U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions
August 23-29, 2027
HITS Lamplight Equestrian Center; Wayne, IL.

2027 USEF Dressage National Championships Qualifying Requirements

Young Rider, Junior, Pony Rider, and Children

Approved by the USEF Board of Directors Executive Committee on November 17, 2026.

The 2027 USEF Young Rider, Junior, Pony Rider, and Children Dressage Championships (Championships) Qualifying Requirements are effective on November 17, 2026 and subject to change. The Qualifying Requirements published herein are subject to additions or revisions and pertain to the following divisions:

- USEF Children Dressage National Championship
- USEF Pony Rider Dressage National Championship
- USEF Junior Dressage National Championship
- USEF Young Rider Dressage National Championship

The United States Equestrian Federation, Inc. ("USEF") assumes no liability for errors or omissions in these Qualifying Requirements. It is the athlete's responsibility to ensure that all applications, application fees, and scores have been received by USEF by the published deadlines.

For questions concerning these Qualifying Requirements, please contact the USEF Dressage Department at festival@usef.org. Unless otherwise provided herein, the USEF Rulebook will apply to the Championship and these Qualifying Requirements.

I. Deadlines and Membership Requirements for Application.

For these Championships, qualification is athlete/horse combination based. Therefore, any change to the athlete during the Qualifying Period will result in a new combination for qualifying purposes.

Athletes are permitted to compete at these Championships with only those horses named on the athlete's application (i.e., athlete/horse combination or combination).

Scores are permitted to be earned prior to the submission of the application.

Application Deadlines:

1. Athletes wishing to earn an invitation to these Championships must successfully complete an online application. The online application will be available beginning on December 1, 2026.

2. Applications completed between December 1, 2026 and May 13, 2027, at 11:59pm ET will be assessed a seventy-five dollar ($75.00) fee per horse.

3. Applications completed between May 14, 2027, and June 28, 2027, at 11:59pm ET will be assessed a one hundred fifty-dollar ($150.00) fee per horse/pony.

4. Additional horses/ponies are permitted to be added to an existing application with a seventy-five dollar ($75) fee per horse/pony by June 28, 2027.

5. No application will be accepted after June 28, 2027 at 11:59pm, ET and no refunds will be given after the closing date.

6. An application is considered complete once the confirmation email is received. It is the athlete's responsibility to ensure that the rider and horse information listed in the confirmation email is correct. If the athlete does not receive the confirmation email, it is the athlete's responsibility to contact USEF (festival@usef.org) to determine if the application has been received.

7. Following the close of the applications on June 28, 2027 at 11:59pm, ET, only combinations which have completed an application for the Championships will display on the ranking lists.

8. By signing the application, the athlete, parent, and owner(s) certify that they have received, read, and understand the USEF Rules, USEF Code of Conduct; USEF Release, Assumption of Risk, Waiver and Indemnification; Qualifying Requirements, U.S. Center for SafeSport Code and the USEF Safe Sport Policy including the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies; the Non-Discrimination Policy; and the USEF Whistleblower & Anti-Retaliation Policy and that they understand these documents, and that they agree to be bound by them.

Membership Requirements for Application:

Athlete: Athletes must be a U.S. Citizen and a Competing member in good standing with USEF at the time of application and through the conclusion of the Championships, and for the combination to earn a scores on their respective ranking list.

> **Children:** Athletes are eligible as Children from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of twelve (12) until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of fourteen (14).
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> **Pony Rider:** Athletes are eligible to compete as Pony Riders from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of twelve (12) until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of sixteen (16).
>
> **Junior:** Athletes are eligible to compete as Juniors from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of fourteen (14) until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of eighteen (18).
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> **Young Rider:** Athletes are eligible to compete as Young Riders from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of sixteen (16) until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of twenty-one (21).

Horse/Pony: The horse/pony must be recorded with USEF pursuant to USEF GR1102, and in good standing at the time of application and through the conclusion of the Championships, and for the combination to earn a score on their respective ranking list. Horse Identification (HID) Numbers DO NOT fulfill the above requirements.

Mules are not permitted to qualify for or compete in these Championships.

