

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Standard	12/1/2025	1/31/2025	

Rule Change Intent

The intent is to make the use of nosebands optional to those who find their horses perform better without it. The noseband regardless of ergonomic design still will not fit certain horses face shapes correctly which directly impacts their ability to perform. Custom built nosebands are often not financially available to the majority of the equine public and then the lengthy process of having it approved by the governing bodies makes it completely unattainable. If we made the use of nosebands optional, it truly can only benefit the horse.

"Nosebands are not an essential component of a bridle, but are widely used across equestrian sport." A quote from the Journal of Veterinary Behavior, from the article, "Know your noseband: An exploration of factors that influence riders' choice of noseband" written by Hilary M Clayton & Jane M. Williams (direct link below)

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1558787821001386?via%3Dihub>

Western riding has been utilizing bridles without nosebands for centuries without it causing a safety concern.

Proponent Details	Contact Information
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Eileen Keller

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Linked Rules	Comments
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Andalusian/Lusitano

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 10/30/2024

Draft 1: The Committee feels that this change is not needed at this time, is not clearly written as a whole, and gives the potential for many safety issues.

Arabian

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 10/02/2024

Draft 1: The Committee does not feel that the use of nosebands should be optional. Also, the proposed rule change conflicts with requirement listed in the final sentence of point D.

Competition Management

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 12/03/2024

Draft 1: The committee feels agrees with the Dressage Committee.

Connemara

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 10/01/2024

Draft 1: The committee is indifferent on the use of nosebands being optional, but the verbiage if the rule change was to be approved, needs to be cleaned up in order for the optional use of nosebands not to conflict with the final sentence regarding double bridles required to use a cavesson.

Council - Natl Breed & Discipline

Dressage

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 11/13/2024

Draft 1: Currently still follow FEI rules where a noseband is required.

Friesian

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 10/02/2024

Morgan

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 10/16/2024

Natl Breed & Disciplines Council - Advisory

ParaEquestrian

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 11/12/2024

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 01/01/2025

**Draft 1: This is in direct conflict with the equipment rules of the FEI, which are followed for Dressage. In addition, there is a concern that allowing bridles without nosebands in USEF licensed competitions would increase the possibility that the bridle might come off the horse, a concern that resulted in the recent amendment of DR 121 to require throatlatches on almost all bridles.**

## DR121 Saddlery and Equipment

### 3. Bridle.

Permitted bridles and bits must be used in a conventional manner.

The headstall (except browband) and noseband must be made of leather or leather-like material except the buckles, wear tabs on cheek pieces and reins, and a small disk of sheepskin used at the intersection of the two leather straps of a crossed noseband. Nylon or other non-metallic material may be used to reinforce leather in the headstall but must not come in direct contact with the horse. Elastic inserts are permitted only in the crownpiece and cheekpieces. Bit snaps, buckles, or hooks/studs to attach cheekpieces to the bit are permitted.

[...]

d. Noseband. A noseband is **optional at Federation run dressage classes, from Introductory Level through Second Level, and required at Third Level through Grand Prix. If a noseband is used, it required** and may be a regular cavesson or noseband with an adjustable back piece or chin strap, a dropped noseband, a flash noseband (combination of a cavesson and an attached dropped noseband), or a Mexican (figure-8, crossed) noseband (Figure 121.8) except as prohibited in some competitions (see DR121.3.j). A double bridle must be used with a cavesson with or without an adjustable back piece or chin strap.