average percentage.
- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3rd to 5th will be awarded to the highest average percentage across two tests at each level for **Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)

YOUTH CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3rd TO 5th

- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3rd to 5th will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination – best two scores from any Sanctioned level class)
The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.
- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3rd to 5th will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination - best two scores from any Non-Sanctioned class)
- The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.

OTHER AWARDS – CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW

These are optional, not mandatory. Prizes for these are at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee.

- ❖ Highest Aggregate Percentage of the Show (1st to 3rd place)
- ❖ Highest Scoring QH, ASH, APPALOOSA, PAINT, DILUTE
- ❖ Highest Scoring Adult Rider
- ❖ Highest Scoring Youth Rider
- ❖ Judges Encouragement Award (Adult)
- ❖ Judges Encouragement Award (Youth)

Other Prizes

Should be considered for Level Champions, up to and including 5th place overall.

For example, a Buckle (for Champions only), garlands, merchandise, feed products, horse related products or tack.

Prizemoney may be given to overall placegetters, but it is not encouraged.

2.3.4 State Shows

WDA-AUS State Associations may apply to conduct only one (1) State show competition during an individual competition year. These can be held over one, two or three days.

If the State Association declines or is unable to conduct a State show competition in any given year, another Affiliate within the state may apply to conduct the State show competition that year.

A State Association or Affiliate is not permitted to have the same Judge/s officiate at a State Show in consecutive years. If extenuating circumstances exist, application may be made to the National Management Committee for consideration.

All competitors at a State Show must be current financial Life, Senior or Youth members of WDA-AUS.

All horses must be registered with WDA-AUS for a competition license. The exception is those that are only entered in the Introductory Level Non-Sanctioned classes.

Come and Try classes are not permitted at a State Show.

There is no requirement to qualify to participate at a State Show.

A State Show may not be held within 7 clear days before or after a National Show, Australia wide.

Competition points (Double points) for sanctioned classes are allocated for the National and State end of year high point awards and WDA-AUS Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program.

Test selections should be limited to two (2) only. For example: All Levels – Tests 2 & 4.

Basic Level tests may only be offered as sanctioned tests.

MANDATORY CLASSES – State Shows

- ▶ Introductory Level (Non-Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Basic Level (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level One (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level Two (Sanctioned) 2 tests only
- ▶ Level Three (Sanctioned) 2 tests only

Optional classes include:

- ◆ Level Four (Sanctioned) 2 tests only (at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee ~~if they have riders eligible for Level Four competition~~)

AWARDS – STATE SHOW

Ribbons must be awarded for 1st to 5th place in each class (Open and Youth), including ties.

Rosettes must be awarded to each Level Champion and Reserve Champion. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Champion and Reserve Champion Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

Rosettes must be awarded for Level placings 3rd to 5th. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

The style, size and colour must be as per Section 2.5 and the 2023 Ribbon & Sash Ordering 'how to' guide on the Event Organiser website page.

All Level Champions must be awarded a State Show Champion Buckle. An optional extra prize recommended for Level Champions is a Garland. Additional prizes may also be given to Level Champions.

Additional prizes must be given to Level placegetters, up to and including 5th place overall. For example, merchandise, feed products, horse related products or tack.

Prizemoney may be given to overall placegetters, but it is not encouraged.

CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION OPEN & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3rd to 5th

- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3rd to 5th will be awarded to the highest average percentages across the two tests at each level for **Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination). Where more than two tests in a level are offered, the two highest test scores are used to calculate the highest average percentage.
- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3rd to 5th will be awarded to the highest average percentage across two tests at each level for **Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)

YOUTH CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3rd TO 5th

Rosettes must be awarded to each Level Champion and Reserve Champion. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Champion and Reserve Champion Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

Rosettes must be awarded for Level placings 3rd to 5th. This applies to Open Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned divisions, as well as Youth Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned divisions.

The style, size and colour must be as per Section 2.5 and the 2023 Ribbon & Sash Ordering 'how to' guide on the Event Organiser website page.

All Level Champions must be awarded a National Show Champion Buckle. An optional extra prize recommended for Level Champions is a Garland. Additional prizes may also be given to Level Champions.

Additional prizes must be given to Level placegetters, up to and including 5th place overall. For example, merchandise, feed products, horse related products or tack.

Prizemoney may be given to overall placegetters, but it is not encouraged.

CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION OPEN & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3rd to 5th

- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3rd to 5th will be awarded to the highest average percentages across the three tests at each level for **Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination).
- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3rd to 5th will be awarded to the highest average percentage across three tests at each level for **Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination)

YOUTH CHAMPION & RESERVE CHAMPION & LEVEL PLACEGETTERS 3rd TO 5th

- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3rd to 5th will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination – best three scores from any Sanctioned level class)
The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.
- Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetters 3rd to 5th will be awarded to the highest average percentages achieved by **Youth in Non-Sanctioned Classes** (same horse & rider combination - best three scores from any Non-Sanctioned class)
- The same horse & rider combination that wins Champion, is not eligible for Reserve Champion.

OTHER AWARDS – NATIONAL SHOW

These are mandatory. Prizes for these are at the discretion of the Event Organising Committee.

- ❖ Highest Aggregate Percentage of the Show (1st to 3rd place)
- ❖ Highest Scoring QH, ASH, APPALOOSA, PAINT, DILUTE
- ❖ Highest Scoring Adult Rider ❖ Highest Scoring Youth Rider
- ❖ Teams Challenge Champions – refer to Section 2.4.

2.4 Teams Challenge

A Teams Challenge Award may be offered at State and National Shows only. Prizes for this award will be at the discretion of the Event Organiser and all members of the team are to receive the same prize.

2.4.1 Team Structure

- Team members do not have to be from the same state, city, location, postcode, or affiliate.
- Team members do not have to be from the same level, teams can be made up from any combination of the different levels, including Introductory level.
- Teams are any age & can include a mix of adult and youth riders.
- Teams must consist of 3 horse/rider participants.

- Each team member must be a current member of WDA-AUS and entered in the show in which the Teams Challenge is being offered.
- Each rider can only be a member of one team.
- Each horse can be ridden by no more than two riders, with each rider competing in a different team.
- Each team member must ride a different test.
- No separate rides are required, the tests are the ones the entrant rides at the show offering the Teams Challenge.
- Each team member must specify which test they are riding for the team.
- If a rider wants to be in a team but doesn't have others to join in with, the Event Convenor is responsible for the maintenance of a list of single riders and making attempts to find a team for those persons. It is recommended that an assistant be delegated this task.
- Each team must choose a name and designate a Team Captain who will submit the entry form and entry fee (\$30 per team), and who will communicate with the designated Event Convenor/Show Secretary/Assistant.
- An entry form template is available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website. Event Convenors are to provide this form to Team Captains.
- The Teams Challenge can be entered as a separate event on nominate.com.au or can be run as a manual nomination with the fee paid to the hosting Association, via direct debit by the closing date.

2.4.2 Teams Entry Process

- The entry fee for each team is \$30.00.
- Each team must designate one Team Captain who will submit the entry form and entry fee, and who will communicate with the designated Event Convenor/Show Secretary/Assistant.
- If a rider's test results in an elimination, the rider will be asked to designate a different test if it meets the team criteria. If the rider fails to designate an acceptable test, they will be considered "scratched" and none of their scores will count towards the team score.
- Team entry forms must be emailed to the designated Event Convenor/Show Secretary/Assistant by the closing time and date of the show nominations.
- No entries are to be accepted after the closing date.

2.4.3 Scoring & Prize Allocation

- The Event Convenor/Show Secretary will obtain the official test results after all tests have been checked by at least two (2) scorers or designated persons. The Event Convenor/Show Secretary will calculate the team results.
- The team score will be calculated as the average of the individual team members % scores.
- The scores are calculated by adding the 3 team member scores together and dividing by three (3) to find the average.
- The highest average score % will be declared the Team Challenge winners.
- Any ties will be broken by averaging the Collective Marks of each team members' specified test.
- Each member of the winning team will receive an identical Teams Challenge prize.

2.4.4 Rider Questions Answered

- Q. Can a rider be on more than one team?
A. No, for a team challenge a rider can only participate on one team.
- Q. Can the horse be ridden by more than one rider?
A. Yes, the horse can be ridden by one or two riders, but each rider must be on a different team.

Q. Which tests count towards the team score?

A. The rider will specify the test they are riding for the team on the entry form, before the event.

Q. Why must each team member specify which test they are riding for the team?

A. Team sports are about working as a team and having a strategy which allows each team member to be at their best.

Q. I do not have a team to join. How can I participate?

A. Contact the Event Convenor/Show Secretary of the event with your expression of interest in joining a team. They will put you on a list and attempt to allocate you into a team. Team Challenge entries have a closing date so you can't leave it to the last minute, you will need to act well before the closing date.

2.5 Competition Ribbons, Sashes And Rosettes

All ribbons, sashes & rosettes are standardised Australia wide. Event Organisers must follow the guidelines outlined in the WDA-AUS Ribbons, Sashes & Rosettes Ordering Aid Memoire on the Event Organisers page on the WDA-AUS website. The following table contains a brief description only.

Placing	Non-Sanctioned classes – Open & Youth (All ribbons are the “narrower” types, 48mm – with silver writing/logo)	Sanctioned classes – Open & Youth (Ribbons will be a wider sash style 7.5 cm – with silver writing/logo)
1 st	Blue	Black
2 nd	Red	Grey
3 rd	Yellow	Yellow
4 th	White	White
5 th	Green	Green

SHOW CATEGORY	Non-Sanctioned Champion Rosette	Non-Sanctioned Res Champion Rosette	Sanctioned Champion Rosette	Sanctioned Res Champion Rosette
Standard	Blue/White	Red/White	Black/Gold/White	Black/Silver/White
Championship	Blue/White/Blue	Red/White/Red	Black/Gold/White	Black/Silver/White
State	Black/Gold/White	Black/Silver/White	Black/Gold/White	Black/Silver/White
Level Placings Rosettes for Championship and State Shows		3 rd Yellow/White/Yellow	4 th White/White/White	5 th Green/White/Green

SECTION 3: WESTERN DRESSAGE LEVELS AND DIVISIONS

3.1 Levels

Western Dressage has five (5) levels of competition. Each level has up to five (5) tests for competition.

1. Introductory Level – Non-Sanctioned classes only
2. Basic Level – Sanctioned & Non-Sanctioned classes
3. Level One – Sanctioned classes only
4. Level Two – Sanctioned classes only
5. Level Three – Sanctioned classes only
6. Level Four – Sanctioned classes only

3.2 Divisions

There are three (3) divisions.

1. Open Division

2. Youth Division
3. Amateur Division

OPEN DIVISION – Riders holding a Life, Senior or Youth membership may compete in the open division. Refer to Section 2.3 Show Requirements for the Open Champion & Reserve Champion & Level Placegetter Award calculation for each different competition show category.

YOUTH DIVISION – Riders holding a Youth membership compete in the open division and are scored in the open division with all of the other class entrants.

However, they are also scored separately in the Youth division, for the same class with all of the other Youth riders in the same class.

As per the details outlined in Section 2.3 Show Requirements, Level Champion & Reserve Champion Awards are given to the Youth division. Level Placegetter Awards are given at the relevant show categories.

Youth Awards are calculated differently from the Open Division. It is determined by using the best two (2) scores from **ANY** Sanctioned Class. This also applies when calculating the Youth Non-Sanctioned Award, using the best two (2) scores from **ANY** Non-Sanctioned Class are used. For a National Show, the best three (3) test scores are used.

Explanatory note: The best scores can be from different levels ie one from Basic Level and one from Level 1. The same Horse/Rider combination that is awarded Champion Youth cannot also be eligible for Reserve Champion.

Youth are not permitted to handle, ride or exhibit colts or stallions within the perimeter of the grounds at any competitions or events.

AMATEUR DIVISION – Refer to Section 7.

3.3 Levels Of Competition - Tests

Introductory Level tests are always Non-Sanctioned or ‘Come and Try’ classes and therefore no competition points are awarded.

Basic Level tests may be offered as Sanctioned, Non-Sanctioned or ‘Come and Try’ Non-Sanctioned classes. For Non-Sanctioned or ‘Come and Try’ classes no points are awarded.

Level One, Two, Three and Four tests are only offered as Sanctioned classes.

Only **WDAA** tests may be used.

TEST CATEGORY	WDA-AUS MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED	WDA-AUS HORSE REGISTRATION REQUIRED	NATIONAL, STATE & LIFETIME POINTS EARNT	EXCEPTION
Non-Sanctioned Introductory Level Tests	NO Event Only Membership fee is required if not a member of the Affiliate holding the show	NO	NO	State & National Shows The Rider must be a WDA-AUS member
Non-Sanctioned Basic Level Tests	NO Event Only Membership fee is required if not a member of the Affiliate holding the show	NO	NO	
Sanctioned Basic Level, Level One – Four Tests	YES	YES	YES	Only the rider of the horse must be a WDA-AUS member, not the owner of the horse

3.4 Eligibility Criteria & Conditions for Test Levels

- a) The Levels of Western Dressage are offered as a means of evaluating a horse as its training progresses. The

performance of the horse shall be considered in light of the degree of training it should have achieved to be shown at that Level.

- b) Riders may choose the test level that they wish to enter at a competition provided that they meet the conditions required of the level/s chosen.

Professional riders are not permitted to compete in Introductory Level tests. Professional riders who wish to introduce green or inexperienced horses to a competition environment may enter Introductory Level tests Hors Concours (HC) only.

Professional riders riding Hors Concours at Introductory Level are not eligible for placings, ribbons or Level Champion Awards.

A professional rider is defined as any rider who does not meet the eligibility requirements for Amateur status under current WDA-Aus rules.

- c) A horse may only compete in a maximum of two (2) consecutive test levels at any one competition.
- d) A horse may only be ridden a maximum of four (4) tests in any one competition day.
- e) A horse may be ridden by more than one rider but may not be entered in the same class with two different riders. A horse may not be ridden more than once in a class. A rider may ride more than one horse.
- f) Horses must be ridden astride.

TEST LEVEL	CONDITIONS
Introductory Level	Horses must be at least 3 years old.
Basic Level	Horses must be at least 3 years old.
Level One	Horses must be at least 3 years old.
Level Two	Horse must be at least 4 years old
Level Three	Horses must be at least 4 years old. Must have achieved at least a 75% score in a Level Two class.
Level Four	Horses must be at least 4 years old. Must have achieved at 75% in a Level Two class. May only be ridden two-handed in a snaffle bit, transitional bit, bosal or bitless bridle; or one-handed in a curb bit or two-rein bridle.

SECTION 4: AWARDS

4.1 National and State End Of Year High Point Awards

- a) End of Year National and State High Point **Open** Awards are determined by sanctioned competition points accrued within each Level by horse and rider combinations during the competition year.
- b) End of Year National and State High Point **Youth** Awards are determined by the total competition points accrued from results in all levels by youth rider and horse combination during the competition year from Youth Division class placings only.
- c) In the case of equal scores, all tied riders will receive the same place and the rider/s with the next highest score will be awarded the next placing. Example: 1st placegetter / 2nd placegetter / Tied 3rd place – two placegetters / 4th placegetter etc. This applies to the End of Year National and State High Point Awards.
- d) All equal placegetters receive the full award points applicable.
- e) Horse and rider combinations must compete in tests from at least 2 separate events during the competition year to be considered for National or State High Point Awards.
- f) State and National High Point awards are not to be announced prior to September 1st, each year. **The exception being in the year that a National Show is to be held. National High Point awards may be announced and presented at the National Show.**

4.2 WDA-AUS Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program

The WDA-AUS encourages the progression of horses and riders through the training levels and would like to provide encouragement, recognition, and awards throughout the journey.

4.2.1 Horse Competition License

WDA-AUS issues lifetime Competition Licenses to individual horses registered with the Association. WDA-AUS awards licensed horses to recognise and reward progressive and successful training and promote fair competition.

- a) Competition licenses incur a once only fee upon application.
- b) The license stays with the horse for its entire life.
- c) The license is transferrable from owner to owner.
- d) If the horse is sold or the responsibility of the horse is transferred to another person, the acquirer is to complete a Horse License Transfer Application, available on the WDA-AUS website. The form is to be submitted to WDA-AUS via email at secretary@westerndressage.com.au
- e) There is no transfer fee applicable.

4.2.2 Awards Program

- Horses must be 3 years of age and over.
- Horses must be registered with WDA-AUS and hold a Lifetime Competition License (Section 4.2.1)
- The rider must be a Life, Senior or Youth member of WDA-AUS.
- The rider does not have to be the owner of the horse.
- The horse owner does not have to be a member of WDA-AUS.
- Points are awarded to the licensed horse according to its percentage score, placing and number of entrants in the class. These points are awarded to the horse irrespective of the rider except for Youth class placings, ie. Only placings from "Open" classes will earn points.
- Points can ONLY be earned at WDA-AUS Affiliated and Sanctioned events judged by a WDA-AUS accredited judge.
- Points are only allocated to Sanctioned Classes (not Introductory Level or Come & Try Classes or Basic Level Non-Sanctioned classes).
- Places from 1st to 5th to be awarded for each class.
- All equal placegetters receive full points for their placing.
- No points will be earned for test scores below 60%.
 - ◆ **ONLINE shows recognised and/or organised by WDA-AUS earn HALF standard points**
 - ◆ **CHAMPIONSHIP Show = 1.5 times standard points**
 - ◆ **STATE Show = DOUBLE standard points**
 - ◆ **NATIONAL show = TRIPLE standard points**

❖ **Affiliates are restricted to holding only one Championship Show per year**

- Points are cumulative for the lifetime of the horse and need not be earned in one competition year.
- Awards and Certificates will be sent out to the registered owner of the horse by WDA-AUS at the discretion of the association biannually as the horse reaches each milestone.
- Horses that reach these milestones and achieve the awards and certificates will be listed in the WDA-AUS Newsletter and on the WDA-AUS website in recognition of their outstanding achievement.

4.3 WDA-AUS Awards Points Scale

NUMBER OF RIDERS IN THE CLASS	MINIMUM PERCENTAGE	PLACINGS				
		1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
1 Rider	65%	1 pt				
2 Riders	65%	2 pts	1 pt			
3 Riders	65%	3 pts	2 pts	1 pt		
4 Riders	65%	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pt	
5 or More Riders	60%	5 pts	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pt

4.4 Awards & Certificates

<i>Certificate of Merit</i>	<i>50 points in a Sanctioned Level</i>
<i>Certificate of Achievement</i>	<i>100 points in a Sanctioned Level</i>
<i>Certificate of Excellence</i>	<i>150 points in a Sanctioned Level</i>
<i>Bronze Century</i>	<i>100 points achieved in each of 2 different Sanctioned Levels</i>
<i>Silver Century</i>	<i>100 points achieved in each of 3 different Sanctioned Levels</i>
<i>Gold Century</i>	<i>100 points achieved in each of 4 different Sanctioned Levels</i>
<i>WDA-AUS Performance Bronze Medal</i>	<i>200 or more points Total across 3 different Sanctioned Levels* (*minimum 20pts in a level to count)</i>
<i>WDA-AUS Performance Silver Medal</i>	<i>350 or more points Total across 3 different Sanctioned Levels* (*minimum 20pts in a level to count)</i>
<i>WDA-AUS Performance Gold Medal</i>	<i>500 or more points Total across 3 different Sanctioned Levels* (*minimum 20pts in a level to count)</i>
<i>WDA- AUS Superior Performance Horse</i>	<i>500 or more points Total across 4 different Sanctioned Levels* (*minimum 20pts in a level to count)</i>

Explanatory Note:- (*minimum 20 points in a level to count)

- Example 1. **WDA-AUS Performance Bronze Medal (ELIGIBLE)**
Mr Ed has 110 points from Basic Level, 100 points from Level One, 20 points from Level Two
Equals: 230 pts TOTAL

- Example 2. **WDA-AUS Performance Bronze Medal (NOT ELIGIBLE)**
Mr Ed has 110 points from Basic Level, 100 points from Level One, 5 points from Level Two
Equals: 215 pts TOTAL

SECTION 5: EXECUTION AND JUDGING OF TESTS

5.1 Voice and Touch during Competition

- a) Subtle use of the voice and limited clicking of the tongue is permitted.
- b) Touching the horse as a reward is permitted.

5.2 Calling Western Dressage Tests

- a) All tests may be called during the competition.
- b) It is the responsibility of the rider to arrange for a person to call the test if required. Lateness and mistakes in calling the test will not release the rider from any penalties for Errors.
- c) Calling the tests is limited to reading the movement as it is written twice only.

5.3 Commencement of Western Dressage Test and Salute

- a) After the ring of the bell, the rider should enter the arena at A within sixty (60) seconds to commence the test.
- b) A test begins with the entry at A and ends after the final salute.
- c) At the salute, all riders must take the reins (and whip if carried) in one hand. The rider drops the other arm down and bows their head to the Judge at C. Men wearing cowboy hats may take off the hat to the Judge instead.
- d) Only riders who are in Military Dress Uniform may salute in Military Fashion.
- e) After the final salute the rider should leave the arena at A at a free walk.
- f) The Judge may stop a test and/or allow a rider to restart a test from the beginning or from any appropriate point in the test if, in the Judge's discretion, some unusual circumstance has occurred to interrupt a test. Time-outs are not permitted.

5.4 Scoring

The Levels of Western Dressage are offered as a means of evaluating a horse as its training progresses. The performance of the horse shall be considered in light of the degree of training it should have achieved to be shown at that Level.

Judges observe the performance of each individual combination and make a balanced objective assessment so that the comments and scores accurately reflect the quality presented and differentiates between serious faults and minor mistakes.

