Rule	Tracking	Draft	Proposal Type	Effective Date	Proponent	Status
DR 118.2	049-25	1	Standard	12/1/2026	USDF	Approved (6/16/2026)

DR118.2 Tracking #049-25 Draft #1 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Draft Received	Board Action
Standard	12/1/2026	9/3/2025	Approved 6/16/2026

Rule Change Intent

To expand the Purpose of the Levels to address the welfare of the horse and emphasize harmony and ease of performance. The goal is to emphasize what is required at each level, so riders fully understand what is expected of them. In prioritizing the welfare of the horse, it is the rider's responsibility to choose an appropriate level of competition where the horse and rider are both competent.

Proponent Details

USDF

Contact Information

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Linked Rules

Comments

Andalusian/Lusitano

Draft 1: Recommends Disapproval 10/30/2025

Draft 1: The committee would like to see more appropriate verbiage used such as changing the words “sideways” to “lateral”.

Arabian

Connemara

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 10/14/2025

Council - Intl Discipline

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 05/26/2026

Council - Natl Breed & Discipline

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 05/26/2026

Dressage

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 12/04/2025

Friesian

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 10/29/2025

Morgan

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 10/30/2025

ParaEquestrian

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 11/18/2025

Draft 1: Language will need to correspond with the new tests for Para Dressage.

USDF

Draft 1: Recommends Approval 12/11/2025

Draft 1: No additional comment

Member Comments

Janet Hannon — Draft #1

i thought the original purpose wording was fine

Amanda Edwards — Draft #1

I think you are just looking for something to do. You are essentially restating what is already there. This type of this is what is giving people

more and more reasons to stop competing in recognized competitions. He rule changes are becoming more and more constant and tedious.

Tamara Logsdon — Draft #1

Agree

Jennifer Grant — Draft #1

This new verbiage is good

DR 118.2 Objectives, purpose, and standards of Federation levels of competition

Introductory Level. To introduce the rider and/or horse to the sport of dressage, confirming that they are beginning to ~~develop an understanding of correct dressage basics~~ ***understand the correct basics and concepts.*** The horse should be ridden freely forward in a ~~steady tempo and clear~~ correct ***rhythm and tempo,*** accepting contact with the bit. ~~An understanding of test accuracy and geometry should be demonstrated.~~ ***Movements should be accurate with correct geometry and show balance, bend, ease, and harmony.***

Training Level. ~~To confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics by showing suppleness both laterally and longitudinally, moving freely forward in a clear rhythm with a steady tempo, and readily accepting contact with the bit. Correct geometry and lines of travel should be shown.~~

The horse should be ridden freely forward in a correct rhythm and a steady tempo. There should be confident acceptance of the bit, and the horse should show correct suppleness, both laterally and longitudinally with bend on circles and in corners. Accuracy and correct geometry are required. The exercises should be performed with ease and harmony.

First Level. ~~To confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics, and in addition to the requirements of Training Level, has developed improved balance, lateral suppleness and throughness, as well as the thrust to perform lengthenings of stride. The horse should be on the bit. All trot work may be ridden sitting or rising, unless otherwise stated.~~

In addition to the Training Level requirements the horse should now be willingly on the bit with improved balance, bend and throughness. The horse is developing the ability to move sideways and with sufficient thrust to perform lengthenings at trot and canter. Accuracy and correct geometry are required. The exercises should be performed with ease and harmony.

Second Level. ~~To confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics and now begins to accept more weight on the hindquarters as the collected and medium gaits develop. A greater degree of straightness, suppleness, throughness, and balance are required to perform the movements with ease and self-carriage. The horse is reliably on the bit and show an uphill tendency.~~

In addition to the First Level requirements the horse should be more reliably and confidently on the bit. With improved balance and throughness, the horse begins to take weight on the hindquarters developing uphill balance for collected and medium gaits, and transitions. Equal lateral suppleness (bend) should be demonstrated in all lateral movements. The improved balance allows the horse to perform the required movements with elasticity, ease, harmony and self-carriage.

Third Level. ~~To confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics, while maintaining consistent uphill balance and self-carriage. Increased engagement facilitates clear differences in collected, medium, and extended gaits with well-defined, balanced transitions. Movements should be accomplished with harmony and ease due to the increased balance and collection. The horse must demonstrate a greater degree of throughness, suppleness, straightness and bending.~~

In addition to the Second Level requirements, the horse should be more consistently engaged and collected, with equal lateral suppleness (bend) and cadence in all lateral work. The medium gaits should be fully developed, and the extended gaits should show balance and ground cover without rushing. Well defined transitions between and within gaits should be balanced and harmonious. There should be confident acceptance of the flying change aids. Consistent uphill balance and self-carriage should be demonstrated while performing movements with ease and harmony.

Fourth Level. ~~To confirm that the horse demonstrates correct basics, and has developed sufficient throughness, suppleness, balance, and impulsion to perform with ease the exercises at this medium level of difficulty. The horse has established consistent self-carriage and lightness through improved~~

~~connection, engagement, and collection. The movements and transitions are performed with greater straightness, impulsion, and cadence.~~

In addition to the Third Level requirements, the horse now has improved balance, equal lateral suppleness (bend), throughness and elasticity. The horse should maintain a consistent uphill balance and self-carriage with ease. Increased engagement facilitates clear differences between the collected, medium and extended gaits. Cadence is clearly shown in all trot and canter work. Transitions should be well defined, balanced and harmonious. The horse demonstrates confidence, throughness, and engagement so that all movements are performed with straightness, impulsion, harmony, and ease.