



2024 USEF Dressage National Championship Qualifying Requirements **Young Horse and Developing Horse**

Approved by the USEF Board of Directors Executive Committee on October 16, 2023

The 2024 Dressage National Championships (“Championships”) Qualifying Requirements published herein are effective October 16, 2023 unless stated otherwise. The qualifying criteria published herein are subject to additions or revisions. This Championship qualifying criteria pertains to the following divisions:

- Markel/USEF Young Horse Dressage National Championships for Four, Five, Six, and Seven-Year-Old Horses
- Markel/USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Dressage National Championship
- Markel/USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Dressage National Championship

While every effort has been taken to avoid mistakes in this publication, the United States Equestrian Federation, Inc. (“USEF”) assumes no liability to anyone for errors or omissions. For questions concerning these Qualifying Requirements, please contact the USEF Dressage Department at festival@usef.org. These Dressage National Championships will be conducted under USEF Rules except where outlined herein.

a. I. Application and Membership and Registration Requirements for Qualifying and Championships.

Application:

1. In order to be considered for these Championships, an Application of Intent must be completed and submitted to USEF no later than June 13, 2024 at 11:59pm, ET. The Application of Intent is made available on the USEF website [here](#) after September 14, 2023 at 11:59pm, ET.
 - a. Applications of Intent received by the USEF on or before May 15, 2024 at 11:59pm, ET, will require an application fee of fifty dollars (\$50) per horse.
 - b. Applications received between May 16, 2024 and June 13, 2024 at 11:59pm, ET will require a fee of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) per horse.
 - c. An Application of Intent is considered complete once the confirmation email is received. If the applicant does not receive the confirmation email, it is the applicant’s responsibility to contact USEF (festival@usef.org) to determine if the application has been received.
 - d. Additional horses must be added to an existing Application(s) of Intent until June 13, 2024 at 11:59pm ET and will require a fee of fifty dollars (\$50) per horse.
 - e. Combinations without a complete Application of Intent by the closing date will be removed from their respective ranking list.
2. No Application of Intent will be accepted after June 13, 2024 at 11:59pm, ET and no refunds will be given after the closing date.
3. Developing Horse: Qualification goes with the athlete/horse combination. Athletes are permitted to compete at the Championships with only those horse(s) named on a submitted Application of Intent.
4. Young Horse: Qualification goes with the horse. See Section III – Qualification System.
5. Scores are permitted to be earned prior to the submission of the Application of Intent.

For Athlete:

1. For Young Horse Championships (Four, Five, Six, and Seven-Year-Old Horses):
 - a. Athletes must be an Active Member in good standing with USEF for scores to count towards their respective ranking list, and at the time of application.
 - b. Athletes must be an Active Competing Member in good standing of USEF at the time of invitation through the conclusion of the Championships.
 - c. Athletes are NOT required to have an FEI Rider Registration to earn scores or to compete in these Championships.

2. For Developing Horse Championships (Prix St. Georges and Grand Prix):
 - a. Athletes must be a U.S. Citizen and an Active Member in good standing with USEF to earn scores towards their respective ranking list and at the time of application.
 - b. If the athlete has an FEI Registration, they must have designated the USA as their Sport Nationality with the FEI to earn scores towards their respective ranking list and to compete in the Championships.
 - c. Athletes must be an Active Competing Member in good standing of USEF at the time of invitation through the conclusion of the Championships.
 - d. Athletes are NOT required to have an FEI Rider Registration to earn scores or to compete in these Championships.

For Horse:

1. Horses must be Annual or Life Recorded and in good standing with USEF for scores to count towards their respective ranking and at the time of application.
2. Horses must be Annual or Life Recorded and in good standing with USEF at the time of invitation, through the conclusion of the Championship.
3. Horse Identification (HID) Numbers DO NOT fulfill the above requirements.
4. Horses must have valid registration papers with a member of a national studbook, which is recognized by the World Breeding Federation for Sport Horses (WBFSH), or with a recognized national breed registry. Horse must have registration papers, but entry is NOT limited to WBFSH members (i.e., Jockey Club, AQHA papers are accepted). These Registration papers must be submitted to USEF by end of business (5:00pm ET), no later than July 22, 2024, in order to receive an invitation to the National Championships.
5. An FEI Horse Registration, FEI passport, or FEI Recognition Card is NOT required to earn scores or compete in these Championships.