- a) Tests and patterns are comprised of several distinct manoeuvre groups which Judges are asked to evaluate on an individual basis dependent on execution as dictated by the pattern description and the rules for judging, and against the standard and expectations for that level.
- ~~b) Points are awarded from 0 to 10 in 0.5 point increments. with 4 points or below denoting extremely poor quality to 10 points for excellent quality and a score of 7 denoting a movement that is correctly executed and of average quality. There is an expectation of an average performance scoring 70%, i.e. averaging 7 out of 10 points for~~

~~each movement.~~

- c) Each movement to be marked by the Judge is numbered on the Judge's test sheet.
- d) Certain movements and collective marks within the test patterns may have a co-efficient. The points are multiplied by the corresponding co-efficient where applicable and then totalled.
- e) Collective marks (points) for **Gaits; Impulsion; Riders Position, Seat & Hands; Rider's Correct & Effective Use of the Aids; and Harmony** ~~attitude, rideability, finesse and fluency~~ are awarded from 0 to 10, including half points, after the rider has finished their performance.
- f) Penalty points for errors are deducted on the Judge's test sheet from the rider's total movement and overall points.
- g) The rider's score is their total points awarded expressed as a percentage of the total points available for the test.
- h) All Level tests are scored to three (3) decimal places. All percentage calculations must be rounded up or down to three (3) decimals after the decimal point as per the following example.
0.0011-0.0014 is rounded down. 0.0015-0.0019 is rounded up.
Therefore, a score of 78.1214 is rounded down to 3 decimal places to become 78.121% because the 4 is less than 5.
A score of 78.1216 is rounded up to 3 decimal places to become a score of 78.122% because the 6 is greater than the midpoint of 5.
- i) **Effective March 2026 all clubs who use tablets for scoring will now be required to provide live scoring (public viewing) for all tests at all events. This will apply to Standard Shows, Championship Shows, State Shows and National Shows. Clubs who do not have tablets and only use paper scoring will display all tests in an appropriate time frame after each class clearly displaying the score, percentages and placings. Club using paper scoring will provide results to WDA-AUS events coordinator and display on social media event results with percentages. Clubs are required to submit the results of their event to WDA-Aus within 14 days of the event, using the standard results template. It is encouraged that clubs post their event results including percentages on their social media.**

5.5 Points Scale - Scoring

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	Marginal		

* "Not executed" means practically none of the movement has been performed

5.6 Expectations of the Levels for Western Dressage Tests

Introductory Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tests provide an introduction to the discipline of Western Dressage; the horse performs only at the gaits of walk and jog. The rider may sit or post the jog.• The rider should demonstrate correct basic position, use of basic aids, and understanding of the figures. The horse should show relaxation and harmony between horse and rider is important.• The horse accepts the aids and influence of the rider.• The jog should be a natural gait within the horse's scope and should demonstrate a swinging back.• To be eligible for Intro Level, a horse/rider combination must not have shown in a Western Dressage Test at Level 1 or above in the same competition year.
Basic Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tests confirm that the horse is supple and moves freely forward in a clear and steady rhythm, accepting light contact with the bit.• The horse demonstrates a greater understanding of the aids and calm acceptance of the bridle; greater emphasis is placed on relaxation, willing cooperation, harmony, rideability and pure gaits.• The horse is beginning to develop more impulsion and balance.
Level 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tests confirm that the horse is building on the elements from lower levels and is developing more engagement to show sufficient impulsion as the lengthened jog and lope are performed.• The horse demonstrates a more consistent light contact with the bit.• These tests introduce some collection and lateral and longitudinal balance, suppleness, and emphasize harmony and rideability.
Level 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To confirm that the horse, having achieved the impulsion required in Level 1, now accepts more weight on the hindquarters (collection); moves with an uphill tendency; especially in the lengthened paces; and is reliably and lightly on the bit.• A greater degree of straightness, bending, suppleness, balance and self-carriage is required than at Level 1.
Level 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To confirm that the horse has achieved the impulsion required in Level 2, now accepts more weight on the hindquarters (collection); moves with a greater degree of an uphill tendency as required in the collected gaits especially in the collected lope.• The horse must maintain a light contact on the bit showing balance, self-carriage and energy that result from improved engagement and weight-carrying by the hind quarters as performed in the collected lope.• The movements should be performed with greater bending, suppleness, balance and self-carriage than in Level 2.
Level 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To confirm that the horse has achieved the impulsion, engagement, uphill balance and self-carriage required in Level 3.• Level 4 movements should be performed with greater engagement, straightness, suppleness and balance.• The marked lightness of the forehand results from a distinct lowering of the haunches and thoroughness required to perform the partial lope pirouette.• A solid foundation is evidenced throughout by a correct, willing, harmonious performance softly on the aids.

Level 5

- To Confirm that the horse has achieved the suppleness, impulsion, throughness and clear uphill balance required in Level 5.
- The marked lightness of the forehead resulting from improved engagement and collection is demonstrated in the full lope pirouette.
- The flying lead changes in series reveal the responsiveness and obedience of the horse to the aids.
- A solid foundation is evidenced throughout by a calm, willing, harmonious performance.

5.7 Western Dressage Test Errors and Penalties

5.7.1 Error of Pattern

An Error of Pattern occurs when there is a deviation from or omission of a movement, such as a wrong turn, taking the incorrect gait at a marker or forgetting a movement entirely.

- When a rider makes an Error of Pattern the Judge may warn the rider by ringing the bell. It is up to the Judge to decide whether to ring the bell or not.
- In some cases, the ringing of the bell would unnecessarily impede the flow of the test. For instance, the rider makes a transition from Free Walk to Working Walk at R instead of M.
- The Judge shows the rider, if necessary, the point at which the rider must take up the test again and the next movement to be executed, then leaves the rider to continue the test.
- In principle, a rider is not allowed to repeat a movement of the test unless the Judge decides on an Error of Pattern and rings the bell.
- If the rider has started the execution of a movement and attempts to repeat the movement, the Judge must consider only score the first movement and penalise for the Error of Pattern.
- The decision as to whether an Error of Pattern has been made will be at the sole discretion of the Judge.
- If the Judge has not noted an error the rider has the benefit of the doubt.
- Every Error of Pattern, whether the bell is sounded or not, is to be noted by the Judge and is penalised as follows:
 - First time by two (2) points.
 - Second time by four (4) points.
 - Third time by elimination. At the Judge's discretion, the rider may continue to finish the test unless this will interfere with the start of the next scheduled ride. In this case the Judge must excuse the rider from the ring.

5.7.2 Error of Execution

An Error of Execution occurs when the rider makes a mistake in the execution of the movement but there is no omission or deviation from the movement.

- Some examples of Errors of Execution include: rising in collected jog; failing to take the reins (and whip if carried) in one hand at the salute; changing from riding one handed to two handed or and vice versa during a test.
- The Judge does not usually ring the bell as this is a rider inaccuracy and does not interrupt the flow of the test.
- If the error is likely to be recurring, for example, the reins are being held incorrectly, or rising instead of sitting for collected jog, then the Judge may choose to ring the bell and let the rider know that the error has occurred. It is up to the rider to decide whether they repeat the error for the remainder of the test.

- Where the jog is permitted to be either sitting or rising, the rider may change from one method to the other at any point within or between the movements.
- The decision as to whether an Error of Execution has been made will be at the sole discretion of the Judge.
- If the Judge has not noted an error the rider has the benefit of the doubt.
- Every Error of Execution is to be noted by the Judge and penalised as follows:
 - i) The rider is penalised by two (2) penalty points for each error.
 - ii) These errors do not result in elimination.
 - iii) The penalty is recorded in the movement where the error occurred.
 - iv) The rider can only be penalised once for a specific error within a movement. If the error is repeated in a subsequent movement/s, a further 2-point penalty is recorded in each movement where this occurs.

Examples:

- a rider goes from one handed to two handed in Movement 3 and then stays two handed for the rest of the test. The rider is given 2 penalty points in Movement 3 and each subsequent Movement.
- a rider goes from one handed to two handed in Movement 3 and stays two handed until Movement 11 where they revert to one handed for the rest of the test. The rider is given 2 penalty points in each Movement from 3 through 10.
- a rider performs the collected jog rising instead of sitting throughout the test. The rider is given 2 penalty points in each Movement where this occurs.
- the riders enter the arena before the Judge rings the bell.
- not entering the arena within sixty (60) seconds after the bell, but within ninety (90) seconds.

5.8 Elimination from the Class

Elimination from the Class by the Judge, or event management where relevant, occurs as a result of any of the following:

- a) Three (3) Errors of Pattern.
- b) Not entering the arena within ninety (90) seconds after the ring of the bell.
- c) Loss of control such as bucking, rearing or being unable to guide the horse.
- d) Use of illegal equipment or use of equipment that is not permitted for the class.
- e) Free hand or the romal/rein ends are used to strike and intimidate the horse.
- f) The leg or spur is used in front of the cinch.
- g) All four feet of the horse leave the arena at the same time during the test is elimination. Provided there is no issue with safety, there is no penalty for knocking down part of arena fence or stepping out of the arena with less than four feet – it may affect the Movement and/or Overall scores.
- h) Blatant disobedience or loss of control for longer than twenty (20) seconds (individual or cumulative) or any disobedience or loss of control such as bucking, rearing or being unable to guide the horse that presents a safety concern for the rider, horse, Judge, other participants, or public will result in elimination earlier than twenty (20) seconds.
- i) In the case of a fall of horse and/or rider the rider will be eliminated (it is considered to be a fall of the horse when both the shoulders and quarters of the horse have contacted the ground).

- j) Concern for the safety or welfare of rider, horse, Judge, other participants, or public.
- k) Misrepresentation of entry or inappropriate entry.

5.9 Elimination From An Event

Elimination from an Event by the Judge or Event Management, as relevant, occurs as a result of any of the following:

- a) Cruelty to the horse.
- b) Use of illegal equipment or misuse of equipment in a manner that is intended or likely to cause injury or abuse to the horse including excessive use of whips or spurs.
- c) Evidence of blood on a horse or marked lameness in the competition arena shall be cause for elimination from the event by the Judge.
- d) Evidence of blood on a horse outside the competition arena shall be cause for elimination from the event, by event management.
- e) Engaging in unsporting, disreputable or abusive behaviour by any participant anywhere at the venue including in the warm up areas shall be cause for elimination from the event by event management.

SECTION 6: TRAINING, PROMOTIONAL EVENTS & COMPETITIONS

6.1 Training and Promotional Events and Competitions

Western Dressage training and promotional events and classes are designed to encourage greater participation and introduce new people to Western Dressage and include, but are not limited to:

- Training days, lessons, clinics and seminars.
- Demonstrations.
- Social/recreational activities.
- 'Come and Try' Western Dressage Introductory Level and Basic Level classes.
- Assisted Rider events.

State Associations and Affiliates conduct these events and competitions subject to the following:

- a) An Event Notification containing the event details is to be submitted to WDA-AUS in the form of an email to events@westerndressage.com.au at least 30 (thirty) days prior to the event. This notification provides the opportunity to promote the event through WDA-AUS associated websites and other media, and for WDA-AUS to provide advice or assistance to the event Convenor.
- b) Participants must be Life, Senior or Youth or Associate (non-riding event) WDA-AUS Members or members of the Affiliate Association conducting the event. Otherwise the participant is to pay an Event Only Membership Fee.
- c) Events Convenors must use the online event system at www.nominate.com.au for participant registration.
- d) WDA-AUS rules and guidelines apply to these events, with the exception that entry to the event may be restricted and eligibility for horse and riders may be defined by the Event Convenors.
- e) The Event Convenors may choose to allow riders to use any style of saddle with any WDA-AUS defined legal headgear for ridden events.

- f) Additional criteria and exemptions apply to equipment and attire for Assisted Rider classes – refer to Section 6.3.
- g) Ribbons, prizes and other awards, if given, are determined and arranged by the event organisation.
- h) Eligibility criteria and any other stipulations for classes should be publicised no later than the opening of nominations for the relevant event or classes.
- i) Horses do not need to be licensed. No WDA-AUS Competition Points are recorded. Results are not counted for WDA-AUS or any other High Point awards.
- j) WDA-AUS Approved Judges are recommended but not required. These events provide an opportunity for ‘Trainee’ judges to gain experience and mentoring.
- k) Classes are judged in accordance with WDA-AUS Rules and Guidelines.

6.2 Come and Try Classes

6.2.1 Definition

Come & Try Classes can be offered as additional classes in Introductory and Basic Levels. These are classed as Non-Sanctioned classes. The classes apply to the riders, not the horse.

Come and Try classes are restricted to riders who:

- have either never ridden in Come & Try classes at all; or have only ridden in Come & Try classes at ONE (1) show previously
- or who have NEVER shown in Sanctioned or Non-Sanctioned official Western Dressage classes prior to the show

If Riders are entered in Come & Try classes they may also enter other official classes at the same show (ie. Come & Try Introductory Level Test A as well as Introductory Level Test A (Non Sanctioned) etc)

- ◆ Any and all photos/videos taken of rider competing in Come and Try classes **must** have a notation made with them that the class is a Come & Try Western Dressage class (hence explaining the lack of compliant tack that may be in use).

6.2.3 Come and Try Requirements

‘Come and Try’ classes may be conducted as a stand-alone event or in conjunction or concurrently with other competitions and events.

- a) Introductory (walk/jog) and Basic Level tests may be offered as ‘Come and Try’ classes and may be judged concurrently or in conjunction with other classes, as part of a training or promotional day, or as a stand-alone event.
- b) Come and Try classes are only permitted at Standard Shows.
- c) Horses must be at least 3 years old to enter ‘Come and Try’ classes.
- d) The Event Convenors may choose to allow riders to use any style of saddle with any WDA-AUS defined legal headgear. The other equipment and attire should adhere to the requirements stated in Sections 10 (Presentation of Horse and Rider) and 11.29 (RWD).
- e) These classes cannot earn any competition points or provide eligibility for any other awards. Ribbons or other prizes are not necessarily awarded.
- f) The class may also be structured to allow for some coaching and individual feedback during or immediately following the performance; to provide the opportunity to ‘re-ride’ all or selected movements; to use ‘live’ judging where the comments and scores are announced during the performance for the benefit of riders, coaches, trainee judges and

spectators.

- g) WDA-AUS Approved Judges are recommended but not required. These events provide an opportunity for 'Trainee' judges to gain experience and mentoring.
- h) Classes are judged in accordance with the relevant rules and guidelines in Section 5.
- i) A Horse may compete in a maximum of four (4) test rides (including Sanctioned or Non-sanctioned classes) in any competition day.
- j) A Horse may be ridden by more than one rider but may not be entered in the same class with two different riders.

COME AND TRY CLASSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● As above● Event Convenor's may choose to allow any style of saddle to be used with any WDA-AUS defined legal headgear as contained in this rulebook.● Restricted to RIDERS who have never or only once before, ridden in Come and Try classes.● Also means a person who has never shown in Sanctioned or Non-Sanctioned official Western Dressage classes before.● Come and Try classes are only permitted at Standard Shows.● If riders are entered in Come and Try classes, they may also enter other official classes at the same show (ie: Come & Try Introductory Level Test 1 as well as Introductory Level Test 1 Non-Sanctioned).● Any and all photos/videos taken of rider competing in Come and Try classes must have a notation made with them that the class is a Come & Try Western Dressage class (hence explaining the lack of compliant tack that may be in use).

6.3 Assisted Rider Events

WDA-AUS has opted to include specific Assisted Rider events to support participation for those who require assistance to compete and this may include Riders with Disabilities, young and/or inexperienced riders. In doing so, WDA-AUS does not assume responsibility for safety of participants.

- a) **Riders participating in Assisted Rider classes may not show in other classes, but their horse may be ridden in those classes by other riders.**
- b) No competition points are earned from any results in the Assisted Rider classes.
- c) The Judge and Event Management may modify a test or set their own to make the class more suitable for the participating riders.
- d) The emphasis of this program is on providing the rider with the opportunity for safe, fun participation in the event and rewarding the rider's effort.
- e) Each rider **must be led** by a suitable experienced assistant who is (sixteen) 16 years of age or older and may be accompanied by a side walker who is (sixteen) 16 years of age or older. The assistant's main role is not to lead the horse, but to guide or control the horse when necessary to ensure the rider's safety. If needed, the assistants can explain what is required and help the rider. The rider is encouraged to make an effort to be in control, maintain their balance and use the aids properly to guide the horse.
- f) Riders do not have to attempt or complete all elements of the patterns but a rider who omits a movement or does it incorrectly cannot be placed above a rider who does the correct pattern.
- g) The assistants and side walkers should wear western style pants/jeans, enclosed safe shoes, long-sleeved

shirt with a collar and a western hat.

- h) The lead line should be approximately 2m long and is attached to a halter that is properly fitted and worn under the bridle. The lead must not be attached to the bit.
- i) The reins may be attached to the side rings of the halter or to the bit, depending on rider's level of experience, but the rider should make an effort to retain control of the reins at all times.
- j) Riders must wear a properly fitted and fastened with harness, current approved Australian Standard protective helmet.
- k) Riders may use any WDA-AUS defined legal headgear and any style of saddle. Riders may hold the horn of the saddle and the use of neck reins and 'monkey grips' is permitted. Other equipment and attire should adhere to the criteria described in Sections 10 (Presentation of Horse and Rider) and 11.29 (RWD).

SECTION 7: AMATEUR DIVISION

7.1 Eligibility Criteria

Amateur status is not automatic, a person must apply and be accepted by WDA-AUS at the start of each membership year and pay the Amateur Permit Fee (\$30).

A person is eligible to apply for Amateur status once they officially cease to be a Youth rider as per Section 1.4 c).

Every person entered in an Amateur class must hold an Amateur Permit issued by WDA-AUS.

Regardless of one's equestrian accomplishments or skills, a person is considered an Amateur if they have not in the **previous 3-year period (36 months)**, engaged in any of the activities identified below:-

- Accepts remuneration for training horses, showing horses, assisting in training horses.
 - Accepts remuneration for conducting horse riding lessons/clinics/schools (including driving, showmanship, equitation, or training of horses).
- ◆ Remuneration is defined as compensation or payment in any form such as cash, goods, sponsorships, discounts, or services; reimbursement of any expenses; trade or in-kind exchange of goods or services.

Amateurs are PERMITTED to accept remuneration for the following activities:-

- Accept remuneration for horse related work duties either on or off competition grounds including but not limited to grooming, tacking and untacking, bathing, clipping, lunging, braiding, tack and stall cleaning, loping/warming up/exercising (but not training) horses that do not belong to them (e.g. Racehorses, cutting horses)
 - Accept remuneration for teaching/training/working with disabled riders for therapeutic purposes.
 - Accept remuneration for judging equestrian events or providing classroom information sessions relating to judging of equestrian events.
 - Accept remuneration as a Social Media Influencer or Social Media Brand Ambassador.
- ❖ Amateur riders can only show a horse in Amateur classes, if that horse is owned by themselves, their spouse, defacto partner or their immediate family members (Mother, Father, Sister, Brother).
- ❖ Amateur riders can show a horse they have leased, if the lease is for a **minimum** of 6 months and proof of the lease is lodged with WDA-AUS.
- ❖ Youth riders that are transitioning out of Youth Division and in to Amateur Division at the end of their 18-year-old year are exempt from the aforementioned 3-year (36month) period.

- ❖ Any remuneration received while their status is Youth is not scrutinized, however anything that occurs as of **Day One** of the first eligible WDA-AUS membership year that they are no longer considered a Youth rider (whether they are a member of WDA-AUS or not at the time), will be considered when applying for Amateur status.
- ❖ If the holder of an Amateur Permit loses/relinquishes their Amateur status at any point and receives remuneration for training horses, showing horses, assisting in training horses, conducting horse riding lessons/clinics/schools (including for driving, showmanship, equitation or training of horses) they have the option to reapply once a 3 year (36month) period has elapsed from when they stop receiving remuneration for those activities as set out above. Proof of timeline must be provided to WDA-AUS.

The WDA-AUS National Management Committee has the authority to deny the acceptance or the continuance of a Member's Amateur Status if it believes that the applicant does not qualify in accordance with this section 7.1.

7.2 Amateur Class Overview

STANDARD SHOWS & CHAMPIONSHIP SHOWS

Amateur classes can be held either within the Open Classes or as separate classes at **Standard** and **Championship** shows (at the discretion of the organising committee).

STATE SHOWS & NATIONAL SHOWS

Amateur classes can be held either within the Open Classes or as separate classes at **State** and **National** shows (at the discretion of the organising committee).

Amateur Class **Within** The Open Class.

- ◆ An Amateur must enter the designated combined Open class + Amateur if they also wish to be considered for the Amateur placings (a nominal fee will apply) – this must be done at the time of nominations.
- ◆ Once nominations close for the show the Amateur cannot enter retrospectively.
- ▶ For Example: A Competitor who holds an Amateur Permit enters a Western Dressage class as follows
 - Basic Level Test 2 (Open) \$18 entry + Basic Level Test 2 (Amateur) \$3 entry = \$21 total entry fee – one test to ride and two chances at being placed from the results of that test.

Amateur Class **Separate** To The Open Class.

- ◆ This will be a completely separate class to the equivalent Open class and will have full entry fee requirements similar to the Open class.
- ◆ The 4 tests per horse/day rule still applies regardless of the type of class entered.
- ▶ For Example: A horse/rider combination can enter at a one-day State Western Dressage show – Class 1: Basic Level Test 1 (Open) \$18 entry + Class 2: Basic Level Test 1 (Amateur) \$18 entry + Class 3: Basic Level Test 2 (Open) \$18 entry + Class 4: Basic Level Test 2 (Amateur) \$18 entry. The horse may not be entered in any further classes on that day because they have been nominated for the maximum number of tests in any one competition day.

7.3 Amateur Placings, Awards, Points

Amateur competitors are placed from first (1st) to fifth (5th) place in a class at all approved Western Dressage competition shows.

7.3.1 Standard Shows

There are no Amateur **Level Champion** or **Level Reserve Champion** awards at approved Standard Western Dressage shows.

There are:

- ◆ **Overall Sanctioned Amateur Champion and Reserve Champion** awards for the highest aggregate percentage.
 - The two highest scoring tests of a horse/Amateur rider combination from **ANY** Sanctioned class is used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ◆ **Overall Non-Sanctioned Amateur Champion and Reserve Champion** awards for the highest aggregate percentage.
 - The two highest scoring tests of a horse/Amateur rider combination from **ANY** Non-Sanctioned class (Excluding Come & Try classes) is used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ A Horse/Amateur rider combination who wins the Overall Amateur Champion cannot be considered for Overall Amateur Reserve Champion (Sanctioned or Non sanctioned).

7.3.2 Championship Shows, State Shows And National Shows Where The Amateur Classes Are Held Within The Open Classes

There are no Amateur **Level Champion** or **Reserve Champion** awards at approved Championship Western Dressage shows or State Shows or National shows where the Amateur classes are held within the Open classes.

There are:

- ▶ **Overall Sanctioned Amateur Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage
 - The two highest scoring tests (Championship/State Show) or three highest scoring tests (National Show) of a horse/Amateur rider combination from **ANY** Sanctioned class is used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ **Overall Non-Sanctioned Amateur Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage.
 - The two highest scoring tests (Championship/State Show) or three highest scoring tests (National Show) of a horse/Amateur rider combination from **ANY** Non-Sanctioned class (excluding Come & Try Classes) is used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ A Horse/Amateur rider combination can only be considered for one placing in the Overall results in both Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned categories.
 - For Example: A Horse/Amateur rider combination win the Reserve Champion Sanctioned Amateur award – they cannot also place fifth overall (sanctioned) using a different combination of their sanctioned test scores.