Horses must fit into one of the following age categories for competition. 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:

> **Children:** Both horses and ponies are eligible to compete in this Championship and must be a minimum of six (6) years old.
>
> **Pony Rider:** Only ponies are eligible to compete in this Championship and must be a minimum of six (6) years old.
>
> **Junior:** Only horses are eligible to compete in this Championship and must be a minimum of six (6) years old.
>
> **Young Rider:** Only horses are eligible to compete in this Championship and must be a minimum of seven (7) years old.

Horse Owner(s): Owners must be a Competing member in good standing with USEF at the time of application and through the conclusion of the Championships, and for the combination to earn scores towards their respective ranking list.

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 the above criteria.

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 3, 2027, or rush fees may be required to submit the application by 11:59pm, ET on June 28, 2027.

II. <u>Additional Eligibility Requirements for Qualifying Competitions and Championships</u>.

FEI Registration: Athletes are not required to have an FEI Rider Registration to earn scores on the ranking lists or to compete in these Championships. If an athlete has an FEI Registration (inactive or current), they must have designated the USA as their sport nationality with the FEI to earn scores on their respective ranking list and to compete in these Championships.

An FEI Horse Registration, FEI Passport, or FEI Recognition is not required to earn scores on the ranking list or to compete in this Championship.

For CDI Events, FEI Registration and Passport Rules apply.

Pony Measurement (DR119.1 and DR135): For Children and Pony Rider, the height of ponies must not exceed 148cm without shoes, and 149cm with shoes. Ponies must have a current and valid Federation Standard or Temporary Measurement card. A current, valid Federation Hunter/Jumper measurement card may also be acceptable as long as it is otherwise valid according to Dressage measurement requirements. All ponies may be subject to additional measurement at the Championships.

Once an athlete has taken part in a National or FEI Dressage Championship (i.e., NAYC) at a higher level, the following restrictions apply to competing in a Dressage National Championship at a lower-level beginning January 1 of the following year:

- Once an athlete has taken part in a National or FEI Dressage Championship for Juniors, they are no longer eligible to compete at a Dressage National Championship as a Children or Pony Rider.

- Once an athlete has taken part in a National or FEI Dressage Championship for Young Riders, they are no longer eligible to compete at a Dressage National Championship as a Pony Rider or Junior.

- Once an athlete has taken part in a National or FEI Dressage Championship for U25/Brentina Cup, they are no longer eligible to compete at a Dressage National Championship as a Pony Rider or Junior.

- If a combination places in the top three (3) in a National or FEI Championship for U25/Brentina Cup, the same combination is no longer eligible to compete in a Young Rider National Championship Rider.

If the above restrictions do not apply to an athlete, the following rules apply to qualifying and Championship participation for athletes meeting the eligible age requirement:

Children

- An athlete is permitted to compete in the Children, Pony Rider, and Junior divisions; however, may not compete in these divisions at the same Qualifying Competition(s) with the same mount.
- An athlete is permitted to compete in the Children and Pony Rider National Championships within the same year; however, not permitted to compete in these divisions at the National Championships with the same mount.
- An athlete is not permitted to compete at the National Championships for the Children and Junior divisions in the same year.

Pony Rider

- An athlete is permitted to compete in the Pony Rider, Children, Junior, Young Rider, and Brentina Cup divisions; however, not permitted to compete in these divisions at the same Qualifying Competition(s) with the same mount.

- An athlete is permitted to compete in the Pony Rider, Children, Junior, Young Rider, and Brentina Cup National Championships within the same year; however, not permitted to compete in these divisions at the National Championships with the same mount.

Junior

- An athlete is permitted to compete in the Children, Pony Rider, Young Rider, or Brentina Cup divisions, however, not permitted to compete in these divisions at the same Qualifying Competition(s) with the same mount.
- An athlete is permitted to compete in the Pony Rider and Junior National Championships within the same year; however, an athlete is not permitted to compete in these divisions at the National Championships with the same mount.
- An athlete is permitted to compete in the Junior, Young Rider and Brentina Cup National Championships within the same year; however, an athlete is not permitted to compete in these divisions at the National Championships with the same mount.
- An athlete is not permitted to compete in the National Championships in the Children and Junior divisions in the same year.

Young Rider

- An athlete is permitted to compete in the Pony Rider, Junior, Young Rider, and Brentina Cup divisions; however, an athlete is not permitted to compete in these divisions at the same Qualifying Competition(s) with the same mount.
- An athlete is permitted to compete in the Pony Rider, Junior, and Young Rider National Championships within the same year; however, an athlete is not permitted to compete in these divisions at the National Championships with the same mount.