For Horse Owner(s):

1. Young Horse Championships:
 - a. Owners must be an Active Competing Member in good standing with USEF for the scores to count towards the horse's respective ranking list and at the time of application.
 - b. Owners must be an Active Competing Member in good standing with USEF at the time of invitation, through the conclusion of the Championships.
 - c. U.S bred horses may be owned by non-U.S. citizens.
 - d. Foreign-bred horses must be owned or co-owned by a U.S. citizen(s). The addition of a co-owner who is a U.S. citizen must be on file with USEF no later than July 22, 2024.
 - e. Owners must be in possession of the horse's valid registration papers.
 - f. Ownership may change during the qualifying period and up to the close of entries for the Championship, as long as the new owner(s) meets all of the above criteria.
 - g. All the above owner requirements apply to all listed owners on file with USEF, including all owners of a partnership, farm, company, corporation, etc. if a horse is recorded as owned by that type of entity.
2. Developing Horse Championships:
 - a. Owners must be an Active Competing Member in good standing with USEF for the combinations' scores to count towards their respective ranking list and at the time of application.
 - b. Owners must be an Active Competing Member in good standing with USEF at the time of invitation through the conclusion of the Championships.
 - c. Owners must be in possession of the horse's valid registration papers.
 - d. Ownership may change during the qualifying period and up to the close of entries for the Championship, as long as the new owner(s) meets all of the above criteria.
 - e. All the above owner requirements apply to all listed owners on file with USEF, including all owners of a partnership, farm, company, corporation, etc. if a horse is recorded as owned by that type of entity.

USEF strongly encourages all athlete, horse, and owner membership requirements be completed by June 6, 2024, or rush fees may be required in order to submit the application of intent by 11:59pm, ET on June 13, 2024.

II. **Division and Age Requirements for Athlete and Horse.**

For all divisions listed below, athletes must be a minimum of 16 years old by December 31, 2024, to compete in these Championships. Athletes are not permitted to compete more than two (2) horses or ponies (when applicable) in each Championship division. The same combination is permitted to participate in one division at these Championships. A horse is permitted to be competed in one division at the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions. Mules will not be allowed to qualify for or compete in these Championships. Per DR119.10, the horse's age is counted from January 1 of the year of birth to January 1 of the current competition year. FEI Rules apply in CDI competition.

Exception, a horse or pony that is also competed in the Young Horse or Developing Horse divisions at these Championships, is permitted to be competed in the USEF Dressage Seat Medal Finals.

Young Horse:

1. Young Horses must fit into one of the following age categories for competition (refer to DR119.10):
 - a. Become four (4) years of age in 2024;
 - b. Become five (5) years of age in 2024;
 - c. Become six (6) years of age in 2024; or
 - d. Become seven (7) years of age in 2024.
2. Ponies are eligible to qualify for and compete in these Championships. The height of ponies must not exceed 148cm without shoes, and 149cm with shoes (DR119.1). Ponies must have a current and valid USEF Standard or Temporary Measurement Certificate for Dressage/Driving. All ponies may be subject to additional measurement at the Championships.

Developing Horse:

3. Prix St. Georges: Horses must fit into one of the following age categories for competition (refer to DR119.10):
 - a. Become seven (7) years of age in 2024;
 - b. Become eight (8) years of age in 2024; or
 - c. Become nine (9) years of age in 2024.
4. Grand Prix: Horses must fit into one of the following age categories for competition (refer to DR119.10):
 - a. Become eight (8) years of age in 2024;
 - b. Become nine (9) years of age in 2024; or
 - c. Become ten (10) years of age in 2024.

III. **Qualifying System.**

For the Young Horse division, qualification goes with the horse. The athlete is permitted to change during the qualifying period and for the Championships as long as the new athlete meets all the above criteria.

Once the entries close for these Championships, the athlete is not permitted to change from the athlete submitted on the entry for the Young Horse Championships. The deadline to submit an entry will be published in the official prize list and in the invitation to the Championships.

For the Developing Horse division, qualification goes with the athlete/horse combination. Athletes are permitted to compete at the Championships with only those horse(s) named on a submitted application of intent.

Qualifying Period:

The qualifying period shall begin January 1, 2024 and end July 22, 2024 unless otherwise noted by USEF no later than February 1, 2024.

Qualifying Competitions:

Competitions throughout the U.S. have been designated as national USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions (Qualifying Competitions) and a list of these Competitions is available on the USEF website

[here](#). The 2023 FEI Calendar can be found [here](#) and please note that the 2024 FEI Calendar will not be published on this link until approved by the FEI, no later than December 31, 2023. Scores must only be earned at the national USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions or CDIs.