7.3.3 State Shows Where The Amateur Classes Are Held Separate To The Open Classes.

There are:

- ▶ **Sanctioned Amateur Level Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage in each sanctioned level.
 - Both scores from the two tests offered in each level are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ **Non-Sanctioned Amateur Level Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage in each non-sanctioned level.
 - Both scores from the two tests offered in each level are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ A Horse/Amateur rider combination can only be considered for one placing in the Overall results in both Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned categories.

- For Example: A Horse/Amateur rider combination are Sanctioned Amateur Reserve champions – they cannot also place fifth overall (sanctioned) using a different combination of their sanctioned test scores.

7.3.4 National Shows Where The Amateur Classes Are Held Separately To The Open Classes

There are:

- ▶ **Sanctioned Amateur Level Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage in each sanctioned level.
 - Where only two tests per level are offered at the show then both scores from these two tests are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
 - Where three or more tests per level are offered at the show then the two HIGHEST test scores are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ **Non sanctioned Amateur Level Champion, Reserve Champion** as well as **Third, Fourth and Fifth place** awards for the highest aggregate percentage in each non-sanctioned level.
 - Where only two tests per level are offered at the show then both scores from these two tests are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
 - Where three or more tests per level are offered at the show then the two HIGHEST test scores are used to determine the highest aggregate percentage.
- ▶ A Horse/Amateur rider combination can only be considered for one placing in the Overall results in both Sanctioned and Non sanctioned categories.
 - For Example: A Horse/Amateur rider combination are Sanctioned Amateur Reserve champions – they cannot also place fifth overall (sanctioned) using a different combination of their sanctioned test scores.

7.3.5 Amateur Division - National & State High Point Awards; and Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program

Horses accumulate lifetime points in Amateur as part of the Horse Lifetime Recognition and Awards Program and these points are recorded with WDA-AUS.

- ▶ Points are tabulated for Horse and Amateur Rider Combinations which are then eligible for End of Year National and State High Point Awards (subject to Lifetime Horse Recognition & Awards Program rules).
- ▶ Amateur points will be collected as of **1st July 2023**
- ▶ Amateur classes are mandatory for all WDA-AUS approved Western Dressage shows as of **1st July 2024**

SECTION 8: EVENT MANAGEMENT

This section is to be read in conjunction with Section 12 (deliberately left blank pending approval) relating to incidents at shows and disciplinary action relating to shows.

8.1 Event Convenor, Event Organiser, Show Secretary

State Associations and Affiliates should appoint an Event Convenor. This term means and includes Event Organiser and Show Secretary and may be filled by more than one person (a Show Committee), depending on the size and category of competition show being conducted. The Event Convenor and any assistants are to be provided with access to the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website so they can familiarise themselves with the requirements and documentation associated with conducting an event. The President of State Associations and Affiliates are to ensure that any new Event Convenors are provided with an adequate handover and orientation to the position.

8.2 Show Approval

Show or program approval is a privilege, not a right, granted or rejected at the discretion of WDA-AUS according to the continuous evaluation of the applicant. The evaluation includes but is not limited to, the competence of the Event Convenor (full meaning of the term), the quality of events, adherence to WDA-AUS Rules and Regulations, and the service to WDA-AUS members.

In order to conduct an approved competition show including Come & Try events, the Event Convenor must submit an application on the approved form, to the WDA-AUS Event Coordinator at events@westerndressage.com.au subject to the following conditions:

- a) The relevant application applicable to the category of the show must be submitted to WDA-AUS within the required time frame. The application forms are available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website. Competition Show applications will not be accepted **LESS THAN 30 days prior to the show date** ~~or MORE THAN 90 days prior to the show date.~~
- b) A show program must accompany the application. The program must adhere to the Show Requirements and include the relevant Event Information that has been provided by WDA-AUS for each category of show. Show Requirements and Event Information documents are available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website.
- c) Event Convenors have the right to cap entries if there are time, Judge and arena access constraints. This must be advertised clearly and prominently on the show program and on the event listing on nominate, **prior to nominations opening**, so that all potential competitors are made aware of this limitation. A guideline on capping entries and managing waiting lists is available to Event Convenors on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website.
- d) WDA-AUS will review the application and notify the Event Convenor of their decision.
- e) Clinics and training events, other than Come & Try events do not require an application. The Event Convenor must notify WDA-AUS via email at events@westerndressage.com.au of the event, prior to it occurring. This will be recorded on file for insurance and legal purposes.
- f) The Event Convenor must use nominate.com.au for the advertising and registering of nominations for all competition shows, including Come and Try events. Class numbers entered on nominate.com.au must be in the same order & have the same number as listed on the program. It is recommended that this system be utilised for other training events such as clinics, protocol days and training days.
- g) All competition show programs and training event flyers are to be uploaded to the **Event Information** section on the nominate.com.au system as a pdf document only. Details are **not** to be entered directly into the Event Information section, the pdf file will be listed below that section and will populate into the Event Information section when the event is published and viewed. A 'how to' guide on this process is available to Event Organisers on the WDA-AUS Event Organiser page.
- h) It is recommended that the Event Convenor uses checklists to plan and coordinate the conduct of their event (Resources are available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website).
- i) For competition shows, Event Convenors are to request that participants who are competing on horses registered with the AQHA, provide their AQHA horse registration numbers (and owner/rider AQHA registration numbers where possible). These details are required for the competition show results form. Section 8.8 refers.

This information can be captured utilising the 'question' facility when setting up the event in nominate.com.au. A 'how to' guide is available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website to guide Event Convenors through that set up.

8.2.1 Non-Competing Horses at Shows

- a) **Only horses officially entered in competition may be ridden on the event grounds. This includes all areas such**

as warm up zones, marshalling areas, lunging areas and competition arenas.

- b) Companion horses are permitted on the grounds but may only be hand walked. Hand walking is strictly limited to periods outside the official competition schedule and draw times.

8.3 Draw

- a) Organisers must prepare a draw with scheduled times for all rides. Riders shall be notified of the draw **at least forty-eight (48) hours prior** to the start of the competition. Judges and riders are to be sent the draw or instructions on where to view it online no later than 48 hours prior to the start of the competition, so that the organisers can be immediately advised of any conflicts of interest.
- b) The draw must be done in the order of the classes as listed on the program of events.
- c) Classes must be run in their entirety. When preparing a time schedule, consideration must be given to riders entered in more than one (1) class or riding more than one (1) horse. Consideration should also be given where possible to riders who may be calling for each other (for example: mothers & daughters, riders travelling together).
- d) No changes to the order of horses or riders are permitted once the draw has been finalised. No substitutes for horses or riders are permitted after the draw has been finalised.
Exception: Standard Shows Only - If a horse has to be withdrawn due to a verified injury, a substitute horse may be entered provided the horse is competing in the same level and in the same class/classes as the withdrawn horse.
Championship, State and National Shows - no horse substitutes are permitted after the draw has been finalised.
- e) Time intervals should be allowed between rides/classes for Judge's breaks and award presentations. A 15-minute break should be scheduled after approximately 2 to 2¹/₂ hours judging (between classes where possible) and half to one hour meal breaks where appropriate.
- f) A Judge should not be expected to judge more than 10 hours per day, excluding breaks.
- g) If the number of entries received for a class exceeds 35 horses, the class should be split and the divisions placed separately.
- h) The draw should include a notation for the riders to the effect that 'Times are approximate, and riders must be ready to ride slightly earlier or later than scheduled'. The following directive is to be followed by the Event Convenor.
 1. 15 minutes earlier or later is an acceptable rider scheduled time change for the rider to be prepared for (as per the notation on the draw).
 2. More than 15 minutes, the Event Convenor is to ensure that ALL RIDERS are informed that their times will change to an earlier time, or later time as the case may be. If the time changes will occur on a following day of the event, it is acceptable to provide all riders with a new draw with time changes only. Section 8.3 d) still applies.
 3. If the event is running very early, the Event Convenor may extend upcoming scheduled break times and incorporate an open pen during the break/s.

8.4 Open Pen

- a) Where possible the arena should be made available for riders to work their horses prior to the start and at the end of competition each day. At the Event Convenor's discretion, the arena may be open during breaks in the competition, especially if warm up areas are limited or because of unfavourable weather conditions. Riders should be advised as soon as possible (preferably when the program is posted) about the availability, times and any conditions regarding Open Pen.
- b) Riders and their helpers should display good sportsmanship and support each other by exercising due care and consideration when using Open Pen.
- c) Where possible, it is preferable that riders are able to use separate areas for lunging and ridden warm up prior to entering the Arena.

8.5 Scribes

- a) Scribes should have knowledge of the tests or patterns being judged.
- b) Scribes must not be an owner, coach, trainer or family member of a rider/horse in the class in which they are scribing.
- c) Scribes must not attempt to manipulate or influence the Judge's decision, commentary or score.
- d) Riders may act as a Scribe for a Judge after all the classes that they have entered (under that same Judge) have concluded.

8.6 Arena Specifications

- a) The arena should be on as flat and as level ground as possible.
- b) The interior measurements of a Standard Arena are sixty (60) metres long and twenty (20) metres wide.
- c) The enclosure itself should ideally consist of a low fence about 30cm high and should be completely enclosed, except for the entrance at A. The width of the entrance must be at least two (2) metres. Exceptions to the height of the fence are allowed for poles or ground markings as long as the arena is visibly marked and presents no safety risk to horse and rider.
- d) The fence should be as such to prevent the horse's hooves from becoming entangled. Rope, stakes, concrete or unbreakable chain fencing is not permitted.
- e) Event management should make every effort to provide the best possible footing in competition and schooling areas.
- f) The Judge is preferably placed a maximum of five metres and minimum of three metres from the end of the arena and must be directly behind the letter C.
- g) Riders should be permitted by management or the Judge to enter the arena prior to their ride if arena conditions do not permit riding around the perimeter of the arena prior to entry. Such permission must be announced prior to the start of the class.

8.7 Scoring and Award Presentations

- a) In the case of the Event Management utilising paper-based score sheets, the Judge's sheets are collected after each performance by the event organisers and given directly to the scorers. **There must be a minimum of 2 scorers.** Points and comments must be written in ink with errors noted with an asterisk *. In the case of any corrected points the Judge who has made the correction must initial it. The points are multiplied by the corresponding co-efficient where applicable and then totalled. Penalty points incurred for errors in the execution of the test are deducted from this total, not the individual movement.
- b) This total score for the test must also be given as a percentage to three (3) decimal points. In all competitions the winner is the rider having the highest total score, the second placed rider is the one with the next highest score and so on.
- c) In the case of Event Management utilising electronic score sheets through the Livescore system, the Show Secretary is responsible for managing the system use and ensuring the accuracy of the calculations in any reports run. **A minimum of 2 people must review all results and all placings to ensure the accuracy of each.**
- d) In the case of equal scores in a test (percentage to 3 decimal places), all tied riders will be awarded an equal place and the rider/s with the next highest score will be awarded the next placing. Each tied rider will receive the same place ribbon.
- e) In the case of ties when working out the Level Champions, Reserve Champions and overall 3rd - 5th Level placings within the applicable show category (including Youth and/or Amateur overall placings) the following tie breakers are to be used to determine each placing:

1. First tie breaker will be the horse/rider with the single highest test score.
2. The second tie breaker will be the horse/rider with the highest cumulative collective mark scores from each test that is used to determine their highest aggregate percentage.
3. The third tiebreaker will be the horse/rider with the highest mark scored for the final movement in any test that was used to determine their highest aggregate score.

As a result of a tie breaker situation, the losing rider will move to the next lowest placing and all other riders scored below them, will move down the placings accordingly.

If a tie still remains, the horse/rider combinations will be declared equal and will share the contested placing and the next relevant placings.

Example 1: Two riders tied in an unbreakable Champion placing, will share Champion & Reserve Champion placings and the relevant prizes. A toss of a coin is to be used to split the 1st & 2nd place prizes between the two relevant riders.

The next horse/rider combination scoring below them will move to 3rd place position.

Example 2: Three riders tied in an unbreakable 3rd Level place position will share 3rd, 4th & 5th Level place positions and the relevant prizes. A toss of a coin is to be used to split the 3rd, 4th & 5th Level place prizes between the three relevant riders.

In the case of any prize money offered, all monies will be split equally between the equal place getters.

At the discretion of the event organisers duplicate prizes may or may not be obtained and shared between the equal placegetters. *E.g. An unbreakable tie for Champion Basic Level at a State show where a trophy buckle is the prize, the Event organisers may choose to order a duplicate buckle to award to the equal placegetter that loses the coin toss.*

A reference to the relevant Tie Breaker rule must be included in the event program.

For Example: Tie Breaks will be determined as per Section 8.7 d) & 8.7e) of the WDA-AUS Rulebook.

Refer to Section 2.4.3 for the Teams Challenge tie break rule used in determining the winning team.

- f) If a rider withdraws (scratches) prior to a class or is excused, eliminated or is a “no show” prior to, or during the performance of a test, the words “scratched”, “excused”, “eliminated”, or “no show” or abbreviations of each, must appear after the rider’s name in the result sheet.
- g) A Judge is free to leave when all scores from that Judge’s class/tests have been totalled.
- h) Class Awards are to be presented at the conclusion of the last test of the day. Results and Judges’s score sheets are not to be released prior to that, irrespective of whether a paper-based or electronic based scoring system is being used.
- i) **Immediately** after a class has been awarded, in the case of a paper-based system, the Judge’s score sheet shall be given to the rider. The score sheet should be collected directly by the rider or the rider’s representative. Privacy of the score sheets must be maintained. However, at the discretion of the organising committee the scores may be published.
- j) **Immediately** after a class has been awarded, in the case of the electronic Livescore system, the Show Secretary is to finalise all classes and cause for the Judge’s score sheets to be sent to the relevant rider.
- k) If a mathematical error on the score sheet is discovered by the rider, it must be brought to the attention of event management within one (1) hour of awarding the last class of that competition day.
- l) Level Awards are to be presented after the Class Awards at the end of the competition show event.
- m) A video recording may not be used to dispute a Judge’s decision.
- n) The Judge’s comments, while judging, may not be audio-recorded without prior written permission of the Judge, the specific rider(s), and event management.

8.8 Show Results Reporting

All competition show results must be submitted within 14 days of the conclusion of the event to, the WDA-AUS Events Coordinator at events@westerndressage.com.au and the AQHA at shows@aqha.com.au

- a) Only the approved results forms are to be used.
- b) These are to be typed, not handwritten.
- c) Both the WDA-AUS Results Form and the AQHA WDA-AUS Affiliates Results Form are available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website.
- d) Examples of completed results forms are also on the Event Organisers page to assist Event Convenors. The examples must be followed. Cutting and pasting reports from the Livescore system is ineffective and is not permitted.
- e) Results submitted other than on the approved forms will not be accepted by WDA-AUS ~~or the AQHA.~~
- f) ~~Late submissions to the AQHA may incur a fee and is not in line with WDA-AUS rules and regulations. There is a risk that points will not be recorded if submitted late.~~

SECTION 9: JUDGES

9.1 Approved Western Dressage Judges

Event Convenors must use Judges from the WDA-AUS Judges List for all competition shows, except Come and Try events.

A Judges Contract is to be completed where applicable forwarded to the Judge by the Event Convenor. Once both parties have signed the agreement, a copy is to be forwarded to the WDA-AUS Events Coordinator at events@westerndressage.com.au with the Show Approval Application or in any case, prior to the commencement of the show.

Event Convenors can access a Judges Contract and an example of a completed contract on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website.

Section 9.1 & 9.2 Under Review as of 16.01.2025

- c) Current or retired Western and/or Dressage coaches and trainers.
- d) Presenters/Educators who have conducted seminars/training for Judges, coaches or riders.
- e) Riders who have won National or State titles in Western and/or Dressage competition.
- f) Riders who have competed in Western Dressage competitions and achieved a score above 70% in Level One or above.

9.2 Western Dressage Judge Accreditation Program

A Judging Convenor and an Assistant Judging Convenor portfolio will be filled by members of the WDA-AUS National Management Committee. Subject to financial viability, WDA-AUS will host a Judges Seminar each year. The location of the seminar will be determined on a needs basis by WDA-AUS. The seminar will form the basis of the accreditation program and will consist of theory based sessions, live judging and a written assessment.

The Program will provide ongoing training, assessment and support to Interim Judges, Applicants and Accredited Judges so that they can objectively assess horse/rider combinations and give accurate feedback through test scores and comments.

The program is based on an evaluation of the individual's prior experience and qualifications, assessment during the applicant's attendance and active participation in Judge seminars, any shadow judging undertaken, and any online training offered.

Ongoing education, judging opportunities and individual mentoring to assist and support Judges is recommended and supported.

A Judge's personal conduct and integrity as a WDA-AUS Member, official and rider must be exemplary.

9.3 Recommended Fees and Reimbursement of Expenses

A Judges Contract is to be completed (Section 9.1 refers) with a record of the agreed fees and expenses listed.

- a) Recommended Fees for Competitions:
 - i) \$5 per test judged with a minimum payment of \$100 per day for all category of classes.
 - ii) Judges should not be expected to judge more than 10 hours per day, excluding breaks.
- b) Recommended Fees for Training and Promotional Events:
 - i) \$50 per hour with a minimum of \$250 per day for training days, lessons, clinics, seminars, presentations and demonstrations.
- c) Recommended Reimbursement of Expenses:
 - i. Air Travel – if required should be booked & paid for by Show Management, unless otherwise agreed. Any reimbursement to the judge must be paid prior to travel.
 - ii. Airport Parking – if required & agreed upon, will be reimbursed by Show Management to the judge prior to the judge departing the event.
 - iii. Transfers – between the airport, accommodation & event venue will be provided by Show Management, unless otherwise agreed. Any agreed reimbursement to the judge to be paid as soon as practicable.
 - iv. Private Vehicle Travel – is to be reimbursed at the rate of 50c per km return trip (excluding the first 50km)
 - v. Accommodation – other than private should be booked & paid for by Show Management, unless otherwise agreed. Any reimbursement to the judge to be paid prior to the judge departing the event.
 - vi. Meals – to be provided by Show Management during the event. Meals related to overnight accommodation to be paid for by Show Management if practicable, or otherwise reimbursement to the judge will be paid to a maximum of \$40 per meal excluding alcohol. Any reimbursement to the judge to be paid prior to the judge departing the event.

- vii. Receipts – to be provided by the judge where possible, for reimbursements other than private vehicle travel.
- viii. Personal Expenses will be met by the judge and not subject to reimbursement by Show Management.

9.4 Judge Protocols

Over time, the Judges scores and feedback influences the training and presentation of competition horses and consequently acts as a key influence on the evolution of the discipline. Judges, riders, coaches, trainers, spectators and supporters need to have confidence in the integrity and quality of the judging system.

- a) Accredited Western Dressage Judges are ambassadors of western dressage and are representing WDA-AUS in an official capacity. Therefore, Judges must adhere to the rules of the association and comply with the code of conduct, policy & procedures. That includes supporting the Statement of Purpose of WDA-AUS and the Objectives of this association.
- b) Judging western dressage events that have not been approved by WDA-AUS is not in line with the above and therefore is not permitted under any circumstances.
- c) If a Judge is unsure if an event has been approved, contact is to be made with the WDA-AUS Secretary for advice.
- d) Judges must conduct themselves in an honourable manner when officiating at any WDA-AUS event. This includes wearing an appropriate standard of dress, not consuming alcohol immediately prior to or during an event, not using electronic communications or mobile phones during the event, not using abusive language or engaging in any other behaviour unbecoming to this position either at the venue or elsewhere for the duration of the event.
- e) A Judge who agrees to officiate at a WDA-AUS sanctioned event is responsible for fulfilling that commitment and a Judges Contract is to be utilised. The contracted Judge should assist the organisers to arrange for a suitable replacement if for any reason he/she is unable to meet this obligation.

9.5 Judges Attire

A Judge is to dress in western attire at all competition show events. This includes:

- i. Western Hat
- ii. Jacket optional but mandatory for State and National Shows.
- iii. Western style pants/jeans/trousers.
- iv. Long sleeve collared shirt – collar may be a band, stand-up, tuxedo etc.
- v. Tie or neckwear – optional
- vi. Western boots

9.6 Judges Code of Conduct

Western Dressage Judges must adhere to the following WDA-AUS Judges Code of Conduct.

Judges must:

- a) Maintain a consistent standard for all riders within a class and across all competitions.
- b) Not deviate from the rules.
- c) Hold a high level of integrity and standards when judging, competing and on social media.
- d) Aim to encourage riders through comments on the judge's scoresheets.
- e) Show a friendly attitude towards riders without being overly familiar and should not be prejudiced by prior knowledge of riders, horses or their past performances. They must not make comments on the Judge's

scoresheets regarding past performances.

- f) Make their decisions having regard for the welfare of the horse above the interests of any others involved.
- g) Be aware that they are responsible for setting and maintaining the image and standards of western dressage both in the competition arena and away from it and that, as an ambassador for western dressage, they should conduct themselves with dignity, honesty and good manners, especially in difficult situations.
- h) The Judge should have with them the current WDA-AUS Rules and Regulations book together with any amendments.
- i) Treat requests from riders to explain their decisions as an opportunity to assist the rider to improve their performance.
- j) Honour a commitment to judge and if unforeseen circumstances prevent this, endeavour to help the organisers to find a replacement.
- k) Maintain an objective and fair mind towards all riders which includes:
 - i) Not taking into account anything known about riders, horses or past performances.
 - ii) Guarding against conflicts of interest and avoiding judging in situations in which they have a close personal or professional relationship with a rider or owner.
 - iii) An open and friendly attitude towards all riders while being careful not to show familiarity towards those competing.
 - iv) Ensure to the best of their ability that the same conditions apply to all riders.
 - v) Maintain the same standard for all riders within a competition and at all events.
- l) Judges must know and understand these Rules and be prepared to align their personal opinion with the principles of WDA-AUS.
- m) Judges must have a thorough knowledge of the correct training of the Western Dressage horse and rider and understand the requirements of the test they are to judge.

9.7 Conflict of Interest

- a) Individuals may not judge or be judged by one another where they have, within fourteen (14) days prior to a competition, participated in any clinics, private lessons, or group lessons.