III. Qualifying Competition Specifics.

Qualifying Period: The Qualifying Period shall begin July 28, 2026, and is scheduled to end June 28, 2027 unless otherwise noted by USEF no later than February 4, 2027 ("the Qualifying Period").

Qualifying Competitions: Qualifying Competitions include national USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions, as well as U.S. and foreign CDI-Ch, CDI-P, CDI-J, or CDI-Y events. However, a combination cannot earn a score in a national Qualifying Competition if their respective CDI division is also offered at the same event. Qualifying Competitions held over the course of a weekend are considered one qualifying opportunity, even if they have separate license/recognition numbers.

The list of USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions is available on the USEF website here. The 2026 FEI Calendar can be found here and please note that the 2027 FEI Calendar will not be published on this link until approved by the FEI, no later than December 31, 2026.

Scores earned from the 2026 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions cannot be used towards qualifying for the 2027 U.S. Dressage Festival Champions.

Scores earned from the 2026 FEI NAYC can be used towards qualifying for the 2027 U.S. Dressage Festival of Championships if held during the Qualifying Period (See below for CDI Scores).

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.

Judging Panels for National Qualifying Competitions: Qualifying tests must be officiated by a panel of at least two (2) USEF 'S' and/or FEI judges. For CDI Events, FEI Dressage Rules apply. See Section IV for Conflicts of Interest.

One Athlete Rule: Please refer to DR128 for national USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions. For CDI Events, FEI Dressage Rules apply.

Dress and Saddlery: Please refer to DR120-121 for dress and saddlery rules for national USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions. The use of a whip is permitted at national Qualifying Competitions. If competing in a CDI event, all FEI Dressage and General Regulations must be followed.

IV. Qualifying Tests and Minimum Overall Average Specifics.

All tests listed below and completed at a national Qualifying Competition must be in classes specifically designated as USEF or USEF/NAYC Qualifying in the prize list. Test of Choice (TOC) classes will not count. Hors de Concours (HC) entries are not permitted in USEF/NAYC Qualifying classes. Only one score per respective Test may be earned over the course of weekend. Combinations are not required to complete the Team Test and the Individual Test at the same Qualifying Competition.

Children: Combinations must achieve a minimum overall average of 62% on the final ranking list to receive an invitation to this Championship by earning at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the FEI Children Team Test and at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the FEI Children Individual Test. The Technical Test scoresheet and Quality Marking sheet will be averaged, and the average will serve as the final score on the ranking list.

Pony Rider: Combinations must achieve a minimum overall average of 62% on the final ranking list to receive an invitation to this Championship by earning at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the FEI Pony Rider Team Test and at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the FEI Pony Rider Individual Test.

Junior: Combinations must achieve a minimum overall average of 66% on the final ranking list to receive an invitation to this Championship by earning at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the FEI Junior Team Test and at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the FEI Junior Individual Test.

Young Rider: Combinations must achieve a minimum overall average of 66% on the final ranking list to receive an invitation to this Championship by earning at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the FEI Young Rider Team Test and at least two (2) scores in the current edition of the FEI Young Rider Individual Test.

Calculation of the Overall Average on the Ranking Lists: Submission of score sheets to USEF is not necessary for these Championships unless requested by the USEF Dressage Department. For these Championships, scratches, eliminations, and withdrawals will not be penalized on the ranking list.

The ranking lists can be found here and will be updated as results are processed from national Qualifying Competitions and CDI events. It can take up to a minimum of 10 business days from the completion of a competition for results to reflect on the ranking lists. The ranking lists can be found here starting on June 9, 2027.

USEF is not responsible for inaccurately reported scores. If errors are detected, athletes are encouraged to contact the USEF Dressage Department at festival@usef.org immediately.

For calculation purposes: USEF will automatically track scores for combinations which are earned at national Qualifying Competitions, including those earned at GAIG/USDF Regional Championships. See below for CDI Scores.

Percentages are carried out to the third decimal point with numbers of five (5) and above rounded up (63.4555% = 63.456%).

A combination's overall average will be calculated by averaging the scores earned in the Team Test with the scores earned in the Individual Test.