For all divisions, please check regularly for updates to the FEI Calendar and the USEF/NAYC Qualifying Calendar as changes to competitions may be posted at any time.

Qualifying Tests and Minimum Overall Average:

All tests must be held as individual classes which are specifically designated as USEF qualifying ("Test of Choice" classes will not count). Qualifying Competitions held over the course of a weekend are considered one qualifying opportunity, even if they have separate license/recognition numbers. Only one score per respective Test may be earned over the course of weekend. See Section IV for Judging Panels.

1. Four-Year-Old
 - a. Horses must achieve a minimum overall average of 7.5 to receive an invitation to this Championship.
 - b. At least two (2) scores must be earned in the current edition of the USEF Four-Year-Old Dressage Test.
2. Five-Year-Old
 - a. Horses must achieve a minimum overall average of 7.5 to receive an invitation to this Championship.
 - b. At least two (2) scores must be earned in the current edition of the FEI Five-Year-Old Final Dressage Test.
 - c. At least two (2) scores must be earned in the current edition of the FEI Five-Year-Old Preliminary Test. The Preliminary Test scores will not be used in the calculation of a horse's final average and will automatically be noted on the final ranking list.
3. Six-Year-Old
 - a. Horses must achieve a minimum overall average of 7.5 to receive an invitation to this Championship.
 - b. At least two (2) scores must be earned in the current edition of the FEI Six-Year-Old Final Dressage Test.
 - c. At least two (2) scores must be earned in the current edition of the FEI Six-Year-Old Preliminary Test. The Preliminary Test scores will not be used in the calculation of a horse's final average and will automatically be noted on the final ranking list.
4. Seven-Year-Old
 - a. Horses must achieve a minimum overall average of 68% to receive an invitation to this Championship.
 - b. At least two (2) scores must be earned in the current edition of the FEI Seven-Year-Old Final Dressage Test.
 - c. At least two (2) scores must be earned in the current edition of the FEI Seven-Year-Old Preliminary Test. The Preliminary Test scores will not be used in the calculation of a horse's final average and will automatically be noted on the final ranking list.
 - d. The quality and technical markings must be scored on the FEI Seven-Year-Old Final Dressage Test to be included on the ranking list.
5. Developing Horse Prix St. Georges
 - a. Combinations must achieve a minimum overall average of 69% to receive an invitation to the Championship.
 - b. At least two (2) score must be earned in the current edition of the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test.
 - c. At least two (2) scores must be earned in the current edition of the FEI Prix St. Georges Test at a national qualifying competition or at a CDI within the qualifying period. The Prix St. Georges Test scores will not be used in the calculation of a horse's final average unless reported on USEF CDI/CPEDI Report Form (see point 7 below) and will automatically be noted on the final ranking list.

6. Developing Horse Grand Prix
 - a. Combinations must achieve a minimum overall average of 66% to receive an invitation to the Championship.
 - b. At least two (2) scores must be earned in the current edition of the USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Test.
 - c. At least two (2) scores must be earned in the current edition of the FEI Intermediate II Test at a national qualifying competition or at a CDI within the qualifying period. The Intermediate II Test scores will not be used in the calculation of a combination's final average unless reported on USEF CDI/CPEDI Report Form and will automatically be noted on the final ranking list.
7. **CDI Scores:** Combinations may also earn scores at any CDI in their respective age division held within the qualifying period. CDI scores are calculable at the option of the athlete and will only be computed into the combination's overall average upon receipt of a [USEF CDI/CPEDI Report Form](#) within the specified deadline stated on the form to the USEF Dressage Department. Scores submitted late will not be accepted. It is the sole responsibility of the athlete to ensure that all CDI scores for this Championship are submitted to USEF on time and are accurate.
 - a. Young Horse:
 - i. Four-Year-Old horses: The FEI Dressage Test for Four-Year-Old Horses cannot be used.
 - ii. Five-Year-Old: FEI 5-Year-Old Final Test.
 - iii. Six-Year-Old: FEI 6-Year-Old Final Test.
 - iv. Seven-Year-Old: FEI 7-Year-Old Final Test.
 - b. Developing Horse Prix St. Georges: Combinations are permitted to only use the FEI Prix St. Georges Test.
 - c. Developing Horse Grand Prix: Combinations are permitted to only use the scores from the FEI Intermediate II Test or FEI Grand Prix Test; however, only one score per CDI may be submitted on the USEF CDI/CPEDI Report Form to be counted towards the ranking list.
 - d. For Young and Developing Horses, a combination cannot earn a score from a National Qualifying Competition if the CDI/CPEDI Report Form is submitted from a CDI, at the same event.
8. **Competing Outside of the U.S.:** Horses that meet all age, registration, and ownership qualifications may qualify by competing at either [FEI competitions](#) or national level competitions in a foreign country. The applicable division tests must be used. However, all foreign national level competitions must be approved by the USEF Dressage Sport Committee or its designees prior to the start of the competition. All other requirements as outlined above including application, eligibility, qualification period, judges, scores, etc. will apply for this method of qualification. Copies of the entire score sheet(s) must be submitted to and received by the USEF Dressage Department (festival@usef.org) no later than the end of the qualifying period for consideration.