Individuals may not judge or be judged by one another where they have, within sixty (60) days prior to a competition, maintained a regular, ongoing or contractual business relationship where horse and/or rider training services are provided and remuneration is incurred.

- ◆ Regarding private lessons, group lessons and clinics, “regular and ongoing” is defined by more than 3 private lessons, group lessons or clinics in sixty (60) days.
- b) A horse may not be exhibited under a Judge where the Judge, or a member of the Judge’s immediate family or the Judge’s employee/employer, has been an owner, exhibitor or trainer of that horse within the preceding (60) days.
- c) The Judge is responsible of notifying event management as he/she becomes aware that a horse/rider is entered in a class and not in compliance with these guidelines. The horse may be ridden hors concours (HC) but the test may not be placed in the competition and no competition points can be awarded.
- d) All parties involved including but not limited to the owner, exhibitor, and Judge will be held responsible in the event of non-compliance with the above standards. The Judges Panel and the WDA-AUS Board will investigate and deal with the matter according to WDA-AUS disciplinary procedures.
- e) Judges must always act in the best interest of the Western Dressage Association of Australia and avoid any situation that creates a conflict of interest while judging any WDA-AUS approved event.

- f) Judges shall not visit with owners, trainers, participants or agents before or during a WDA-AUS approved event.
- g) Judges are not to be housed in private homes unless the Judge has agreed to it prior to the competition.
- h) The Judges shall talk only with representatives of event management, beyond the exchange of normal greetings, until the entire class or competition that they are judging is completed.
- i) It is recommended that a Judge shall not appear on the venue more than one hour prior to the scheduled start of the event unless as directed or requested by event management.
- j) After an event Judges may provide feedback to riders on an individual basis. These discussions with riders should be monitored by event officials. Competitors are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and courteous manner and recognise that such a discussion is an opportunity for the rider to learn and improve their performance. Any disrespectful or confrontational behaviour between any participants or officials during an event is not to be tolerated.

9.8 Procedures for Judges

When invited to judge at an event, ask for a contact name, phone number and e-mail address and request that details be confirmed in writing within two weeks, preferably with a WDA-AUS Judges Contract, which all Event Convenors have access to.

- a) Agree and confirm in your contract, fees and expense allowances and the distance (most direct route) you have to travel.
- b) Advise the organisers if you are bringing your own scribe.
- c) Advise the organisers if you require a car if judging outdoors.
- d) Arrive at the venue 30 to 60 minutes prior to starting time. Contact the Event Convenor should you be delayed on the way to the venue.
- e) Have your Rulebook with you and be prepared to take action and/or offer assistance to the organisers with regards to rules, guidelines, risk management and event procedures.
- f) The Judge must physically inspect the arena and communicate with the Event Convenor to ensure that:
 - i) the arena surface and fence are a satisfactory standard.
 - ii) the marker letters are the correct position and distance outside of the arena (.5 to 1m).
 - iii) the letter A must be placed at least 5-10 metres back from the entry and in line with C.
 - iv) no dogs or any other distractions are at or near the Judge's car or table.
 - v) as much as possible, conditions remain the same for all riders in each class.

Conversation, apart from the exchange of normal greetings, should only occur with the Event Convenors or event representatives until the entire event is completed. The Judge is free to leave when all scores from the classes that they have judged have been totalled and checked.

SECTION 10: PRESENTATION OF HORSE AND RIDER

Reference should also be made to the Frequently Asked Questions section at the end of this publication.

10.1 Bridles

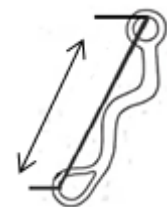
- a) Any Western or Australian Stock headstall style may be used. A headstall is defined as a leather or leather like item to carry a bit or bosal. The headstall for bitless bridles must be of rope, leather or leather-like material.

10.2 Snaffle Bits

- a) Snaffle bits may be used at any level of competition by any horse of any age.
- b) The rider must use two hands with a snaffle bit.
- c) A standard snaffle is a conventional O-Ring, Egg Butt, Full Cheek or D-Ring, all with rings having an inside diameter no smaller than 50mm (2"), nor larger than 100mm (4").
- d) Bars of the mouthpiece must be round or oval shaped and no less than 8mm to 19m ($\frac{5}{16}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ ") in diameter when measured 25mm (1") from the cheek. The mouthpiece may be inlaid or latex wrapped but must be smooth.
- e) The mouthpiece may be Mullen, barrel, or ported and consist of one, two or three pieces.
- f) If a mouthpiece is three pieces, a connecting link must be no larger than 32mm ($1\frac{1}{4}$ ") in diameter, or a connecting flat bar must be no longer than 50mm (2"), 9.5 mm to 19mm ($\frac{3}{8}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ "), measured top- to-bottom, and must lie flat in the horse's mouth.
- g) Other types of snaffle bits such as hanging cheek snaffles are legal and are not considered to be leverage bits. Bits such as the Spanish Snaffle or Kimberwick, which have slots for both the reins and the cheek pieces, are permitted. A chin strap or curb chain is permitted above the reins.
- h) The port of any snaffle bit must be no higher than 32mm ($1\frac{1}{4}$ ").
- i) Bit hobbles below the reins are permitted.

10.3 Curb Bits

- a) A curb bit is a leverage bit and may have loose or fixed shanks. Curb bits must connect directly from the cheek piece to the mouth piece.
- b) When using a curb bit, the rider may use one or two hands up to and including Level 3.**
- c) The rider should not go from one to two handed or vice versa during an individual test – penalty points are applied in this case.**
- d) When used in Level 4 classes the rider may only ride one handed with a curb bit.**
- e) Maximum length from the inside bottom of the top ring to the point of pull on the lower ring is 216mm (8.5") – *see opposite*.
- f) A curb chain or flat leather chin strap must be used with a curb bit and must be at least 12.7mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ ") in width and **lie flat** against the jaw of the horse.
- g) The angle created between the shank and lower jaw as the curb strap tightens, should not be less than 45 degrees or more than 90 degrees.
- h) Bars of the mouthpiece must be round or oval shaped and no less than 8mm to 19m ($\frac{5}{16}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ ") in diameter when measured 25mm (1") from the cheek. The mouthpiece may be inlaid or latex wrapped but must be smooth.
- i) The mouthpiece may be one, two or three pieces. A three piece, connecting link of 32mm ($1\frac{1}{4}$ ") or less in diameter, or a connecting flat bar of 9.5 mm to 19mm ($\frac{3}{8}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ ") measured top to bottom with a maximum length of 50mm (2"), which lies flat in the horse's mouth, is acceptable.
- j) Jointed and cricket mouthpieces and rollers attached to the centre of the bit and covers are acceptable. All curb bits must be free of mechanical devices. Nothing, such as extensions, rivets or prongs may protrude from the mouthpiece. No curbs may have a double fulcrum effect.



Transitional Curbs

- a) Transitional Curb Bits permit the shanks to be independently moved.

- b) A transitional curb bit may be used by horses at least three (3) years of age.
- c) Shanks must have an independent swivel action either from the port or the cannons of the bit.
- d) The port of any transitional bit must be no higher than 50mm (2").
- e) Bit hobbles are not permitted on transitional curbs.
- f) May be ridden two handed in all levels.

Fixed Shank Curbs

- a) The rider should preferably use one hand with a fixed shank with a solid mouthpiece. However, the use of two hands is permitted.
- b) No horse under four (4) years of age may be ridden in a fixed curb with a solid mouthpiece.
- c) Bit hobbles below the reins are permitted.

10.4 Spade Bits and Two Rein Bridles

- a) A Spade Bit or Two Rein Bridle (bosalita and spade bit configuration) is only permitted in Level 3 and 4 and horses must not be under four (4) years of age.
- b) Must be ridden one handed with the exception of the rider's free hand which can be used without penalty in the two-rein setup.
- c) The port of a spade bit may not exceed 90mm (3.5")
- d) Bit hobbles below the reins are permitted.



10.5 Bosals and Bosalitas

- a) Bosals are permitted on horses of any age for any event or competition level.
- b) The bosal and bosalita are rounded in shape, **smooth and constructed of braided rawhide or leather** and must have a flexible non-metallic core, attached to a suitable headstall.
- c) The bosal diameter must be no wider than 19mm (¾") when measured at the cheek or bars just below the side buttons where the hanger (headstall) is connected.
- d) The bosalita is a light bosal approximately 9.5mm (3/8") in diameter that is used in the two-rein set up.
- e) The bosalita may be worn without reins in the manner of a noseband.

10.6 Bitless Bridles

- a) The noseband for bitless bridles must be **smooth and constructed of flat leather or braided rawhide or leather as for a bosal**. There are no knots or protrusions permitted on the noseband.
- b) Control is achieved by direct pressure on the nose. There is neither leverage nor any type of clamping action permitted.
- c) **The reins attach directly to a fixed ring on the noseband – see opposite.**
- d) Reins can be split, looped or joined and are used two handed.



10.7 Reins

See also Section 11.28 – Rein Handling Techniques.

- a) Reins must be of leather, rope, horsehair, or synthetic material.
- b) Split, looped or joined reins can be used two handed with a snaffle, curb bit or bitless bridle.
- c) Looped or joined reins can be held independently or bridged when riding two handed.
- d) Split reins are bridged when used with two hands.
- e) Split reins can be used one handed with a curb bit. There are two different rein handling methods that can be used. Refer to **Section 11.28** for details.
- f) Romal reins are used one handed with a curb bit.
- g) Mecate reins are used two handed with a bosal.
- h) Romal and mecate reins are used one handed for the Two Rein setup with a spade bit and bosalita.
- i) Slobber straps on snaffle bits can be no wider than 50mm (2") or longer than 216mm (8.5").

10.8 Saddles

Refer also to the Frequently Asked Questions annexure at the end of this publication.

- a) A Western or Swinging Fender or 'half-breed' saddle is to be used.
- b) All saddles used must meet at least 2 of the 3 following requirements:
 - i) Saddle Skirt.
 - ii) Western Fenders which must be a minimum of 75mm (3") at the narrowest point.
 - iii) Horn.
- c) A saddle pad of suitable size, material and thickness must be used under the saddle.
- d) At the Event Convenor's discretion, English or other styles of saddle and any WDA-AUS defined legal bridle with a legal bit or legal bitless bridle may be used for Training and Come and Try days. Refer to Section 6.

10.9 Optional Equipment

- a) A saddle blanket may be used over the top of the saddle pad.
- b) Breastplate.
- c) Crupper.
- d) One whip is permitted when riding provided it is no longer than 120 cm (48") including lash.
- e) A cavesson noseband or bosalita (as described in **Section 5.5**). A cavesson must be constructed of smooth leather, fit comfortably (not too tight) and be appropriately positioned above the bit according to the individual horse's conformation.

10.10 Illegal Equipment

The use of illegal equipment will result in elimination from the class and/or competition. The following equipment is illegal:

- a) Martingales.
- b) Bit guards.
- c) Nosebands other than a cavesson or bosalita such as drop, crossover, etc.
- d) Gadgets of any kind (running or draw reins, tongue tie, tie-downs, etc).
- e) Any form of blinkers, earhoods, or hoods. (Ear plugs are permitted)
- f) Sharp, square, twisted or pointed edges on any mouthpiece or noseband.

- g) Slip or gag bits, donut or flat polo mouthpieces.
- h) Bits with reins attached to a single ring at the centre of a cross bar.
- i) Any rein design or other device that increases the effective length thereby affecting the leverage of the shank of a curb bit.
- j) Anything that alters the intended use of equipment as provided for in the description of appointments for a given class/test.
- k) Curb bits that create double leverage.
- l) Mechanical Hackamores.
- m) Bosalita and snaffle configuration.
- n) Bitless bridles that use straps that have leverage and/or tighten around a horse's head to apply pressure to the nose, jaw, cheek and/or poll are not permitted – *examples below*.



10.11 Equipment in Warm-Up Ring and Training Areas

- a) For safety reasons, lunging or long-reining should be in a separate area to the warm-up areas where horses are being ridden. While lunging, long-reining or working in hand, side-reins or headset attachments from the bit or headstall to the saddle/roller and the use of one whip or a training stick are permitted. No training equipment is allowed in the marshalling area or the performance arena one hour prior to the commencement and one hour after the cessation of the show each day.
- b) Side-reins or headset attachments from the bit or headstall to the saddle are prohibited when mounted.
- c) Equipment that is illegal for competition purposes cannot be used at the venue at any time during the venue usage or hire period booked for the event, including the set up and pull-down days immediately prior to and following the event.

10.12 Gear Check

- a) The responsibility for the correct attire and equipment rests with the rider.
- b) Inspection of tack and bits may be completed by or at the discretion of the Event Convenor or Judge. A horse must be eliminated from the test just completed if the equipment is in violation of the rules. All horses in each class/test may be inspected at the Judge's discretion if any tack or equipment is thought to be illegal.
- c) Tack and bits on both sides of each horse may be inspected and checked for each class/ test and may be done immediately as the horse leaves the arena if requested by an official.
- d) Any evidence of blood on the horse's mouth or sides will result in elimination of the entry for that competition. Environmental causes such as insect bites shall normally not be the cause of elimination.
- e) If checking of the bridle is performed, it is to be done with due caution, as the horse may be overly sensitive

or reactive.

- f) If riders are required to remove the bridle it should be done in a safe manner.
- g) Biosecurity and hygiene protocols must be followed when doing a gear check.

10.13 Presentation of the Horse

- a) Tendon boots, splint boots, leg wraps or bandages in plain colours (white, off-white, black, brown or beige) may **only** be used **in the warmup area**. **Tendon boots, splint boots leg wraps or bandages are not allowed in competition (dressage test). Bell boots/over-reach boots of any kind are not permitted.** Hoof boots designed for riding may be used instead of horse shoes.
- b) False tails, manes and forelocks are permitted.
- c) Manes may be long, trimmed, pulled or hogged and tails may be natural, trimmed or pulled.
- d) Coats and facial hairs may be clipped or trimmed.
- e) No decoration of the horse with extravagant items, such as ribbons or flowers, glitter, etc is permitted.
- f) No braiding, banding or plaiting of the mane, tail or forelock is permitted.

10.14 Attire

- a) Helmet or Western style hat must be worn.
- b) WDA-AUS strongly recommends the wearing of a properly fitted and fastened, current safety approved protective headgear at all times when in the saddle.
- c) Riders with Disabilities, 'Assisted' and Youth riders must wear a properly fitted and fastened, current safety approved protective headgear at all times when in the saddle.
- d) Helmet use may be deemed mandatory in any competition and/or warm up areas where the Event Convenor or facility owner requires the use of a helmet.
- e) Western style long-sleeved shirt with any type of collar and Western style trousers or a one-piece long sleeved Western equitation suit provided it includes a collar must be worn.
- f) In the case of inclement weather, it is at the Judge's discretion to make concessions in acceptable clothing such as jackets or raincoats.
- g) Boots must have a minimum of 12.7mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ ") well defined square cut heel.
- h) Caps, **and** polo/short sleeved shirts **and jumpers** are not permitted **for competitions while competing however are permitted when training and warming up, including open pen periods.**
- i) High English type boots or leggings are not permitted.
- j) **Safety vests may be worn in competition (test), warm up arena or any other area within the competition venue. Vests may be worn over the shirt or jacket.**

10.15 Optional Attire

- a) Necktie, kerchief, bolo tie or pin.
- b) Vests.
- c) Spurs of western or English type. Rowels are permitted but must be blunt, smooth, vertical and rotate freely. The shank must come from the centre of the back of the heel. The tip of the shank on dummy spurs must be smooth and blunt and not point up or inwards.
- d) Chaps or chinks.
- e) Gloves.

SECTION 11: PERFORMANCE OF HORSE AND RIDER

11.1 Overview

The quality of the horse's training and the rider's proficiency is assessed according to the principles and standards described in *Section 1: Standard of Excellence; Objectives of Western Dressage Training; and Objectives of Western Dressage Competition*.

According to the Level being demonstrated, they may be required to execute any of the following:

- a) Gaits - walk, jog, and lope.
- b) Paces - working, free, lengthening and collected.
- c) Movements and exercises - halt, back-up, counter-lope, transitions, simple change of lead through the walk, simple change of lead through the jog, flying change, release of rein, leg-yield, side-pass, shoulder-in, haunches-in (travers), haunches-out (renvers), half-pass, zig-zag, turn on the forehand and turn on the haunches, pivot, pirouette (including half and quarter pirouettes).
- d) Figures - circles, figure eights, loops, serpentine; changes of direction; straight lines, turns, corners and change of bend.

11.2 Walk

- a) The walk is a well-marked four time beat marching gait in a regular cadence with equal intervals between each beat. This regularity combined with complete relaxation must be maintained throughout all walk movements.
- b) When the foreleg and the hind leg on the same side swing forward almost at the same time, the walk has a lateral rhythm. This irregularity is a serious fault of the gait.
- c) The following walks are recognized: Collected walk, Working walk, Free walk and Extended walk. There should always be a clear difference in the attitude and tracking in these variations.
 - i) **Collected Walk.** The horse, remaining "on the bit", moves resolutely forward with its neck raised and showing a clear self-carriage. The head approaches the vertical position, and a light contact is maintained with the mouth. The hind legs are engaged with good flexion of the joints. The gait should remain marching and vigorous, the feet being placed in regular sequence. The steps cover less ground and are higher than at the Working walk, because all the joints bend more markedly. The step at the Collected walk is shorter than the Working walk and shows greater activity.
 - ii) **Working Walk.** Four-beat, active, energetic walk with resolutely forward-reaching steps and confident stretch to the bit. Head and neck should swing naturally as a result of a relaxed back and free shoulders. The nose shall be on or slightly in front of the vertical. The hind feet should touch the ground into or beyond the prints of the forefeet.
 - iii) **Free Walk.** A relaxed walk with unconstrained, forward reaching steps where hind feet touch the ground in or in front of the footprints of the forefeet. The horse must be relaxed and be allowed complete freedom to lower its head and neck to stretch forward and down and out. The length of stride, rhythm, the relaxation and swing through its back are of great importance.
 - iv) **Extended Walk:** The horse demonstrates optimum ground cover, a lengthened frame and reach to the contact without sacrificing regularity, suppleness of the back and an open frame. Without hurrying, the horse exhibits balance, freedom and over track.

11.3 Jog

- a) The jog is a two-beat gait of alternate diagonal legs (left fore and right hind leg and vice versa) separated by a moment of suspension.
- b) The jog should show free, active and regular steps.
- c) Excessive speed or slowness will be penalized.
- d) The quality of the jog is judged by general impression, i.e., the regularity and elasticity of the steps, the cadence and impulsion in extension at all three paces. This quality originates from a supple back and well engaged hindquarters, and by the ability to maintain the same rhythm and natural balance in all variations of the jog.
- e) The following jogs are recognized: Collected jog, Working jog, Lengthening of Strides, and Free Jog.
 - i) **Collected Jog.** The horse, remaining “on the bit”, moves forward in a two-beat gait with the neck raised and arched and showing clear self-carriage. The head approaches the vertical position, and a light contact is maintained with the mouth. The hocks are well-engaged and flexed and must maintain an energetic impulsion, enabling the shoulders to move more freely. Although the horse’s steps are shorter than in the other jogs, elasticity and cadence are not lessened. The Collected jog must be ridden seated.
 - ii) **Working Jog.** An energetic, regular, two-beat jog; the horse must go forward with even and elastic steps. The back must be relaxed and the shoulders free, while there is an obvious push from the hindquarters. The hind legs step actively up under the horse. The horse must show proper balance and maintain light contact with the bit. The horse’s nose shall be on or slightly in front of the vertical. In the Introductory, Basic and Level 1 tests, the Working jog may be ridden either posting or sitting. In more advanced tests from Level 2 up, the Working jog must be ridden seated.
 - iii) **Lengthening of Strides.** This is a variation of the Working jog; the horse covers more ground through lengthening its frame while maintaining the same tempo as in the Working jog. Excessive speed will be penalized. Lengthening of stride may be ridden either posting or sitting.
 - iv) **Free Jog.** This is a pace that confirms a relaxed, supple topline to facilitate freedom and throughness. Without hurrying, the horse jogs forward in a two-beat gait while stretching downward and forward over the back showing a willingness to reach towards a soft elastic connection. Balance, bend, tempo, and regularity should be maintained as the horse shows increased swing through the back. There should be a smooth willing retake of the reins in transition to the working jog. The free jog may be ridden posting or sitting.

11.4 Lope

- a) The lope is a gait with three equal, regular beats with time of suspension after the third beat. One stride equals three beats, or three footfalls. This gait may be demonstrated on right or left lead. Footfall sequence in right lead is: left hind, right hind and left fore together, right fore, then suspension. Footfall sequence in left lead: right hind, left hind and right fore together, left fore, then suspension.
- b) The lope has a typically slower tempo than a canter and must keep the three beat rhythm or the regularity is lost. Excessive speed or slowness must be penalized.
- c) The correct lope must be balanced, rhythmic, and with three beats with a clear time of suspension; it must be straight, adjustable and supple, showing willingness to move forward in self-carriage with engaged hindquarters.
- d) The quality of the lope is judged by the general impression, i.e., the regularity and lightness of the steps. The uphill tendency of the forehand and the steady cadence, originating from engagement of the hindquarters transmit the energy from back to front and connect into a willing acceptance of the bridle. The horse’s mouth is quiet and its poll is soft. The horse should always remain straight on straight lines and correctly bent on curved lines.

- e) The following lopes are recognized: Collected lope, Working lope, Lengthening of Strides, and Counter Lope.
- i) **Collected Lope.** The horse, remaining “on the bit”, moves forward in a three-beat cadence with the neck raised and arched. The hocks are well-engaged and maintain an energetic impulsion, enabling the shoulders to move more freely, demonstrating self-carriage and an uphill tendency. The horse’s strides are shorter than in the other lopes, without losing elasticity and cadence.
 - ii) **Working Lope.** While maintaining the three beat cadence, the horse must go forward with even and elastic steps. The back must be relaxed and the shoulders free; there is an obvious push from the hindquarters and the hind legs step actively up under the horse. The horse must maintain light contact with the bit and its nose shall be on or slightly in front of the vertical.
 - iii) **Lengthening of Strides.** This is a variation of the Working lope; the horse covers more ground through lengthening its frame while maintaining the same tempo as in the Working lope. Excessive speed will be penalized.
 - iv) **Counter-Lope.** The counter lope is a balancing and straightening movement. The horse appears to be cantering on the incorrect lead to the direction of travel. The horse lopes in a correct sequence to the left on the right lead; the horse lopes to the right in a correct sequence on the left lead.