If a combination completes three (3) or more Team Tests, the lowest score earned in the Team Test will be dropped. If a combination completes three (3) or more Individual Tests, the lowest score earned in the Individual Test will be dropped. Only one (1) score will be dropped from the Team Test and only one (1) score will be dropped from the Individual Test. All remaining scores will be used to calculate each combination's overall average.

CDI Scores: CDI scores are calculable at the option of the athlete and will only be computed into the combination's overall average upon receipt of the 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. Changes to a submitted USEF CDI/CPEDI Report Form will not be accepted following the specified deadline stated on the form to the USEF Dressage Department.

It is the sole responsibility of the athlete to ensure that all CDI scores for these Championships are submitted to USEF on time and are accurate.

Combinations may also earn scores from the FEI North American Youth Championships if held during the Qualifying Period. For these scores to count, scores must be reported by athletes via the USEF CDI/CPEDI Report form by the deadlines as indicated on the form.

Withdrawals: Withdrawals must be submitted in writing to festival@usef.org. Withdrawals received after the close of the application will be noted as WD on the final ranking list.

V. Additional Rules and Requirements.

Conflict of Interest: Judging Panels at CDI Events: Refer to FEI Dressage Regulations for Judge Requirements and Codex for Judges.

Judging Panels at USEF National Licensed Competitions: Refer to USEF Chapter 13, GR1304.

Clean Sport: 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. When competing in a CDI event, FEI Drug Rules must be followed.

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 epratt@usef.org.

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.

VI. Final Ranking Lists and Invitations to the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions.

Final Ranking List: After the conclusion of the Qualifying Period (June 28, 2027) and for these Championships, combinations will be ranked according to their overall average and be accepted up to the number of invitations available, not to exceed 12 combinations.

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.

The Final Ranking List will be posted here no later than Friday, July 2, 2027.

Invitations are anticipated to be sent via email no later than Friday, July 2, 2027. Combinations on the Final Ranking List will be invited until the close of the entry deadline published in the official prize list and in the invitation to these Championships. Once entries close for the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions, additional combinations shall not be invited to participate.

For these Championships,

- The same combination is permitted to participate in one (1) division at the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions.
- A horse/pony is permitted to be competed in one (1) division at the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions.

Exception, a horse/pony that is also competed in the Children, Pony Rider, Junior or Young Rider divisions is permitted to be competed in the USEF Dressage Seat Medal Finals pending confirmation of the final timetable.

- **Pony Rider:** Athletes are permitted to compete with a maximum of two (2) ponies in this Championship.
- **Children, Junior, and Young Rider:** Athletes are permitted to compete with a maximum of one (1) horse/pony in these Championships. If an athlete qualifies more than one (1) horse/pony in the top 12 ranked combinations, the second horse/pony may serve as the athlete's direct reserve if the higher ranked horse/pony is unable to compete in their respective Championship. If an athlete is invited to compete with a second horse/pony that is ranked as an alternate on the Final Ranking List, the second horse/pony may serve as the athlete's direct reserve if the higher ranked horse/pony is unable to compete in their respective Championship. Substitutions must be made up to two (2) hours before the horse inspection (jog) upon notification to USEF Staff and the Show Office.
    - If the invitation list is fully exhausted during the invitation period and prior to the close of entries, athletes with a second horse/pony serving their direct reserve may be permitted to compete with both horses/ponies in their respective championship and be accepted up to the number of invitations available, not to exceed 12 combinations. Horses/ponies serving as a direct reserve will be invited in ranked order by combination and be accepted up to the number of invitations available, not to exceed 12 combinations. After entries close for the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions, no additional combinations or horses/ponies will be invited to participate.

Combinations not qualified as listed above may be invited to participate in their respective Championship if there is not a maximum of 12 qualified combinations on the final ranking list, not to exceed 12 unless there is a tie, if the following criteria is obtained:

- The combination obtained at least two (2) scores in their respective Team and Individual Tests within the Qualifying Period at Qualifying Competitions.
- The combination's final overall average is within 1% of the minimum overall average as required per their respective Championship and is the next highest overall average on their respective Final Ranking List.
- For clarification purposes to the above, the additional invitations are based upon the Final Ranking List posted no later than Friday, July 2, 2027, and not on the final entry list for these Championships.

VII. <u>Championship Information</u>:

USEF Championship Rules will be followed and the Championship Format for each division will be available on the USEF website by March 4, 2027.

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.