Score Calculation:

For calculation purposes, the combination's overall average will be determined by averaging the scores earned in their respective Test. For all divisions, scratches, eliminations, and withdrawals will not be penalized on the ranking list.

1. Ranking List
 - a. USEF will automatically track scores for combinations which are earned at National Qualifying Competitions. Submission of score sheets to USEF is not necessary for these Championships unless requested by USEF staff.
 - b. As stated above, CDI scores must be reported to the USEF by the deadline as indicated on the USEF CDI/CPEDI Report Form to be counted.
 - c. International Qualification procedures as stated above must also be adhered to for scores to be counted.
 - d. Percentages are carried out to the third decimal point with numbers of five (5) and above rounded up (63.4555% = 63.456%). USEF is not responsible for inaccurately reported scores. If any errors are detected, athletes are encouraged to contact the USEF Dressage Department at festival@usef.org immediately.

2. Drop Scores
 - a. If a combination completes three (3) or more of their respective test, including scores reported on the USEF CDI/CPEDI Report Form, the lowest score earned in the Test will be dropped. A maximum of one (1) score may be dropped. All remaining scores will be used to calculate a combination's overall average.
3. **Withdrawals:** Withdrawals must be submitted in writing festival@usef.org. Withdrawals received between June 14, 2024 and July 22, 2024 will be noted as WD on the final ranking list.

IV. Additional Rules and Requirements

One Athlete Rule:

1. For USEF Championships, within 24 hours prior and through the conclusion of the competition, any horse entered in a USEF Championship class shall not be ridden by anyone other than the athlete entered in that class on that horse under penalty of elimination from the USEF championships. Exception: grooms riding on a loose rein. For purposes of this rule, the competition starts when horse or pony and athlete arrive on the show grounds.
2. For CDI Events, FEI Dressage Rules apply.

Judging Panels for National Qualifying Competitions:

1. Qualifying tests must be judged by a panel of at least two (2) FEI and/or USEF "S" judges (or at least one (1) FEI Judge and one (1) USEF 'S' Judge).
2. For tests to be counted towards qualification, at least one (1) judge must differ per Qualifying Competition.
3. Four-, Five-, Six-, and Seven-Year-Old: It is required that all judges on the panel have completed and received credit from a USEF or FEI-recognized Young Horse Judge training session.

Conflict of Interest:

1. Judging Panels at CDI Events: Refer to FEI Dressage Regulations for Judge Requirements and Codex for Judges.
2. Judging Panels at USEF National Licensed Competitions: Refer to USEF Chapter 13, GR1304.
3. All competitors and officials are subject to the conflict-of-interest rules as outlined in the USEF General and Dressage Rules.

Dress and Saddlery:

1. Young Horse: Please refer to [DR120-121](#) for dress and saddlery rules for national Qualifying Competitions and for these Championships.
2. Developing Horse: A snaffle or double bridle is permitted for the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test, USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Test, FEI Intermediate II Test, and the FEI Prix St. Georges Test for national Qualifying Competitions and these Championships.
3. If competing in a CDI event, all [FEI Dressage](#) and [General Regulations](#) must be followed.

Non-Discrimination Policy:

USEF does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), sex, gender identify, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. Everyone involved in the development of selection procedures and selection process must abide by the Non-Discrimination Policy.

Clean Sport:

1. [Equine Anti-Doping](#): All horses/ponies shall be subject to drug and medication testing during qualifying and at the Championship and the horse must meet all Federation drug and medication rules. Blood and/or urine samples may be collected at any time during the competition. Samples collected from horses/ponies will be tested for the presence of all substances forbidden and/or controlled by USEF. Any horse/pony whose sample contains a prohibited substance or a restricted substance in a concentration greater than USEF limits shall be subject to sanctions in accordance with USEF Rules.
2. [Human Anti-Doping](#): Athletes must adhere to all WADA, FEI, USEF and USADA protocols, policies and procedures. This includes participation in out-of-competition testing as required by WADA, FEI, USEF, and/or USADA rules, if applicable.