11.5 Halt

- a) At the halt the horse should stand attentive, engaged motionless, straight and square with the weight evenly distributed over all four legs. The neck should be raised with the poll as the highest point and the head 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 mouth the bit and should be ready to move off at the slightest indication of the rider.
- 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 soft hand, causing an almost instantaneous but not abrupt stop at a previously fixed place.
- c) The quality of the gaits before and after the stop is an important part of the assessment.

11.6 Back

- a) Back is a rearward diagonal movement with a two-beat rhythm but without a moment of suspension. Each diagonal pair of legs is raised and returned to the ground alternately, with the forelegs aligned on the same track as the hind legs.
- b) During the entire exercise, the horse should remain “on the bit”, maintaining its desire to move forward at the slightest indication of the rider.
- c) Serious faults are: Anticipation of the movement, resistance to or evasion of the contact of the bit either by raising the neck or going behind the bit, dropping the poll and neck below the withers, deviation of the hindquarters from the straight line, spreading or inactive hind legs and dragging forefeet.
- d) Steps are counted as each foreleg moves back. After completing the required number of steps backward, the horse should show a square stop or move forward in the required gait immediately. In tests where a back of one horse’s length is required, it should be executed with three or four steps.
- e) A back series (swing) is a combination of two backs with walk steps in between. It should be executed with fluent transitions and the required number of steps. Except for the initial halt, a back series should be performed with continuous movement, with the horse stepping fluidly forward into the required forward gait from the last step of the back.

11.7 Faults

Faults of gaits include crookedness, loss of rhythm; tight and tense back with short stiff neck; horse on forehand and/or leaning on the bit; nose consistently behind the vertical; raising of the head to avoid collection; changing tempo; and evasion of contact which can come from improper training, too harsh a bit, or bad hands. In all cases faults will be penalized.

11.8 Transitions

- a) The changes of gait and pace should be clearly shown when the rider's leg is at the prescribed marker; they should be quickly made yet must be smooth and not abrupt. The cadence of a gait or pace should be maintained up to the moment when the gait or pace is changed or the horse halts. The horse should remain light in hand, calm and maintain a correct position.
- b) In transitions where the horse approaches the letter from a line on the diagonal or perpendicular to the point where the letter is positioned, the transition must be done when the horse's nose reaches the track at the letter so that the horse is straight in the transition. This includes the execution of flying changes.

11.9 Simple Change of Lead through the Walk

- a) This is a movement in which, after a direct transition out of the lope into a walk, with **3-5 2-3** clearly defined steps at the walk, an immediate transition is made into the other lead. This is considered a Simple Lead Change when done through the walk.
- b) The changes of gait should be smooth and clearly shown.
- c) The quality of the pace and frame of the horse before, during and after each transition, should meet the expectations of the Level being shown.
- d) The cadence of each gait should be maintained up to the moment of transition. The horse should remain light in hand, calm and balanced.

11.10 Simple Change of Lead through the Jog

- a) This is a change of lead where the horse is brought back into the jog and after **3-5 2-3** strides, strikes off into a lope with the other leg leading.

11.11 Flying Change of Lead

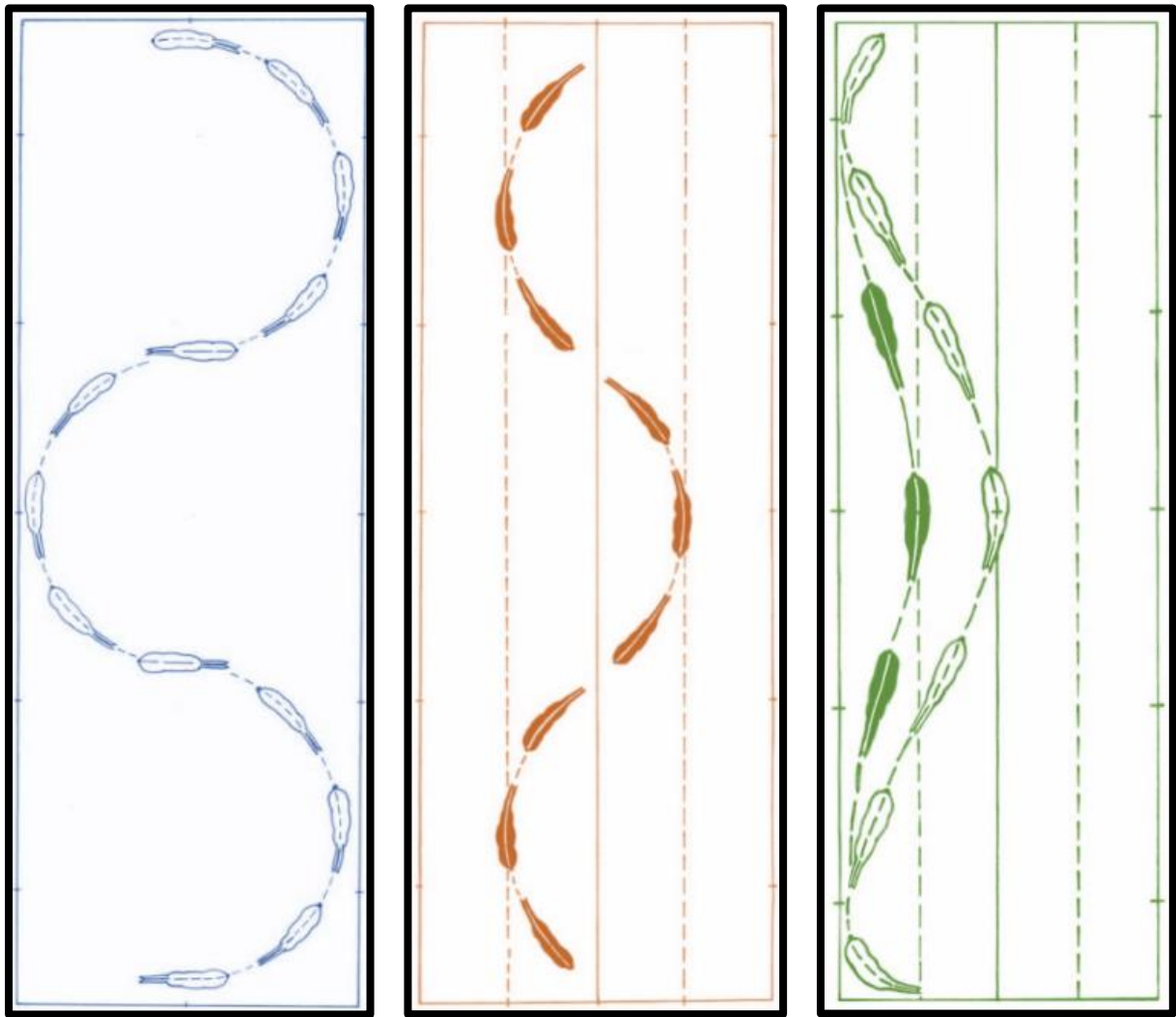
- a) The flying change is executed when the horse changes from one leading leg to the other while maintaining the balance and cadence of the lope. The change should be smooth and straight, almost imperceptible, emphasising the integrity and quality of the horse's movement.
- b) Failing to stay straight and cleanly change from one lead to the other (becoming disunited, changing with the front or hind leg first and then developing the new lead, breaking gait), rushing, kicking out or loss of composure by either horse or rider are serious faults.
- c) The flying change of lead will ideally begin with the sequence of the new outside hind leg, the diagonal pair and followed by the new leading front leg. The change of lead of the hind and front leg take place immediately after the moment of suspension without a break of gait. The aids should be precise and unobtrusive. Flying changes of lead can also be executed in series. For example, flying changes can be performed at every 4th, 3rd, 2nd or at every stride. The horse, even in the series, remains light, calm and straight with lively impulsion, maintaining the same rhythm and balance. In order to not restrict or restrain the lightness, fluency and groundcover of the flying changes in series, enough impulsion and forwardness must be maintained. The flying lead changes show the reaction, sensitivity and obedience of the horse to the aids.

11.12 Changes of Direction

- a) At changes of direction, the horse should adjust the bend of its body to the curvature of the line it follows, remaining supple and following the aids of the rider, without any resistance or change of gait, rhythm or speed. Corners should be ridden as one-quarter of a circle appropriate to the level of the test.
- b) Changes of directions can be executed in the following ways:
 - i) Right-angled turn including riding through the corner (one quarter of a small circle of approximately 6 meters). Short and long diagonal.
 - ii) Half small circles and half small circles with change of rein.
 - iii) WD Turn on the forehand and WD Turn on the haunches.
 - iv) Serpentine loops.
 - v) Counter-changes of hand (in zig-zag). The horse should be straight for a moment before changing direction.

11.13 Figures and Exercises

- a) The figures asked for in Western Dressage tests are: the circles, the serpentines and the figure eights.
 - i) **Circle.** The circle is a round figure which varies in size according to the requirements of each test. The diameter of a circle is specified in each test.
 - ii) **Serpentine.** There are three variations:
 - 1) The serpentine with several loops touching the long side of the arena consists of equal half circles connected by a straight line. When crossing the centerline, the horse should be parallel to the short side.
 - 2) Depending upon the size of the half circles, the straight connection varies in length. The serpentine with one loop on the long side of the arena is executed with 5-meter or 10-meter distance from the track.
 - 3) The Serpentine around the centerline is executed between the quarter line
 - iii) **Figure eight.** This figure consists of two circles of equal size as specified in the test, joined at the center of the eight. The rider should make their horse straight an instant before changing direction at the center of the figure.



b) The exercises.

- i) **Stretching Through the Frame.** The horse gradually takes the reins, stretching forward and downward with light contact, while maintaining balance, rhythm and tempo and quality of the gait. Important: The horse must point its nose clearly forward. This is a clear release of contact while the horse maintains self carriage, rhythm, tempo, straightness, and quality of gait.
- ii) **Release of Rein.** This is a clear release of contact while the horse maintains self-carriage, rhythm, tempo, straightness, and quality of gait. The rider lets their hand(s) move forward from the elbow.

11.14 Work on Two Tracks and the Lateral Movements

a) The aim of movements on Two Tracks is:

- i) To improve the obedience of the horse to the aids of the rider;
- ii) To supple all parts of the horse thereby increasing the freedom of its shoulders and the suppleness of its quarters as well as the elasticity of the bond connecting the mouth, the poll, the neck, the back and the haunches;
- iii) To improve the balance, cadence and straightness and bring the gaits into harmony.

- b) In all lateral movements - shoulder in, counter shoulder in, haunches in, haunches out, half-pass - the horse is slightly bent and moves with the forehand and the hindquarters on different tracks.

- i) Lateral movements are the beginning of collection.
- ii) The bend or flexion must never be exaggerated so that it impairs the balance and fluency of the movement concerned.
- iii) At the lateral movements the gait should remain free and regular, maintained by a constant impulsion and forwardness, yet it must be supple, cadenced and balanced. The impulsion should not be lost because of the rider's preoccupation mainly in bending the horse and pushing it sideways. The horse should maintain rhythm and not lose impulsion.
- iv) **Shoulder-In.** The exercise is performed in collected jog. The horse is ridden with a slight but uniform bend around the inside leg of the rider maintaining cadence at a constant angle of approximately 30 degrees. The horse's inside foreleg passes 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, while lowering the inside hip. The horse's footfall creates three tracks. The horse is bent away from the direction in which it is moving.
- v) **Travers (Haunches-In).** The horse is slightly bent round the inside leg of the rider. The forehand remains on the track and the quarters are moved inwards. The horse is bent in the direction in which it is moving. To start the haunches-in, the hindquarters should leave the track or, after a corner or circle, are not brought back onto the track. At the end of the haunches-in, the hindquarters are brought back on the track as one would finish a circle, without any counter-flexion of the poll/ neck. The horse's footfall creates four tracks.
- vi) **Renvers (Haunches-Out).** This is the inverse movement in relation to haunches-in. The hindquarters remain on the track while the forehand is moved inward. To finish the haunches-out, the forehand is aligned with the hindquarters on the track. Otherwise, the same principles and conditions that apply to the haunches-in are applicable to the haunches-out. The horse is slightly bent around the rider's inside leg. The horse is bent in the direction in which it is moving. The forehand is displaced to the inside. Balance and cadence are maintained.
- vii) **Half-pass.** This movement is a variation of haunches-in, executed on a diagonal line instead of along the wall. The horse should be slightly bent around the inside leg of the rider and into the direction in which it is moving. The horse should maintain the same cadence and balance throughout the whole movement. In order to give more freedom and mobility to the shoulders, it is of great importance that the impulsion be maintained, especially the engagement of the inside hind leg. The horse's body is nearly parallel to the long side of the arena with the forehand slightly in advance of the hindquarters. The bend in the half-pass should increase with the steepness of the diagonal.
 - 1) In the jog and the lope, the movement is performed in a series of forward/sideways strides. Aims of the half-pass in the jog and the lope: Show a fluent collected movement on a diagonal line with a greater degree of bend than in shoulder-in. Fore and hind legs cross, balance and cadence are maintained.
 - 2) The aims of the half-pass: to both demonstrate and develop the collection and suppleness by moving fluently forwards and sideways without any loss of rhythm, balance or softness and willing cooperation to the bend.
- viii) **Leg yield.** Leg yielding is not a lateral movement. 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 corner of the eye and nostril on the inside. The inside legs pass and cross in front of the outside legs. Leg-yielding can be performed on the diagonal in which case the horse should be as close as possible parallel to the long sides of the arena although the forehand should be slightly in advance of the hindquarters. The leg yield can also be ridden along the wall with approximately a 35 degree angle.

- ix) **Sidepass.** The side pass is a lateral maneuver performed from a halt in which a horse crosses its fore and hind legs to move directly sideways. The horse's body should stay straight and square or flexed slightly in the direction of travel. The horse should remain supple while yielding softly and willingly to subtle aids. When a horse sidepasses, it should be crossing its legs evenly with balance and a consistent walk tempo. In a sidepass to the right, the left front and left hind should cross in front of the respective right front and right hind legs. Loss of balance, counter bending, hesitation, crookedness and outside legs crossing behind inside legs or not crossing are faults.

11.15 Turn on the Haunches

- a) The WD Turn on the haunches is executed out of a working walk prepared by half halts to shorten the steps. During the movement the forefeet and the outside hind foot move around the inside hind foot. The WD Turn on the haunches can be performed on a larger diameter than the pivot. This movement is executed at Level 1 and Level 2. Riders may choose to pivot or WD Turn on the haunches. Switching from one method to the other within the same movement will be penalized. At Level 3 and above, only the pivot may be performed.
- b) For younger horses that are still not able to perform a collected walk, the 'WD Turn on the haunches' is an exercise to prepare the horse for collection. The 'WD Turn on the haunches' is executed out of working walk prepared by half-halts to shorten the steps a little and to improve the ability to bend the joints of the hindquarters.
- c) The horse must bend a little in its ribcage around the rider's inside leg. The 'WD Turn on the haunches' can be executed on a larger diameter (approximately one meter) than the pivot in walk, but the demands of the training scale concerning rhythm, contact, activity and bend are the same.

11.16 Pivot

- a) In keeping with traditional Western Stock horse movements, the horse pivots on the inside hind leg and step around it with the outside hind leg. The horse pushes off with the outside hind leg. The pivot leg is allowed to pickup and reset when it reaches the point of stress. The horse should maintain correct bend and balance and respond to the rider's leg. A pivot should begin at a walk tempo with forward intention, building speed moderately while maintaining form and fluidity. Pivoting around the middle axis of the horse should receive a marginal to insufficient score of 5 or lower. It is not a fault to step forward 1-2 steps into the pivot.

11.17 Pirouette, Half Pirouette, and Quarter Pirouette

- a) The lope pirouette is a circle or part of a circle executed on two tracks with the forehand moving around the haunches. The haunches are lowered to afford the lightness required to maintain the proper lope sequence throughout. The horse is slightly bent in the direction of the turn and lightly on the bit. The quality of the pirouette is further demonstrated by the relatively small size of the turn, suppleness, balance, fluidity and maintenance of forward intention.
- b) Quarter Pirouette: the quarter pirouette is a preliminary exercise to prepare the horse for half and full pirouettes. While the demands of a smaller figure of a quarter turn consisting of 2-3 strides are less, the same criteria for full pirouettes apply.
- c) The strength and balance required for the pirouette is further demonstrated by the ability to perform the half-pirouette, full pirouette and sequences of multiple pirouettes. Impulsion, willingness to carry and engagement behind in the pirouette create a highly collected lope while maintaining a calm, confident demeanour which is the hallmark of the Western Dressage horse.

11.18 Rider Proficiency

The rider is confident, graceful and proficient. Their performance demonstrates a fluency and finesse that makes it apparent the horse and rider have a mutually cooperative and enjoyable relationship.

- a) The rider's connection with the horse is established and maintained through a balanced upright position. There is vertical alignment of the body through the head, shoulder, hip and heel. The foot should rest home in the stirrup at a natural angle and level. The rider should sit evenly in the centre of the saddle, using their core stability and strength to maintain balance and steadiness.
- b) The suppleness of the body and joints and absence of unnecessary tension allows the rider to smoothly absorb and quietly follow the horse's movement.
- c) The hands should be independent and unobtrusive. The rider should use the appropriate rein handling method as described in **Section 11.28 Rein Handling Techniques** and maintain a light connection to the horse's mouth.
- d) Other Aids:
 - i) Subtle use of the voice and clicking of the tongue.
 - ii) Touching the horse as a reward. The romal/rein ends or free hand must not be used to intimidate the horse.
 - iii) Discreet use of a whip no longer than 120 cm (47.24 inches) including lash.
 - iv) Subtle use of spurs which must be smooth to touch and rowels must also be smooth and rotate freely. Using the leg or spur in front of the cinch is not permitted.
 - v) The bit, spurs and any other tack or equipment should never be used in a manner that intentionally or carelessly causes injury to the horse.
- e) The horse is influenced by the rider's feel, timing and correct use of aids including hands, legs and body position. The horse should be subtly directed with little apparent effort by the rider.
- f) The rider's awareness and ability to feel for the horse's intention and the consequent response or movement is central to being able to use the correct signals and timing to efficiently work with the horse. This understanding is a key ingredient in the development of the horse and rider relationship.
- g) Knowledge and understanding of the discipline is demonstrated by the accurate and correct execution of movements.
- h) Over time, it is the effectiveness and expertise of the rider that fundamentally determines the horse's responsiveness and level of training achieved.
- i) Self-control, focus and awareness are especially revealed by the rider's empathy for the horse and composure under pressure.

11.19 Collection, Impulsion, Submission, Aids

Collection

- a) Collection is achieved by increased weight bearing of the horse's haunches, thereby lowering the croup and lightening the forehand to allow the shoulders more freedom.
- b) The aim of the collection of the horse is to add to the ease and carriage of the horse, to increase the strength and athleticism, and to make it more pleasurable to ride.
- c) Horses ridden with the face consistently behind the vertical plane must be penalized.
- d) The position of the head and neck of a horse at the collected gaits is naturally dependent on the stage of training and on its conformation. It should, however, be distinguished by the neck being raised and unrestrained, forming a harmonious curve from the withers to the poll which is the highest point. The head is on or slightly in front of the vertical. However, when the rider applies their aids in order to obtain a momentary and passing collecting effect, the head may momentarily become more or less vertical.
- e) The lightness of contact, which is the hallmark of Western Dressage, shall be demonstrated in collection.

- f) A marked lowering of the horse's pelvis and an increased flexion of the hocks should be demonstrated. This is also called "coiling of the loins".

Impulsion

- a) Impulsion is the term used to describe the transmission of an eager and energetic, yet controlled, positive forward energy generated from the hindquarters into the athletic movement of the horse. Its ultimate expression can be shown only through the horse's soft, relaxed, swinging back guided by a light, elastic contact with the rider's hand.
- b) Speed, of itself, has nothing to do with impulsion; the result is more often a flattening of the gaits. A visible characteristic of impulsion 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 and certainly not backwards. A prime ingredient of impulsion is the time the horse spends in the air rather than on the ground. Impulsion is, therefore, seen only in those gaits that have a period of suspension.
- c) Impulsion is required for a good collection in the jog and lope. If there is no impulsion, then there is nothing to collect.

Submission

Submission of the horse does not mean subordination, but an obedience revealing its presence by a constant attention, willingness, and confidence in the whole behavior of the horse as well as by the harmony, lightness and ease it is displaying in the execution of the different movements. Willing cooperation is also demonstrated by the way the horse accepts the bit, with light contact and a supple poll. Resistance to or evasion of the contact, by being either "above the bit" or "behind the bit" demonstrate lack of willing cooperation.

- a) Putting out the tongue, keeping it above the bit or drawing it up altogether, as well as grinding the teeth or agitation of the tail, are mostly signs of nervousness, tension or resistance on the part of the horse and must be taken into account by the judges in their marks for every movement concerned, as well as in the collective mark for harmony.
- b) Willingness is the most important consideration when evaluating obedience. The horse understands what is being asked of it and is confident in the rider by responding to the aids without fear or tension.
- c) The horse's straightness, uphill tendency and balance enable it to stay in front of the rider's legs and go forward into an accepting, light and self-carrying contact with the bit. This is what really produces the picture of harmony and lightness.
- d) Harmony between the horse and rider is demonstrated by the horse and rider moving as "one". The rider uses tactful cues; the horse performs without resistance, agitation or wariness. The horse shows attention and confidence in its ease of movements and acceptance of the bit while staying up in the poll and keeping its nose in front of the vertical. The degree of lightness increases as the horse advances in its training.

Position and Aids of the Rider

- a) All the Western Dressage 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 center of the saddle, smoothly absorbing the movement of the horse with their core muscles, supple thighs with the legs steady and stretched well down. The heels should be the lowest point with the ankles relatively relaxed. The upper part of the body should be tall and supple demonstrating a vertical alignment of shoulder to hip to heel. The light contact of the rider's hands should be independent from the rider's seat. The hands should be carried steadily in a style appropriate to the style of rein and bit being used with 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.
- b) The rider may use one or two hands with a curb bit but may not go from one handed to two handed during an individual test. The rider may use one or two hands with a curb bit and split reins, but with a Romel, the rider is to only use one hand.

- c) Not only the aids of the rider's hands and the legs, but also of the seat are of great importance in Western Dressage. The rider who understands how to properly engage the core muscles at the right moment is able to influence the horse correctly.
- d) Accuracy: precise placement of the figures and transitions, the effectiveness of the rider's aids determines the accurate fulfillment of the test. There should always be the impression of a harmonious cooperation between horse and rider.
- e) Quiet use of the voice and clicking of the tongue is permitted.

11.20 Rein Handling Techniques

Refer also to Section 10.7.

Skilful rein handling and thorough knowledge and understanding of the equipment and techniques are attributes of competent riders. Riders should choose the appropriate equipment and methods to use considering the individual needs, capability and level of training of both themselves and their horse.

A full description of bits, bosals, reins and bridles and related tack that may be used in Western Dressage can be found in **Section 10 Presentation of Horse and Rider**.

The rider may use this equipment in competition as follows:

◆ **TWO HANDED – SNAFFLE, CURB, BOSAL AND BITLESS BRIDLE**

- a) A snaffle bit and a bitless bridle can be used for all Test Levels and must be ridden two handed with either split or joined reins as described below in 11.28 (c).
- b) With the exception of Level 4 Tests and/or for the Two Rein Bridle setup, the rider may ride two handed with a curb bit and use either split or joined reins as described below in 11.28 (c). The rider may not change from one handed to two handed or vice versa during an individual test or pattern.
- c) Joined or split reins can be used two handed with a snaffle, bitless bridle, or curb as per 11.28 (a) and (b) above, as follows:
 - i) Joined or connected reins can be buckled (English style) or looped (mecate or romal style but without the tie-rein or romal extension).
 - ii) These reins may be bridged or held independently. The reins come from the bit and pass across the palm of each hand and exit over the index finger. The fingers are closed and the thumb is kept uppermost and locks down the rein against the index finger.
 - iii) When held independently, the bight (excess rein) should fall on the off (right) side of the horse's neck and underneath the rein.
 - iv) To bridge the reins, the excess rein passes to the opposite side of the neck and is also held by the thumb and fingers of each hand creating a 'bridge' between the hands. Split reins are bridged when used two handed.
 - v) For the bitless bridle the reins should be slightly draped. A signal is given when pressure is applied to one rein and it is released as the horse responds. There should not be a constant contact or pressure and only one rein at a time should be used to signal the horse.
- d) A bosal can be used for all Test Levels and must be ridden two handed with a mecate rein setup.
 - i) The mecate is a single rope or braided rein configured as two parts, the looped rein attached to a bosal and the long tie-rein that comes out of the bottom of the bosal. The tie-rein is attached to the saddle while mounted.

- ii) The looped rein is held with two hands about shoulder width apart with the thumbs facing inwards and the fingers closed around each rein. The left hand can also hold a loop of the excess rein which can be used to lengthen and shorten the mecate as needed while riding.
- iii) The mecate should be slightly draped and a signal is given when pressure is applied to one rein and it is released as the horse responds. There should not be a constant contact or pressure and only one rein at a time should be used to signal the horse.

◆ **ONE HANDED – CURB AND TWO REIN BRIDLE**

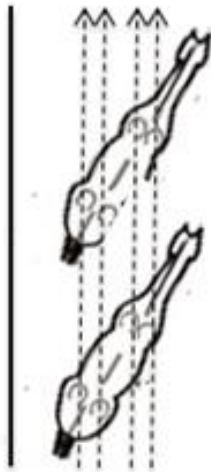
- e) When using a curb bit the rider may ride one handed in all Levels and must ride one handed when using a curb bit in Level 4. Split or romal reins are to be used. The reins can be held in either hand although it is customary for the rein hand to be the non-dominant hand (that is, the left hand if you are right-handed and vice versa).
- d) When riding one handed, the rider is allowed at the end of the free walk, free jog or free lope, to use the free hand to adjust the reins back to the desired length. Riders using romal reins may use the hand holding the romal to alter the tension or length of the reins from the bridle to the rein hand.
- e) There are two methods of riding one handed with a curb bit that may be used with split reins.
 - i) In the first method, the reins come from the bit over the index finger. The reins can be held together or separated by the one finger. The thumb is kept uppermost and locks down the rein/s against the index finger (usually the right rein is on top and the left rein is underneath). The two reins then exit below the closed hand with the ends falling on the same side as the rein hand.
 - ii) The free hand must not be used to alter the length or tension of the reins except as permitted after free paces. The free hand should not touch the reins except to untangle the end of the reins (below the rein hand) if necessary.
 - iii) The second method is similar to the romal setup. The reins are held in a fist with the thumb uppermost. The reins come from the bit under the little finger and pass out over the thumb. No finger separates the reins.
 - iv) The free hand holds the excess rein and rests against the rider's leg. The rein hand and free hand must be held so that there is at least 40 cm (16") of excess rein between the hands. The rider is allowed to alter the tension or length of the reins as long as the hands are held in a legal manner.
- f) Romal rein setup may only be used with a curb bit and ridden one handed.
 - i) Romal reins consist of two parts, the joined reins and the single extension of material (romal) attached at this point. These parts are balanced in length and weight and connect in the middle (the keeper, or hobble, that attaches to the romal is considered to be part of the romal). The reins attach to the bit. The romal has a leather popper or quirt on the end.
 - ii) The reins are held in a fist with the thumb uppermost. The reins come from the bit under the little finger and pass out over the thumb. No fingers are permitted between the reins except in the two-rein setup.
 - iii) The free hand must hold the romal and is not allowed, at any time, to touch the reins. The reins and romal must be held so that there is at least 40 cm (16") of rein/romal between the hands. The rider is allowed to alter the tension or length of the reins as long as the hands are held in a legal manner.
 - iv) The Two Rein Bridle with a bosalita and spade bit configuration may only be used in Level 3 and 4 and the horse must be at least four (4) years old.
 - v) The bosalita with mecate reins is worn under the bridle and bit with romal reins.
 - vi) The rider holds both sets of reins in the same manner as a romal setup, but is allowed to separate the reins with the fingers as they wish. The free hand holds the romal in the usual way and can be used to adjust the length of the reins.

11.21 Riders With Disabilities (RWD)

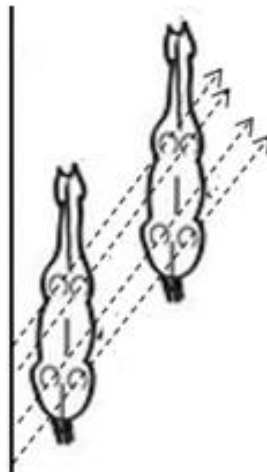
- a) A rider with a physical or intellectual disability (RWD) that has signed documentation from a medical practitioner stating their condition and that equestrian related activities are a safe option for them to pursue are encouraged to participate in Western Dressage events and activities.
- b) This documentation is to be provided the first time that the rider joins WDA-AUS or registers to attend a WDA-AUS event. This enables a rider to gain approval to participate with the use of compensating aids or other appropriate assistance as needed to enable them to ride at their optimum functional level. Youth RWD participants must be seven (7) years of age or older to participate in ridden events.
- c) WDA-AUS recommends that where practical Event Convenors opt to include specific RWD classes and support RWD participation in competition classes and clinics. In doing so, WDA-AUS does not assume responsibility for safety of participants. The Event Organisation conducts these events and controls both the physical facility and all aspects of the event and so responsibility for participant's safety remains solely with the Event Organisation.
- d) Each RWD participant, and if the participant is a minor, the parent or guardian by allowing participation, assumes all risk of personal injury or property damage and releases and discharges WDA-AUS, its State Associations and Affiliates and Event Convenors, their respective officers, directors, representatives, and employees, from any and all liability, whenever or however arising, as to personal injury or property damage occurring as a result of participation in these classes, except for the negligent act or omission, if any, of said indemnities. Further, in the case of a minor, as parent or legal guardian, they agree to indemnify and hold harmless WDA-AUS and Event Organisation from such liability to the minor.
- e) The rider will need to provide a written list of all compensatory aids, modified equipment and assistance required for competition. WDA-AUS will review this and any supporting documentation in order to provide a dispensation notification. Riders are not allowed to use any other aids, modified equipment or assistance while competing that is not specifically listed on their dispensation notification. The rider will provide a copy of this notification to the Event Convenors when registering to attend an event. The Event Convenor shall attach a copy of this notification to all applicable scoring sheets for the Judge's reference.
- f) If an assistant is required, they must be eighteen (18) years of age or over and should wear western style pants/jeans, enclosed safe shoes, long-sleeved shirt with a collar and a western hat. The assistant/s remains in a designated area unless their assistance is required and requested by the Judge, rider or event official. If a lead line is needed, the assistant can attach it to a halter that is under the bridle. The lead cannot be attached to the bit.
- g) A RWD with hearing impairment can have an assistant/s who communicates via sign language or cue cards to the rider so they can be informed of event officials and Judge's directives.
- h) Judges are not permitted to alter a test, pattern or course except for specific RWD only classes. In this case the Judge can modify a test, pattern or course or set their own in order to make the class more suitable for the participating riders.
- i) **All other competition and event guidelines, apart from the exceptions noted in this section, apply to RWD specified classes, and participation by RWD in other WDA-AUS classes and events.**
- j) RWD Eligible conditions:
 - i) Amputation; Arthrogryposis; Asperger's Syndrome; Autism; Batten's Disease; Cerebrovascular Accident; Cerebella Ataxia; Cerebral Palsy; Coffin Lowry Syndrome; Cystic Fibrosis; Down Syndrome; Dwarfism; Fragile X Syndrome; Friedrick's Ataxia; Guillan Barre Syndrome; Hearing Impairment; Hunter's Syndrome; Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis; Intellectual Disability; Microcephaly; Multiple Sclerosis; Muscular Dystrophy; Post-Polio Syndrome; Prader Willie Syndrome; Rhetts Syndrome; Spina Bifida; Spinal Cord Injury; Tourette Syndrome; Traumatic Brain Injury; Trisomy Abnormalities; Vision Impairment; Other diagnoses will be considered upon request.
- k) RWD Ineligible conditions:

- i) ADHD; Anxiety Disorders; Chronic Fatigue Syndrome; Depression; Dyslexia; Eating Disorders; Fibromyalgia; Learning Disabilities; Psychological Diagnosis.
- l) RWD and Assisted Riders must wear a properly fitted and fastened with harness, Australian Standard protective helmet. No equipment is allowed that would in any way affix the rider to the horse or saddle with the exception of light rubber bands. Safety stirrups (covered or other approved safety stirrups) are required if rider is unable to wear boots with a heel.
- m) RWD tack and equipment is to conform to the needs of the rider and be suitable for the horse. Special adaptive equipment may be used where appropriate. Acceptable adaptive equipment includes:
 - i) Audio Communications; Bareback Pads; Boot Adaptations; Dowel Reins; Hand Holds: Flexible and/or Rigid; Velcro or Rubber Bands to tie stirrups or leathers to girth or cinch; Ladder Reins; Loop Reins; Rein Handles; Rein Handle Tethers; Rubber Bands; Saddle Blocks, Wedges, Cushions; Safety Stirrups; Seat Savers; Surcingles; Whips (one or two); Other equipment will be considered upon request.
- n) The equipment and attire must adhere to the requirements stated in **Section 10 - Presentation of Horse and Rider** with exceptions of authorised adaptations described in the case of the RWD Dispensation Notification.

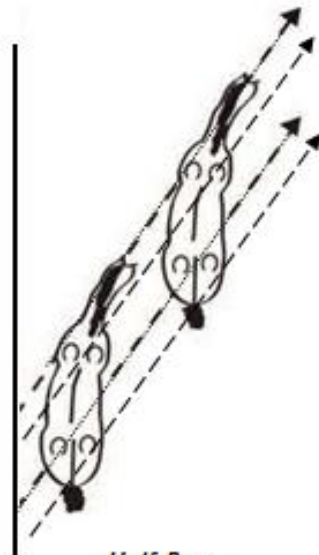
11.22 Illustrations and Diagrams



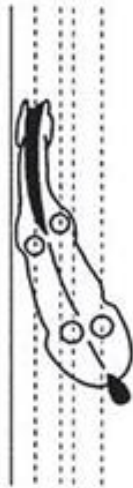
*Leg-Yield
on the wall*



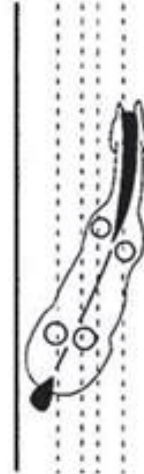
*Leg-Yield
on the diagonal*



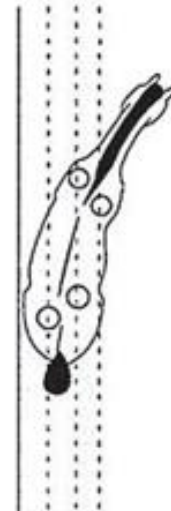
Half-Pass



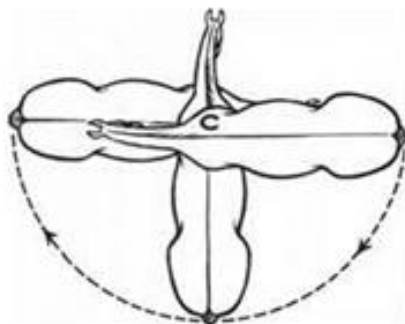
*Haunches-In
(Travers)*



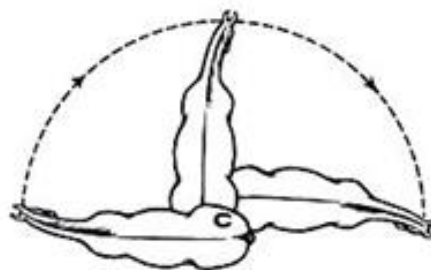
*Haunches-Out
(Renvers)*



Shoulder-In



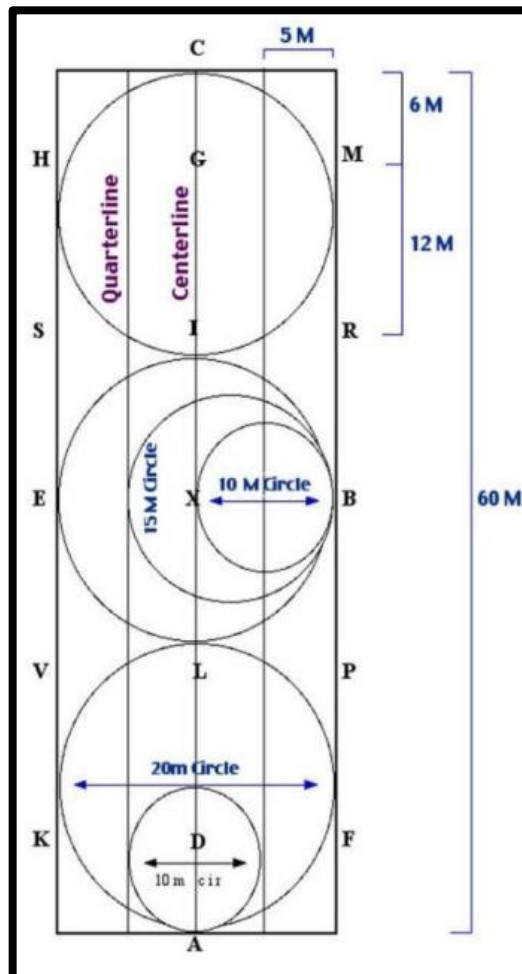
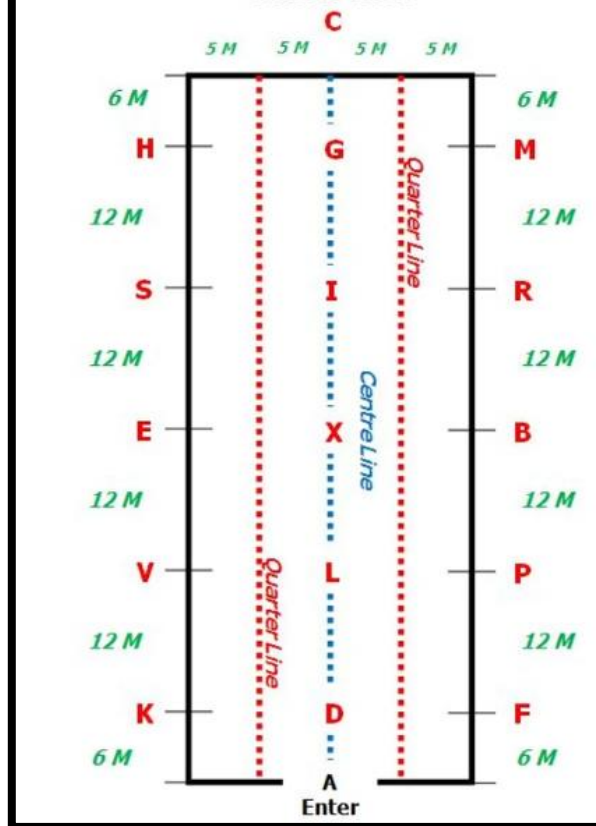
Half-Turn on the Forehand

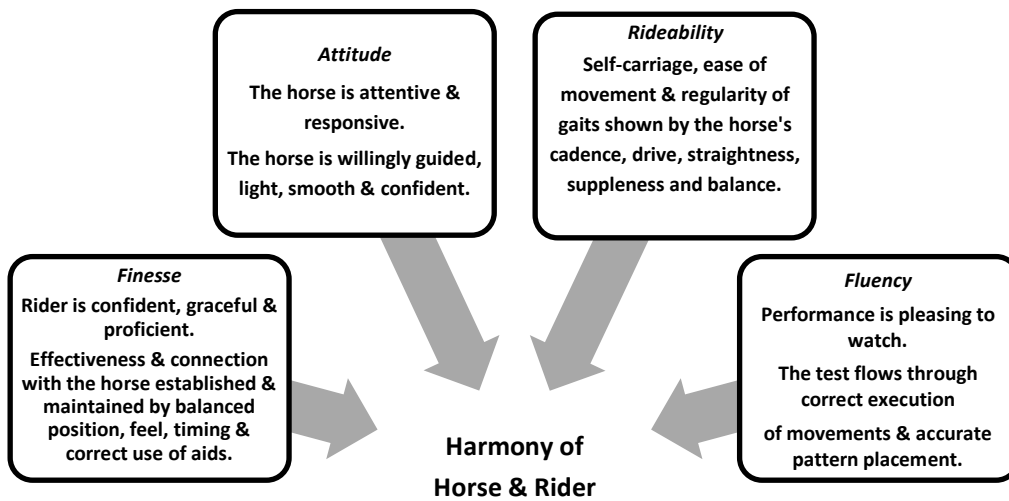


Half-Turn on the Haunches

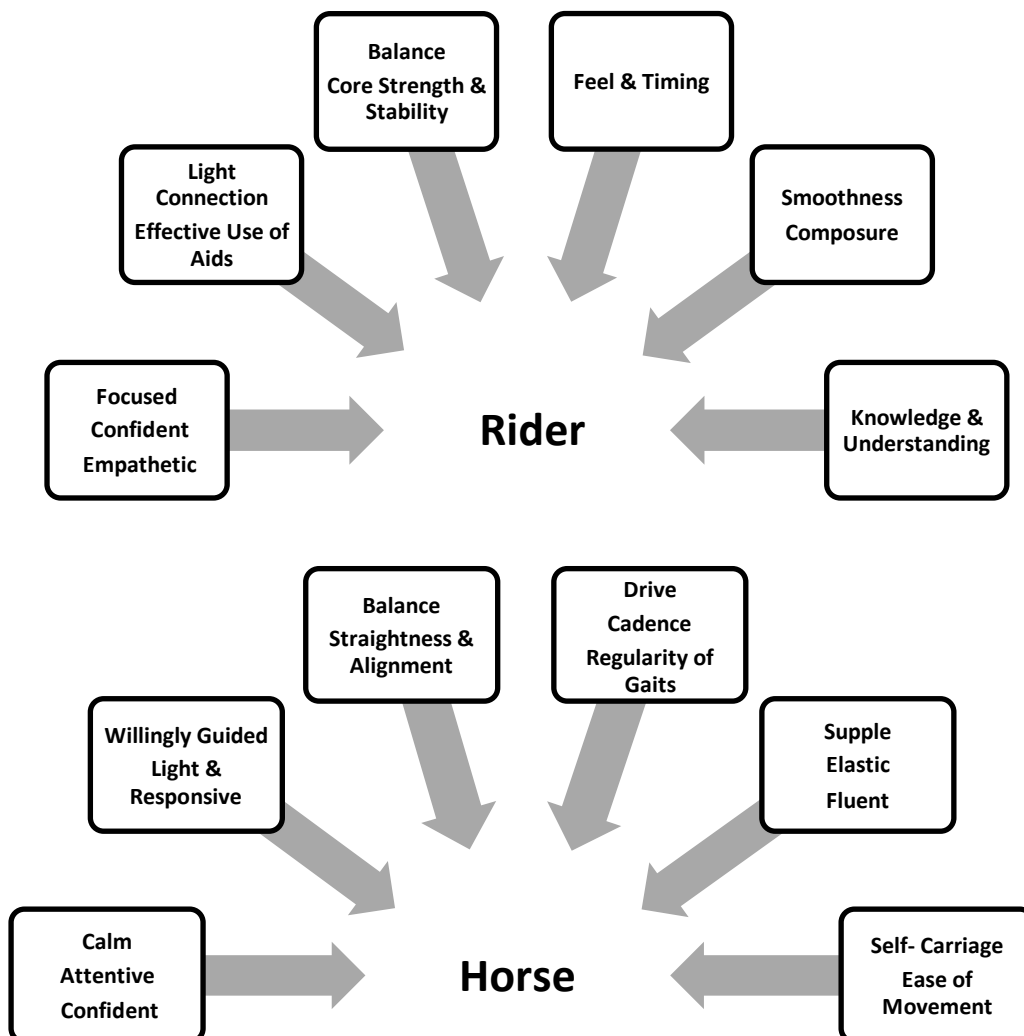
WESTERN DRESSAGE ARENA LAYOUT

60m x 20m





Western Dressage Competition – Key Elements



Western Dressage Training - Key Elements

SECTION 12: INCIDENTS AT SHOWS AND DISCIPLINARY COURSES OF ACTION

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SECTION 13: STALLION POLICY

13.1 Overview

WDA-AUS, has developed the following set of rules relating to the safe practices of stallions at events.

These rules are consistent with WDA-AUS's focus on improving safety for everyone, by identifying risks and putting in place measures to mitigate those risks.

It is compulsory at all events for stallion owners/riders/grooms and any other person in charge of a stallion to ensure they are easily identifiable at all times.