Grievance Procedures:

Athletes wishing to file a grievance challenging a denial or threatened denial to participate in competition, please see the [Athlete's Guide to Filing a Grievance Regarding Opportunity to Participate](#) and Opportunity to Participate Complaint Form. For procedural guidance for filing a grievance, please contact Emily Pratt at opratt@usef.org.

Please contact the USOPC Athlete Ombudsman Office at (719) 866-5000, ombudsman@usathlete.org, or visit www.athleteombudsman.org for guidance as to the USOPC grievance process

General:

1. It is the responsibility of the owners and athletes of horses/ponies to ensure that they know and understand the [USEF Rules](#), [Qualifying Requirements](#), and the USEF Code of Conduct.
2. All athletes, horse owners, and trainers are required to follow the [USEF Safe Sport Policy](#) which includes the [USEF Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies](#).
3. USEF is not responsible for any late, lost, delayed, misdirected, or stolen correspondence either electronic, postal, commercially shipped, or voice activated. It is the athlete's responsibility to ensure that all applications, application fees, and qualifying competition scores have been received by published deadlines.

V. Championship Competition.

Invitations to the Championship:

- a. Invitations to these Championships are anticipated to be sent via email no later than Friday, July 26, 2024.
- b. All combinations that submitted an Application of Intent as outlined above (see "Application") and have qualified by the method outlined above (see "Qualifying System") will be ranked according to scores and be accepted up to the numbers of entries available, not to exceed 15 athlete/horse or pony combinations.
- c. In the case of a tie, the combinations shall remain tied but shall take up two places so that if tied for first place, the next ranked combination shall be ranked third.
- d. If there is a tie for 15th place, all tied combinations will be invited, thereby increasing the total number of entries accepted (e.g., 16 entries accepted).
- e. **Young Horse and Developing Horse:** Following the end of the qualifying period, combinations not qualified as listed in Section III – Qualifying System may be invited to participate in these Championships if there is not a maximum of 15 qualified combinations on the Final Ranking List for a respective age group, not to exceed 15 unless there is a tie, if the following criteria is obtained:
 - a. The combination obtained at least two (2) scores in the USEF Four-Year-Old Test, FEI Five-, Six, or Seven-Year-Old Final Tests, the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test, USEF Developing Grand Prix Test, FEI Intermediate II Test (CDI), FEI Prix St. Georges Test (CDI), or FEI Grand Prix Test (CDI) within the qualifying period.
 - b. The combination's final overall average is within 1% of the minimum overall average as required per their respective age group and is the next highest overall average on the Final Ranking List.

For clarification purposes to the above, the additional invitations are based upon the Final Ranking List at the end of the qualifying period and not on the final entry list for these Championships.

Competition information:

1. The 2024 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions will take place on August 19-25, 2024 at HITS Chicago at Lamplight Equestrian Center Wayne, IL.
2. USEF Championship Rules will be followed and the Championship Format for each division will be available on the USEF website by March 1, 2024.
3. Tests shall be ridden from memory and WHIPS ARE FORBIDDEN.
4. With the exception of the USEF Dressage Seat Medal Finals, all horses entered in these Championships will be examined for soundness. A horse inspection will be scheduled prior to the start of the Championship classes, at which time horses must be presented to an FEI Veterinarian and at least one (1) member of the judging panel for examination. Horses shall be evaluated from

the side and following consultation with the FEI Veterinarian, the decision of the judge(s) is final and not subject to further protest. If a horse does not pass the horse inspection, the athlete may request to re-present the horse to the judge(s) and FEI Veterinarian. The judge(s) must give an option for reinspection in consultation with Competition Management at any time up to one (1) hour prior to the start of the class. The FEI Veterinarian and the judge(s) from the original panel must be present. All individuals aged 25 and under must wear protective headgear during the horse inspection.

These Qualifying Requirements are based on the USEF and FEI rules and regulations as presently known and understood. Any change in the Qualifying Requirements caused by a change in USEF or FEI rules and regulations will be distributed to the affected athletes immediately. The Qualifying Requirements are based on the latest information available to USEF. However, the Qualifying Requirements are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and realistically may not have accounted for every possible contingency. Changes in Qualifying Requirements are subject to approval by USEF.