13.2 Stallion Rules

- a) All horses regardless of gender must be 3 years of age and over to enter a Western Dressage event.
- b) Correct green identification tags/discs must be displayed on both sides of the halter, bridle or saddle blanket. when in competition, warm up or exercise area and any other areas of the competition venue. The identification discs must be clearly displayed.
- c) Clearly displayed means - there must not be any obstruction by clothing or other items.
- d) When a Stallion is tied to a truck/ float the animal must be suitably restrained (hard tied or enclosed within a stallion safe panelled yard.
- e) When competitors are staying overnight at an event. the stallion owner or person in charge must advise the event organising committee when entering the event and booking stabling that they have a stallion nominated for the event
- f) The Stallion identification card with a green background to be placed on the outside of the stable or yard. clearly notifying others that there is a stallion within. The identification card must display the name and contact details of the person in charge of the stallion.
- g) Stallions maybe substituted in prize giving ceremonies with another horse should it be deemed a safe option.
- h) Riders and handlers of stallions must be over the age of 18 years
- i) The organising reserve the right to refuse entry, or remove from competition any horse/stallion deemed to be a danger to people or other horses.

ANNEXURE – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

☑ **Where can I find information on the tack that I can use?**

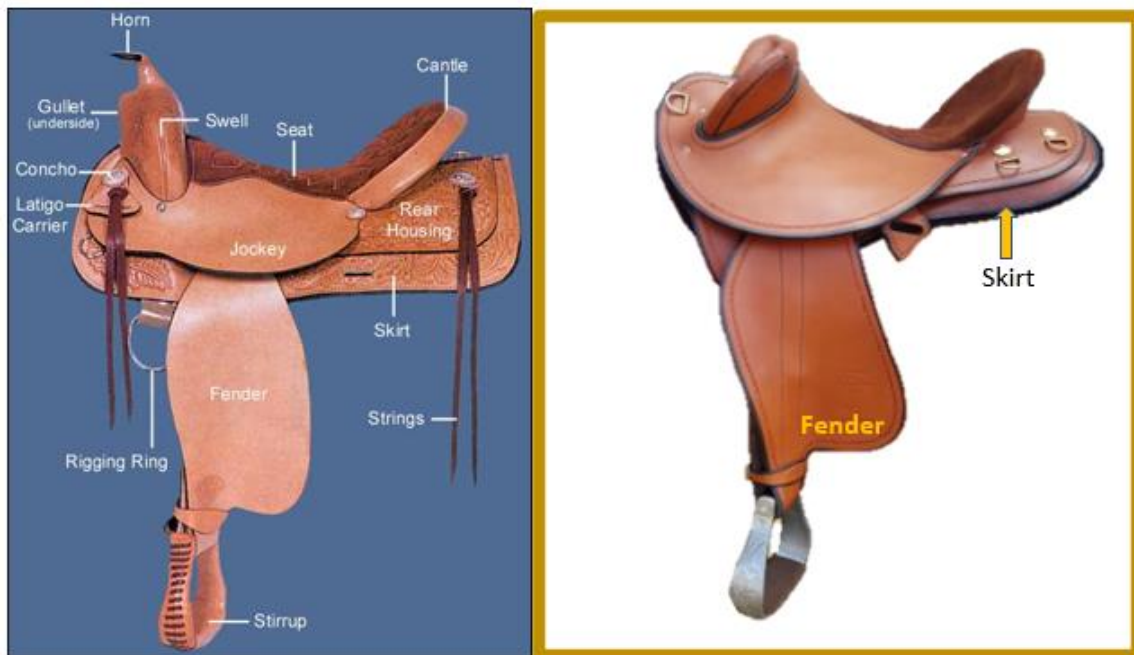
The WDA-AUS rule book has details of tack, attire and presentation of the horse, in Section 10. This page also provides brief information based on questions that have been asked.

☑ **What type of saddle do I have to use?**

A Western or Swinging Fender or Half Breed Saddle is required, but all saddles **must have at least 2 of these 3 requirements**:-

1. Saddle Skirt
2. Western Fenders which are a minimum of 75mm at the narrowest point
3. A Horn.

LEGAL WESTERN SADDLE AND LEGAL HALF BREED SADDLE



☑ **What is a saddle skirt?**

The skirt attaches to the underside of the bars. Its purpose is to protect the horse from the bars and helps distribute the rider's weight more evenly, as per the diagram above.

NOT LEGAL - STOCK SADDLE
It only has 1 instead of 2 of the requirements. It only has fenders.



☑ Can I use a Pee Wee bit?

No, Pee Wee bits are not permitted.

NOT LEGAL - PEE WEE BIT



☑ Can I use a nose net?

You need to make a request to the WDA-AUS Board for consideration via secretary@westerndressage.com.au & must include a Veterinary Certificate certifying the medical need for the use of a nose net. It must also include a photo of the net (preferably on the horse), the full name of the horse and the medical condition applicable to the use of the nose net. You would need to submit your request several weeks in advance, to allow time for the board to convene & consider your request. If you apply a week before the relative show, you won't get approval. The net must be transparent and must not cover the bit or the mouth of the horse.

☑ When does the membership year start? Do I get a discount if I join late in the membership year?

The membership & show year starts on 1 July & ends on 30 June each year. It is the same price throughout the year, no matter what month you join.



☑ Can I use an Anatomical bridle, for example a micklem bridle?

No, anatomical bridles like the one pictured are not permitted.



☑ I have heard that when a rider is using split reins with 2 hands, they have to bridge the reins. Is that true?

Yes that's true. Split reins must be bridged when used with 2 hands. If they are joined or connected though, they can be held independently.

☑ Am I disqualified if I go off pattern?

No, that is classed as an error of pattern. You will be penalised by 2 points for the first error, 4 points for the 2nd error. If you make 3 errors of pattern, then yes you are eliminated.

☑ Can I carry a whip during a test?

Yes, so long as it is 120cm or less, including the lash.

☑ I know there are 4 different jogs. Do I have to ride the jog sitting or rising?

1. In the working jog, you can ride either sitting or rising, up to Level 1. Level 2 & above is sitting only.
2. In the free jog, you can ride either sitting or rising in all test levels.
3. In the lengthen stride jog, you can ride either sitting or rising.
4. In the collected jog, you can only ride sitting.

If your test level allows the jog to be ridden sitting or rising, you can change from one to the other at any point throughout the test.

☑ There's a WDA-AUS approved show coming up but I only want to try WD out instead of joining at the moment. Can I do that?

Yes, you definitely can do that. You can pay an event only membership and ride in the non-sanctioned Introductory and Basic Levels. The non-sanctioned basic tests are exactly the same tests as the sanctioned basic tests but are awarded separately. Ribbons are awarded for placings. Your horse does not need to be competition licensed either.

☑ If I only do the non-sanctioned tests and pay the event only membership, do I still have to comply with the rules for tack and attire?

Yes, you still have to comply with those rules. Occasionally our affiliate associations will include designated "Come & Try" non-sanctioned Introductory and Basic level classes at their shows. The event convenors have the discretion to allow any style of saddle to be used in specifically identified "Come & Try" classes only. The headgear used must comply with the WDA-AUS legal tack rules. These classes are stand-alone classes, run separately to the other non-sanctioned classes, but as part of an approved show.

☑ How do I know what level to enter my horse in?

You can choose the test level for your horse, up to Level 2. Only 2 consecutive levels can be ridden at any one competition: for example Basic/Level 1. To further explain for example: You can't ride Basic & Level 2 at a show.

All tests from Level 1 upwards are sanctioned only and riders must be WDA-AUS members and the horses must hold a lifetime competition license.

☑ How many classes can I enter each day?

You can enter each horse in a maximum of 4 tests per day, no matter what the test is. For example only, if the show is a 2 day event, you could enter a total of 8 tests (4 tests on day one & 4 tests on day two, providing you comply with the 2 consecutive levels rule for the sanctioned tests).

☑ I have seen some western dressage classes advertised at shows, but the tests look a little different from the ones on your website. If I get the judge to sign my points book, can I have competition points awarded from those events.

No. WDA-AUS is the national governing body responsible for setting national standards in all aspects of Western Dressage for our members and affiliated associations, this establishes unity in both training & competition. Therefore, competition points are only earned at WDA-AUS approved events.

☑ There is a new WDA-AUS affiliate in my area & event attendance is starting to grow. Is there any advice on including Champion & Reserve Champion awards?

WDA-AUS has standardised the event information for all show types across Australia. All affiliate associations & branches now offer the same awards for each different show type (Standard, Championship & State Shows). Their programs will all have the same event information outlining how the Champion & Reserve Champion awards are calculated. They will have these awards in Sanctioned, Non-Sanctioned & Youth classes. Some affiliate associations & branches may offer optional awards in addition to the set standards.

☑ I'm a member of WDA-AUS, but I'd like to ride a horse that is owned by a non-member. Is that allowed?

Yes it certainly is. If you intend to ride the horse in sanctioned classes, the horse only needs to have a competition license. The license costs \$25 and is issued for the lifetime of the horse, it is not subject to annual renewal. If you only intend to ride the horse in non-sanctioned Introductory and or Basic tests, then no license is needed.

☑ Do I have to salute & what am I supposed to do when I finish my test?

Yes, you have to salute if the test lists it in the movement, otherwise you could be penalised for an error of execution. Once you finish the final movement and salute, you should move towards the rail on a 10m ½ circle (arc) at a free walk and you can exit diagonally from any rail marker towards A, to exit at A. All exits are at a free walk.

☑ Can I use an English style headstall in Western Dressage?

As the name suggests, Western Dressage requires the use of a Western style of headstall, or an Australian Stock style headstall made of leather or leather like material. If using a bitless bridle, it must be made of rope, leather or leather like material.

These are just a few types of Western & Stock style headstalls. You are not limited to these particular ones; they are simply examples.

The bitless headstall on the palomino is not legal because the reins attach to rings on a sliding chin strap that applies direct pressure to the jaw. The bitless headstall on the bay is legal because the reins attach directly to a fixed ring on the noseband & there is no leverage or clamping action occurring.



WESTERN



STOCK



NOT LEGAL - BITLESS



LEGAL - BITLESS

☑ Can I band my horses mane and spray some glitter on the hindquarters?

No braiding, banding or plaiting of the mane, tail or forelock is permitted. No decoration of the horse with items such as ribbons, flowers or glitter is permitted either.

☑ Do I have to wear chaps in Western Dressage?

No, it is not mandatory to wear chaps in Western Dressage. You may wear chaps or chinks as an optional item though. The same ruling applies to gloves. Some riders like to wear these at Championship, State and National Shows, while others wear them at Standard Shows also.

The rulebook says that chin straps and bit hobbles are permitted to be used with a snaffle bit. Is it mandatory that I use a chin strap or bit hobble when I use a snaffle bit?

No. Chin straps or bit hobbles are not mandatory if using a snaffle bit. These are permitted though if you want to use one. If you are using a curb bit, it is mandatory to use a curb chain or flat leather chin strap which is at least 12.7mm (1/2 inch) in width and it must lie flat against the jaw of the horse.

Can I use a sheepskin nose band cover when I show in a bosal?

No, nose band covers are not permitted.

Can I use a work saddle pad, stock horse saddle pad or pony club saddle pad when I show?

As the name suggests, Western Dressage requires a western style saddle pad or western style show pad/blanket in competition. You can use any type of saddle pad at clinics, training days or social events but for WD Shows you must use a western style saddle pad/blanket. You can use a western saddle blanket or western show blanket over your preferred non-western saddle pad, provided that it is not visible.

I'm new to western and I like to ride in skinny jeans. Can I wear my western boots over the top of my jeans while showing, if I can't fit my jeans over the top of my boots?

No, your jeans or western style trousers must be worn over the top of your boots when you are riding at a show, unless covered by chaps. However, if you are riding at a clinic, training day or social event you can wear your boots over the top of your jeans if preferred. If you are wearing short boots, your jeans/trousers should still cover the top of them.

Sometimes it's hard to hear my caller. Can I wear an earpiece that is paired with a microphone being used by my caller?

No, that is not permitted. Many affiliate associations & branches hosting WD shows have a PA system where callers have the option of using a microphone through an amplifier, so that riders, judges & the spectators can hear the test being called. If a rider has a diagnosed hearing impairment, a request to the WDA-AUS Board for consideration via secretary@westerndressage.com.au can be made. You would need to submit your request along with medical certification, several weeks in advance, to allow time for the board to convene & consider your request. If you apply a week before the relative show, you won't get approval.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Event Organiser – includes Event Convenor, Show Secretary and any Assistants to those roles. The term also includes a Show Committee.

Affiliate Association – includes State Associations and Branches.

Capping Event Entries – means placing a limit on the number of nominations that can be accepted per test and or per show.

Nominate.com.au – Electronic system used to process online entries for equestrian events.

Livescore – Paperless western dressage scoring application, used instead of paper tests. Scribes enter the judge's comments on a mobile device.

Caller – an assistant to the rider who stands outside the arena boundary and calls each movement of the test for the rider.

Scorer – A minimum of two (2) persons delegated to adding up the scores on the judge's scoresheets, taking into account any deductions due to penalties and determining the final score in the form of a percentage mark to 3 decimal places. Each test is to be scored by the two scorers who verify the final percentage mark. In the case of the use of Livescore means a minimum of two (2) persons who each review all results and placings to ensure the accuracy of each.

Scribe – a person who sits with the judge and notes the judge's comments, scores and penalties on the paper score sheet or on the mobile (tablet) device.

AMENDMENTS

Any future amendments made prior to the next 2 year review, are summarised here & listed in red font throughout the rulebook.

16/01/2025

1.4 Memberships

- c) YOUTH MEMBERS: must be **between seven (7) years of age and** eighteen (18) years at the commencement of the Membership year and, subject to the relevant WDA-AUS rules and conditions, may participate in all training events and activities, and compete in all categories of competition including Sanctioned classes, and accrue competition points.
- **For example** – a youth turns 18 on their birthday 01 October 2020. The youth is 18 years of age on 1 July 2021 when the membership year for the 2021-22 period starts. The youth is current in their youth membership when they turn 19 on 01 October 2021. **They remain a Youth Member until 30 June 2022**, which is the end of the 2021-22 membership year. On 1 July 2022 the youth becomes a Senior Member. Youth Members do not have the right to cast a vote at General Meetings, nor be able to serve as a Judge or Member of the Board or a Committee except a Committee to represent Youth Members.

Youth are not permitted to handle, ride or exhibit colts or stallions within the perimeter of the grounds at any competitions or any events. Youths seven (7) to ten (10) years of age may not ride horses under the age of four (4) years. Youth participating or competing in any event must have permission from their parent or guardian and must be in the care of a responsible adult who is in attendance for the duration of the event, whilst the youth is at the event.

27/01/2025

8.3 Draw

d) No changes to the order of horses or riders are permitted once the draw has been finalised. No substitutes for horses or riders are permitted after the draw has been finalised.

Exception: Standard Shows Only - If a horse has to be withdrawn due to a verified injury, a substitute horse may be entered provided the horse is competing in the same level and in the same class/classes as the withdrawn horse.

Championship, State and National Shows - no horse substitutes are permitted after the draw has been finalised.

15/04/2025 – to take effect 01/07/2025

3.4 Eligibility Criteria & Conditions for Test Levels

TEST LEVEL	CONDITIONS
Level Three	Horses must be at least 4 years old. Must have achieved at least a 75% score in a Level Two class.
Level Four	Horses must be at least 4 years old. Must have achieved at 75% in a Level Two class deleted. May only be ridden two-handed in a snaffle bit, transitional bit, bosal or bitless bridle; or one-handed in a curb bit or two-rein bridle.

NEW RULE INSERTED UNDER SECTION 8 EVENT MANAGEMENT

8.2A Non-Competing Horses at Shows

- a) Only horses officially entered in competition may be ridden on the event grounds. This includes all areas such as warm up zones, marshalling areas, lunging areas and competition arenas.

- b) Companion horses are permitted on the grounds but may only be hand walked. Hand walking is strictly limited to periods outside the official competition schedule and draw times.

~~11.3 Jog~~

~~d) iii Lengthening of stride at the jog may be ridden either posting or sitting at all levels. Absorbed into new wording for complete section 11.3 on 19/06/2025.~~

11.4 Lope

11.4 d) ii) Free Lope – **deleted**.

11.21 & 11.22 – **deleted** and new definition inserted.

11.21 Turn on the Haunches

- a) The WD Turn on the haunches is executed out of a working walk prepared by half halts to shorten the steps. During the movement the forefeet and the outside hind foot move around the inside hind foot. The WD Turn on the haunches can be performed on a larger diameter than the pivot. This movement is executed at Level 1 and Level 2. Riders may choose to pivot or WD Turn on the haunches. Switching from one method to the other within the same movement will be penalized. At Level 3 and above, only the pivot may be performed.
- b) For younger horses that are still not able to perform a collected walk, the 'WD Turn on the haunches' is an exercise to prepare the horse for collection. The 'WD Turn on the haunches' is executed out of working walk prepared by half-halts to shorten the steps a little and to improve the ability to bend the joints of the hindquarters.
- c) The horse must bend a little in its ribcage around the rider's inside leg. The 'WD Turn on the haunches' can be executed on a larger diameter (approximately one meter) than the pivot in walk, but the demands of the training scale concerning rhythm, contact, activity and bend are the same.

11.22 Pivot

- a) In keeping with traditional Western Stock horse movements, the horse pivots on the inside hind leg and step around it with the outside hind leg. The horse pushes off with the outside hind leg. The pivot leg is allowed to pickup and reset when it reaches the point of stress. The horse should maintain correct bend and balance and respond to the rider's leg. A pivot should begin at a walk tempo with forward intention, building speed moderately while maintaining form and fluidity. Pivoting around the middle axis of the horse should receive a marginal to insufficient score of 5 or lower. It is not a fault to step forward 1-2 steps into the pivot.

NEW SECTION INSERTED AS 11.28.

Therefore 11.28 TO 11.31 renumbered.

11.28 Collection, Impulsion, Submission, Aids

Collection

- a) Collection is achieved by increased weight bearing of the horse's haunches, thereby lowering the croup and lightening the forehand to allow the shoulders more freedom.
- b) The aim of the collection of the horse is to add to the ease and carriage of the horse, to increase the strength and athleticism, and to make it more pleasurable to ride.
- c) Horses ridden with the face consistently behind the vertical plane must be penalized.
- d) The position of the head and neck of a horse at the collected gaits is naturally dependent on the stage of training and on its conformation. It should, however, be distinguished by the neck being raised and unrestrained, forming a harmonious curve from the withers to the poll which is the highest point. The head is on or slightly in front of the vertical. However, when the rider applies their aids in order to obtain a momentary and passing collecting effect, the head may momentarily become more or less vertical.
- e) The lightness of contact, which is the hallmark of Western Dressage, shall be demonstrated in collection.
- f) A marked lowering of the horse's pelvis and an increased flexion of the hocks should be demonstrated. This is also called "coiling of the loins".

Impulsion

- a) Impulsion is the term used to describe the transmission of an eager and energetic, yet controlled, positive forward energy generated from the hindquarters into the athletic movement of the horse. Its ultimate expression can be shown only through the horse's soft, relaxed, swinging back guided by a light, elastic contact with the rider's hand.
- b) Speed, of itself, has nothing to do with impulsion; the result is more often a flattening of the gaits. A visible characteristic of impulsion 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 and certainly not backwards. A prime ingredient of impulsion is the time the horse spends in the air rather than on the ground. Impulsion is, therefore, seen only in those gaits that have a period of suspension.
- c) Impulsion is required for a good collection in the jog and lope. If there is no impulsion, then there is nothing to collect.

Submission

Submission of the horse does not mean subordination, but an obedience revealing its presence by a constant attention, willingness, and confidence in the whole behavior of the horse as well as by the harmony, lightness and ease it is displaying in the execution of the different movements. Willing cooperation is also demonstrated by the way the horse accepts the bit, with light contact and a supple poll. Resistance to or evasion of the contact, by being either "above the bit" or "behind the bit" demonstrate lack of willing cooperation.

- a) Putting out the tongue, keeping it above the bit or drawing it up altogether, as well as grinding the teeth or agitation of the tail, are mostly signs of nervousness, tension or resistance on the part of the horse and must be taken into account by the judges in their marks for every movement concerned, as well as in the collective mark for harmony.
- b) Willingness is the most important consideration when evaluating obedience. The horse understands what is being asked of it and is confident in the rider by responding to the aids without fear or tension.
- c) The horse's straightness, uphill tendency and balance enable it to stay in front of the rider's legs and go forward into an accepting, light and self-carrying contact with the bit. This is what really produces the picture of harmony and lightness.
- d) Harmony between the horse and rider is demonstrated by the horse and rider moving as "one". The rider uses tactful cues; the horse performs without resistance, agitation or wariness. The horse shows attention and confidence in its ease of movements and acceptance of the bit while staying up in the poll and keeping its nose in front of the vertical. The degree of lightness increases as the horse advances in its training.

Position and Aids of the Rider

- a) All the Western Dressage 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 center of the saddle, smoothly absorbing the movement of the horse with their core muscles, supple thighs with the legs steady and stretched well down. The heels should be the lowest point with the ankles relatively relaxed. The upper part of the body should be tall and supple demonstrating a vertical alignment of shoulder to hip to heel. The light contact of the rider's hands should be independent from the rider's seat. The hands should be carried steadily in a style appropriate to the style of rein and bit being used with 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.
- b) The rider may use one or two hands with a curb bit but may not go from one handed to two handed during an individual test. The rider may use one or two hands with a curb bit and split reins, but with a Romel, the rider is to only use one hand.

- c) Not only the aids of the rider's hands and the legs, but also of the seat are of great importance in Western Dressage. The rider who understands how to properly engage the core muscles at the right moment is able to influence the horse correctly.
- d) Accuracy: precise placement of the figures and transitions, the effectiveness of the rider's aids determines the accurate fulfillment of the test. There should always be the impression of a harmonious cooperation between horse and rider.
- e) Quiet use of the voice and clicking of the tongue is permitted.

19/06/2025 – **to take effect 01/07/2025.** (24/03/2026 – 11.8 Simple change through walk corrected, numbering updated, formatting of Faults corrected)

5.6 Expectations of the Levels for Western Dressage Tests

Table of Level Expectations and Movement List removed. Replaced with WDAA WD130 Expectations of Levels.

Note: Level 5 added.

1. Introductory Level. Tests provide an introduction to the discipline of Western Dressage; the horse performs only at the gaits of walk and jog. The rider may sit or post the jog. The rider should demonstrate correct basic position, use of basic aids, and understanding of the figures. The horse should show relaxation and harmony between horse and rider is important. The horse accepts the aids and influence of the rider. The jog should be a natural gait within the horse's scope and should demonstrate a swinging back. To be eligible for Intro Level, a horse/rider combination must not have shown in a Western Dressage Test at Level 1 or above in the same competition year.

2. Basic Level. Tests confirm that the horse is supple and moves freely forward in a clear and steady rhythm, accepting light contact with the bit. The horse demonstrates a greater understanding of the aids and calm acceptance of the bridle; greater emphasis is placed on relaxation, willing cooperation, harmony, rideability and pure gaits. The horse is beginning to develop more impulsion and balance.

3. Level 1. Tests confirm that the horse is building on the elements from lower levels and is developing more engagement to show sufficient impulsion as the lengthened jog and lope are performed. The horse WD - 24 © USEF 2025 demonstrates a more consistent light contact with the bit. These tests introduce some collection and lateral and longitudinal balance, suppleness, and emphasize harmony and rideability.

4. Level 2. To confirm that the horse, having achieved the impulsion required in Level 1, now accepts more weight on the hindquarters (collection); moves with an uphill tendency; especially in the lengthened paces; and is reliably and lightly on the bit. A greater degree of straightness, bending, suppleness, balance and self carriage is required than at Level 1.

5. Level 3. To confirm that the horse has achieved the impulsion required in Level 2, now accepts more weight on the hindquarters (collection); moves with a greater degree of an uphill tendency as required in the collected gaits especially in the collected lope. The horse must maintain a light contact on the bit showing balance, self-carriage and energy that result from improved engagement and weight-carrying by the hind quarters as performed in the collected lope. The movements should be performed with greater bending, suppleness, balance and self-carriage than in Level 2.

6. Level 4. To confirm that the horse has achieved the impulsion, engagement, uphill balance and self-carriage required in Level 3. Level 4 movements should be performed with greater engagement, straightness, suppleness and balance. The marked lightness of the forehead results from a distinct lowering of the haunches and throughness required to perform the partial lope pirouette. A solid foundation is evidenced throughout by a correct, willing, harmonious performance softly on the aids.

7. Level 5. To Confirm that the horse has achieved the suppleness, impulsion, throughness and clear uphill balance required in Level 5. The marked lightness of the forehead resulting from improved engagement and collection is demonstrated in the full lope pirouette. The flying lead changes in series reveal the responsiveness and obedience of the horse to the aids. A solid foundation is evidenced throughout by a calm, willing, harmonious performance.

11.2 Walk

- a) The walk is a well-marked four time beat marching gait in a regular cadence with equal intervals between each beat. This regularity combined with complete relaxation must be maintained throughout all walk movements.
- b) When the foreleg and the hind leg on the same side swing forward almost at the same time, the walk has a lateral rhythm. This irregularity is a serious fault of the gait.
- c) The following walks are recognized: Collected walk, Working walk, Free walk and Extended walk. There should always be a clear difference in the attitude and tracking in these variations.
 - i) **Collected Walk.** The horse, remaining “on the bit”, moves resolutely forward with its neck raised and showing a clear self-carriage. The head approaches the vertical position, and a light contact is maintained with the mouth. The hind legs are engaged with good flexion of the joints. The gait should remain marching and vigorous, the feet being placed in regular sequence. The steps cover less ground and are higher than at the Working walk, because all the joints bend more markedly. The step at the Collected walk is shorter than the Working walk and shows greater activity.
 - ii) **Working Walk.** Four-beat, active, energetic walk with resolutely forward-reaching steps and confident stretch to the bit. Head and neck should swing naturally as a result of a relaxed back and free shoulders. The nose shall be on or slightly in front of the vertical. The hind feet should touch the ground into or beyond the prints of the forefeet.
 - iii) **Free Walk.** A relaxed walk with unconstrained, forward reaching steps where hind feet touch the ground in or in front of the footprints of the forefeet. The horse must be relaxed and be allowed complete freedom to lower its head and neck to stretch forward and down and out. The length of stride, rhythm, the relaxation and swing through its back are of great importance.
 - iv) **Extended Walk:** The horse demonstrates optimum ground cover, a lengthened frame and reach to the contact without sacrificing regularity, suppleness of the back and an open frame. Without hurrying, the horse exhibits balance, freedom and over track.

11.3 Jog

- a) The jog is a two-beat gait of alternate diagonal legs (left fore and right hind leg and vice versa) separated by a moment of suspension.
- b) The jog should show free, active and regular steps.
- c) Excessive speed or slowness will be penalized.
- d) The quality of the jog is judged by general impression, i.e., the regularity and elasticity of the steps, the cadence and impulsion in extension at all three paces. This quality originates from a supple back and well engaged hindquarters, and by the ability to maintain the same rhythm and natural balance in all variations of the jog.
- e) The following jogs are recognized: Collected jog, Working jog, Lengthening of Strides, and Free Jog.
 - i) **Collected Jog.** The horse, remaining “on the bit”, moves forward in a two-beat gait with the neck raised and arched and showing clear self-carriage. The head approaches the vertical position, and a light contact is maintained with the mouth. The hocks are well-engaged and flexed and must maintain an energetic impulsion, enabling the shoulders to move more freely. Although the horse’s steps are shorter than in the other jogs, elasticity and cadence are not lessened. The Collected jog must be ridden seated.
 - ii) **Working Jog.** An energetic, regular, two-beat jog; the horse must go forward with even and elastic steps. The back must be relaxed and the shoulders free, while there is an obvious push from the hindquarters. The hind legs step actively up under the horse. The horse must show proper balance and maintain light contact with the bit. The horse’s nose shall be on or slightly in front of the vertical. In the

Introductory, Basic and Level 1 tests, the Working jog may be ridden either posting or sitting. In more advanced tests from Level 2 up, the Working jog must be ridden seated.

- iii) **Lengthening of Strides.** This is a variation of the Working jog; the horse covers more ground through lengthening its frame while maintaining the same tempo as in the Working jog. Excessive speed will be penalized. Lengthening of stride may be ridden either posting or sitting.
- iv) **Free Jog.** This is a pace that confirms a relaxed, supple topline to facilitate freedom and throughness. Without hurrying, the horse jogs forward in a two-beat gait while stretching downward and forward over the back showing a willingness to reach towards a soft elastic connection. Balance, bend, tempo, and regularity should be maintained as the horse shows increased swing through the back. There should be a smooth willing retake of the reins in transition to the working jog. The free jog may be ridden posting or sitting

11.4 Lope

- a) The lope is a gait with three equal, regular beats with time of suspension after the third beat. One stride equals three beats, or three footfalls. This gait may be demonstrated on right or left lead. Footfall sequence in right lead is: left hind, right hind and left fore together, right fore, then suspension. Footfall sequence in left lead: right hind, left hind and right fore together, left fore, then suspension.
- b) The lope has a typically slower tempo than a canter and must keep the three beat rhythm or the regularity is lost. Excessive speed or slowness must be penalized.
- c) The correct lope must be balanced, rhythmic, and with three beats with a clear time of suspension; it must be straight, adjustable and supple, showing willingness to move forward in self-carriage with engaged hindquarters.
- d) The quality of the lope is judged by the general impression, i.e., the regularity and lightness of the steps. The uphill tendency of the forehand and the steady cadence, originating from engagement of the hindquarters transmit the energy from back to front and connect into a willing acceptance of the bridle. The horse's mouth is quiet and its poll is soft. The horse should always remain straight on straight lines and correctly bent on curved lines.
- e) The following lopes are recognized: Collected lope, Working lope, Lengthening of Strides, and Counter Lope.
 - i) **Collected Lope.** The horse, remaining "on the bit", moves forward in a three-beat cadence with the neck raised and arched. The hocks are well-engaged and maintain an energetic impulsion, enabling the shoulders to move more freely, demonstrating self-carriage and an uphill tendency. The horse's strides are shorter than in the other lopes, without losing elasticity and cadence.
 - ii) **Working Lope.** While maintaining the three beat cadence, the horse must go forward with even and elastic steps. The back must be relaxed and the shoulders free; there is an obvious push from the hindquarters and the hind legs step actively up under the horse. The horse must maintain light contact with the bit and its nose shall be on or slightly in front of the vertical.
 - iii) **Lengthening of Strides.** This is a variation of the Working lope; the horse covers more ground through lengthening its frame while maintaining the same tempo as in the Working lope. Excessive speed will be penalized.
 - iv) **Counter-Lope.** The counter lope is a balancing and straightening movement. The horse appears to be cantering on the incorrect lead to the direction of travel. The horse lopes in a correct sequence to the left on the right lead; the horse lopes to the right in a correct sequence on the left lead.

11.5 Halt

- a) At the halt the horse should stand attentive, engaged motionless, straight and square with the weight evenly distributed over all four legs. The neck should be raised with the poll as the highest point and the head 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 mouth the bit and should be ready to move off at the slightest indication of the rider.

- 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 soft hand, causing an almost instantaneous but not abrupt stop at a previously fixed place.
- c) The quality of the gaits before and after the stop is an important part of the assessment.

11.6 Back

- f) Back is a rearward diagonal movement with a two-beat rhythm but without a moment of suspension. Each diagonal pair of legs is raised and returned to the ground alternately, with the forelegs aligned on the same track as the hind legs.
- g) During the entire exercise, the horse should remain "on the bit", maintaining its desire to move forward at the slightest indication of the rider.
- h) Serious faults are: Anticipation of the movement, resistance to or evasion of the contact of the bit either by raising the neck or going behind the bit, dropping the poll and neck below the withers, deviation of the hindquarters from the straight line, spreading or inactive hind legs and dragging forefeet.
- i) Steps are counted as each foreleg moves back. After completing the required number of steps backward, the horse should show a square stop or move forward in the required gait immediately. In tests where a back of one horse's length is required, it should be executed with three or four steps.
- j) A back series (swing) is a combination of two backs with walk steps in between. It should be executed with fluent transitions and the required number of steps. Except for the initial halt, a back series should be performed with continuous movement, with the horse stepping fluidly forward into the required forward gait from the last step of the back.

11.7 Faults

Faults of gaits include crookedness, loss of rhythm; tight and tense back with short stiff neck; horse on forehand and/or leaning on the bit; nose consistently behind the vertical; raising of the head to avoid collection; changing tempo; and evasion of contact which can come from improper training, too harsh a bit, or bad hands. In all cases faults will be penalized.

11.8 Transitions

- c) The changes of gait and pace should be clearly shown when the rider's leg is at the prescribed marker; they should be quickly made yet must be smooth and not abrupt. The cadence of a gait or pace should be maintained up to the moment when the gait or pace is changed or the horse halts. The horse should remain light in hand, calm and maintain a correct position.
- d) In transitions where the horse approaches the letter from a line on the diagonal or perpendicular to the point where the letter is positioned, the transition must be done when the horse's nose reaches the track at the letter so that the horse is straight in the transition. This includes the execution of flying changes.

FOLLOWING ON FROM THE ADOPTION OF THE WDAA GAIT DESCRIPTIONS, THE WORDING OF SECTIONS **11.9** (Simple changes through ~~walk~~/jog) REMAIN THE SAME EXCEPT FOR THE NUMBER OF STRIDES DECREASING TO 2-3 INSTEAD OF 3-5.

-24/03/2026 – the above has been corrected for 11.8 – Simple Change of Lead through the Walk – this should have stayed at **3-5** clearly defined steps and has been corrected as such.

These sections deleted in full.

- 11.7 Counter Lope
- 11.12 Release of Rein
- 11.13 Leg Yield
- 11.14 Side Pass

- 11.15 Shoulder In
- 11.16 Haunches In (Travers)
- 11.17 Haunches Out (Renvers)
- 11.18 Half Pass
- 11.19 Zig Zag (Counter Change of Hand)
- 11.20 Turn on the Forehand
- 11.24 Counter Bending Exercises
- 11.25 Circles, Serpentine, Loops and Figure Eights
- 11.26 Straight Lines, Turns and Corners, Change of Direction

Reallocation of section numbers.

New Rules inserted into vacant section numbers.

- 11.11 Changes of Direction
- 11.12 Figures & Exercises
- 11.13 Work on Two Tracks and the Lateral Movements

11.16 Pirouette, Half Pirouette, and Quarter Pirouette

Subsections a), & b) deleted.

Subsections c), d) & e) relisted as a), b) & c).

30/07/2025

1.7 Objective of Western Dressage Competition

- e) Over time, the Judges' scores and feedback influences the training and presentation of competition horses and consequently acts as a key influence on the evolution of the discipline. The Judge will objectively assess each movement and test with regards to the following qualities and how each of these impact on the overall appearance of harmony between the horse and rider.
 - i) **Gaits:** freedom and regularity; elasticity of steps.
 - ii) **Impulsion:** engagement – transmission of an eager and energetic, yet controlled positive forward energy generated from the hindquarters into the athletic movement of the horse; suppleness of the back.
 - iii) **Rider's Position, Seat & Hands:** well-balanced elastic seat demonstrating vertical, centred alignment, with light independent contact from hand(s).
 - iv) **Rider's Correct & Effective Use of Aids:** evidenced by the horse's responsiveness, steady elastic connection cultivating athletic expression. Accuracy – precise placement of the figures and transitions, the effectiveness of the rider's aids determines the accurate fulfillment of the required movements of the tests.
 - v) **Harmony:** The horse accepts the aids and influence of the rider with attention, relaxation, and confidence, and demonstrates a willing partnership between horse and rider resulting in a free flowing performance.

7.2 Amateur Class Overview

STANDARD SHOWS & CHAMPIONSHIP SHOWS

Amateur classes are held within the Open classes at Standard and Championship shows.

Changed to Amateur classes can be held either within the Open Classes or as separate classes (at the discretion of the organising committee).

5.5 Points Scale – Scoring

Points scale table deleted in full and replaced with:

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	Marginal		

* "Not executed" means practically none of the movement has been performed

05/09/2025

NEW SECTION INSERTED

Section 13 Stallion Policy

13.1 Objective

WDA-AUS, has developed the following set of rules relating to the safe practices of stallions at events.

These rules are consistent with WDA-AUS's focus on improving safety for everyone, by identifying risks and putting in place measures to mitigate those risks.

It is compulsory at all events for stallion owners/riders/grooms and any other person in charge of a stallion to ensure they are easily identifiable at all times.

13.2 Stallion Rules

- a) All horses regardless of gender must be 3 years of age and over to enter a Western Dressage event.
 - b) Correct green identification tags/discs must be displayed on both sides of the halter, bridle or saddle blanket. when in competition, warm up or exercise area and any other areas of the competition venue. The identification discs must be clearly displayed.
 - c) Clearly displayed means - there must not be any obstruction by clothing or other items.
 - d) When a Stallion is tied to a truck/ float the animal must be suitably restrained (hard tied or enclosed within a stallion safe panelled yard).
 - e) When competitors are staying overnight at an event. the stallion owner or person in charge must advise the event organising committee when entering the event and booking stabling that they have a stallion nominated for the event
 - f) The Stallion identification card with a green background to be placed on the outside of the stable or yard. clearly notifying others that there is a stallion within. The identification card must display the name and contact details of the person in charge of the stallion.
 - g) Stallions maybe substituted in prize giving ceremonies with another horse should it be deemed a safe option.
 - h) Riders and handlers of stallions must be over the age of 18 years
 - i) The organising reserve the right to refuse entry, or remove from competition any horse / stallion deemed to be a danger to people or other horses.
-

30/03/2026

1.4 Membership

- a) **NON-RIDING MEMBERS:** Non-Riding Membership is restricted to individuals who are either currently accredited judges or are actively serving on a National, State, or Affiliate Committee. Subject to the relevant WDA-AUS rules and conditions, Non-Riding Members have the right to attend, speak, and vote at General Meetings. They cannot take part as a rider in any ridden events. Eligibility to apply for committee or judging roles is governed by the relevant WDA-AUS policies and is not conferred by this membership category. ~~ASSOCIATE MEMBERS: subject to the relevant WDA-AUS rules and conditions, have the right to be present and speak at General Meetings but not to cast a vote. They are not able to take part as a rider in any ridden events, nor are they eligible to become a Judge. The fee is less than a full membership and is recommended for affiliate committee members and show secretaries who do not ride.~~

3.4 Eligibility Criteria & Conditions for Test Levels

- a) The Levels of Western Dressage are offered as a means of evaluating a horse as its training progresses. The

performance of the horse shall be considered in light of the degree of training it should have achieved to be shown at that Level.

- b) Riders may choose the test level that they wish to enter at a competition provided that they meet the conditions required of the level/s chosen.

Professional riders are not permitted to compete in Introductory Level tests. Professional riders who wish to introduce green or inexperienced horses to a competition environment may enter Introductory Level tests Hors Concours (HC) only.

Professional riders riding Hors Concours at Introductory Level are not eligible for placings, ribbons or Level Champion Awards.

A professional rider is defined as any rider who does not meet the eligibility requirements for Amateur status under current WDA-Aus rules.

5.4 Scoring

The Levels of Western Dressage are offered as a means of evaluating a horse as its training progresses. The performance of the horse shall be considered in light of the degree of training it should have achieved to be shown at that Level.

Judges observe the performance of each individual combination and make a balanced objective assessment so that the comments and scores accurately reflect the quality presented and differentiates between serious faults and minor mistakes.

- a) Tests and patterns are comprised of several distinct manoeuvre groups which Judges are asked to evaluate on an individual basis dependent on execution as dictated by the pattern description and the rules for judging, and against the standard and expectations for that level.
- ~~b) Points are awarded from 0 to 10 in 0.5 point increments. with 4 points or below denoting extremely poor quality to 10 points for excellent quality and a score of 7 denoting a movement that is correctly executed and of average quality. There is an expectation of an average performance scoring 70%, i.e. averaging 7 out of 10 points for each movement.~~
- c) Each movement to be marked by the Judge is numbered on the Judge's test sheet.
- d) Certain movements and collective marks within the test patterns may have a co-efficient. The points are multiplied by the corresponding co-efficient where applicable and then totalled.
- e) Collective marks (points) for Gaits; Impulsion; Riders Position, Seat & Hands; Rider's Correct & Effective Use of the Aids; and Harmony ~~attitude, rideability, finesse and fluency~~ are awarded from 0 to 10, including half points, after the rider has finished their performance.
- f) Penalty points for errors are deducted on the Judge's test sheet from the rider's total movement and overall points.
- g) The rider's score is their total points awarded expressed as a percentage of the total points available for the test.
- h) All Level tests are scored to three (3) decimal places. All percentage calculations must be rounded up or down to three (3) decimals after the decimal point as per the following example.

0.0011-0.0014 is rounded down. 0.0015-0.0019 is rounded up.

Therefore, a score of 78.1214 is rounded down to 3 decimal places to become 78.121% because the 4 is less than 5.

A score of 78.1216 is rounded up to 3 decimal places to become a score of 78.122% because the 6 is greater than the midpoint of 5.

- i) ~~Effective March 2026 all clubs who use tablets for scoring will now be required to provide live scoring (public viewing) for all tests at all events. This will apply to Standard Shows, Championship Shows, State Shows and~~

National Shows. Clubs who do not have tablets and only use paper scoring will display all tests in an appropriate time frame after each class clearly displaying the score, percentages and placings. Club using paper scoring will provide results to WDA-AUS events coordinator and display on social media event results with percentages. Clubs are required to submit the results of their event to WDA-Aus within 14 days of the event, using the standard results template. It is encouraged that clubs post their event results including percentages on their social media.

8.2 Show Approval

Show or program approval is a privilege, not a right, granted or rejected at the discretion of WDA-AUS according to the continuous evaluation of the applicant. The evaluation includes but is not limited to, the competence of the Event Convenor (full meaning of the term), the quality of events, adherence to WDA-AUS Rules and Regulations, and the service to WDA-AUS members.

In order to conduct an approved competition show including Come & Try events, the Event Convenor must submit an application on the approved form, to the WDA-AUS Event Coordinator at events@westerndressage.com.au subject to the following conditions:

- ⇒ The relevant application applicable to the category of the show must be submitted to WDA-AUS within the required time frame. The application forms are available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website. Competition Show applications will not be accepted **LESS THAN 30 days prior to the show date** ~~or MORE THAN 90 days prior to the show date.~~

8.8 Show Results Reporting

All competition show results must be submitted within 14 days of the conclusion of the event to, the WDA-AUS Events Coordinator at events@westerndressage.com.au ~~and the AQHA at shows@aqha.com.au~~

- a) Only the approved results forms are to be used.
- b) These are to be typed, not handwritten.
- c) Both the WDA-AUS Results Form and the AQHA WDA-AUS Affiliates Results Form are available on the Event Organiser page on the WDA-AUS website.
- d) Examples of completed results forms are also on the Event Organisers page to assist Event Convenors. The examples must be followed. Cutting and pasting reports from the Livescore system is ineffective and is not permitted.
- e) Results submitted other than on the approved forms will not be accepted by WDA-AUS ~~or the AQHA.~~
- ~~f) Late submissions to the AQHA may incur a fee and is not in line with WDA-AUS rules and regulations. There is a risk that points will not be recorded if submitted late.~~

10.13 Presentation of the Horse

- a) Tendon boots, splint boots, leg wraps or bandages in plain colours (white, off-white, black, brown or beige) may **only** be used **in the warmup area**. Tendon boots, splint boots leg wraps or bandages are **not allowed in competition (dressage test)**. Bell boots/over-reach boots of any kind are not permitted. Hoof boots designed for riding may be used instead of horse shoes.

10.14 Attire

- a) Helmet or Western style hat must be worn.
- b) WDA-AUS strongly recommends the wearing of a properly fitted and fastened, current safety approved protective headgear at all times when in the saddle.
- c) Riders with Disabilities, 'Assisted' and Youth riders must wear a properly fitted and fastened, current safety approved protective headgear at all times when in the saddle.
- d) Helmet use may be deemed mandatory in any competition and/or warm up areas where the Event Convenor

- or facility owner requires the use of a helmet.
- e) Western style long-sleeved shirt with any type of collar and Western style trousers or a one-piece long sleeved Western equitation suit provided it includes a collar must be worn.
 - f) In the case of inclement weather, it is at the Judge's discretion to make concessions in acceptable clothing such as jackets or raincoats.
 - g) Boots must have a minimum of 12.7mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ ") well defined square cut heel.
 - h) Caps, ~~and~~ polo/short sleeved shirts ~~and jumpers~~ are not permitted ~~for competitions~~ while competing however are permitted when training and warming up, including open pen periods.
 - i) High English type boots or leggings are not permitted.
 - j) Safety vests may be worn in competition (test), warm up arena or any other area within the competition venue. Vests may be worn over the shirt or jacket.