

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Standard	12/1/2026	USDF
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.

Proposed Change

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.

DR101.1 Tracking #136-25 Draft #2 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Standard	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

Add statement to the Dressage rules on the principles of dressage that support the ethical treatment of horses.

Proposed Change

DR101 Object and General Principles of Dressage. Add new:

1. The object of dressage is the development of the horse into a happy athlete through harmonious education. As a result, it makes the horse calm, supple, loose and flexible, but also confident, attentive and keen, thus achieving perfect understanding with the rider.

2. Upholding a high standard of welfare, care and ethical treatment of all horses, ensuring their physical and mental well-being.

3. These qualities are demonstrated by:

- a. The freedom and regularity of the gaits;
 - b. The harmony, lightness, and ease of the movements;
 - c. The lightness of the forehand and the engagement of the hindquarters, originating from a lively impulsion;
 - d. The acceptance of the bit, with submissiveness/throughness (Durchlässigkeit) without any tension or resistance.
4. The horse thus gives the impression of doing, of its own accord, what is required. Confident and attentive, submitting generously to the control of the rider, remaining absolutely straight in any movement on a straight line and bending accordingly when moving on curved lines.
5. The walk is regular, free, and unconstrained. The trot is free, supple, regular, and active. The canter is united, light, and balanced. The hindquarters are never inactive or sluggish. The horse responds to the slightest indication of the rider and thereby gives life and spirit to all the rest of its body.
6. By virtue of a lively impulsion and the suppleness of the joints, free from the paralyzing effects of resistance, the horse obeys willingly and without hesitation and responds to the various aids calmly and with precision, displaying a natural and harmonious balance both physically and mentally.
7. In all the work, even at the halt, the horse must be “on the bit.” A horse is said to be “on the bit” when the neck is

more or less raised and arched according to the stage of training and the extension or collection of the gait, accepting the bridle with a light and consistent soft submissive contact. The head should remain in a steady position, as a rule slightly in front of the vertical, with a supple poll as the highest point of the neck, and no resistance should be offered to the rider.

8. Cadence is shown in trot and canter and is the result of the proper harmony that a horse shows when it moves with well-marked regularity, impulsion, and balance. Cadence must be maintained in all the different trot or canter exercises and in all the variations of these gaits.

9. The regularity of the gaits is fundamental to dressage.

DR119.1 Tracking #137-25 Draft #1 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Standard	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

Reorganize, clarify and add important content to DR119. Also, correct conflict between wording of DR119.2 and DR129. DR129 requires qualification to ride a freestyle to have occurred at a previous competition.

Proposed Change

DR119 Participation in Dressage Competitions. Change to read:

1. **Eligibility.**

a. Dressage classes are open to riders on horses, mules and/or ponies of any **breed or** origin. **However,** Dressage Competitions and classes may be limited to ponies of any breed or origin. ~~However,~~ Dressage Competitions and open dressage divisions of other Federation licensed competitions may not offer breed-restricted tests or classes. **See DR Subchapter 2 (DR204.2e) for information on breed-restricted DSHB classes.**

b. Participation of mules and ponies may be limited in the qQualifying criteria for the U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions, NAYC or selection trials and classes designated as qualifying classes for international competition, ~~may limit participation of mules and ponies~~ (except championships for FEI Pony Riders).

c. In the Dressage Division, a horse is an animal over 148 cm without shoes, and 149 cm with shoes. A pony is an animal that does not exceed 148 cm without shoes, and 149 cm with shoes. Unless otherwise noted, the term “horse” in these rules denotes either a horse or pony (see DR135).

d. Stallions are permitted in all classes, **with the exception of** Dressage Seat Equitation classes **limited to riders ages 18 and under.** (see DR133.1.I). Mares may not compete after their eighth month of pregnancy or within three months after foaling.

e. No horse may be ridden more than once in any Dressage class (including separate divisions or sections of the same class).

f. Horses showing evidence of broken wind or complete loss of sight in either or both eyes are permitted to compete. Horses with complete loss of sight in both eyes may only participate in classes in which they are shown individually.

g. **Horse's age.** The horse's age is to be counted from January 1 of the year of birth to January 1 of the current competition year. **However,** horses in any under saddle class must be at least thirty-six months of age (from foaling date) at the time of competition. Horses competing in the following tests and levels must meet the following minimum age requirements per FEI rules:

- i. FEI Children/Pony/Junior and Fourth level tests: minimum six (6) years;
- ii. Young Riders/Prix St. Georges/Intermediate I: minimum seven (7) years;
- iii. Tests above Intermediate I: minimum eight (8) years.
- iv. Horses must be a minimum of six (6) years of age to compete in an FEI Para Dressage Class.

2. **Competition Restrictions.**

a. Horses may compete in no more than one Licensed Competition on the same day and are prohibited from competing

in any non-licensed competition(s) held on the same day(s) as they compete in a **the** Licensed Dressage Competition **in which they are competing.**

b. Horses competing in **Federation licensed Regular or Local competitions (including Breed restricted) that are holding** Open dressage divisions or classes ~~which must be offered prior to any other classes, at a Regular or Local Competition~~ are not permitted to participate or compete in other divisions or classes on the same day(s). **and The Open dressage division or classes must be offered prior to any other classes. All Open dressage competitors** are subject to all DR Chapter rules from the time of their arrival.

c. Horses are limited to a maximum of three Dressage rides per day at Fourth Level and below or two Dressage rides per day above Fourth Level. Horses competing at both Fourth Level and Prix St. Georges, (or their equivalents), are limited to two Dressage rides per day. Horses competing in FEI Para Dressage tests are limited to a maximum of two Dressage rides per day including non-Para Dressage FEI, USEF, or USDF tests.

d. Dressage Seat Equitation, Quadrille, Pas de Deux and Materiale classes are excluded from the maximum limit of rides per day and horses in these classes may compete at any level for which they are otherwise eligible during the same competition.

e. Horses may enter no more than two consecutive levels, Freestyle levels included, at any one competition (refer to the following chart). **The FEI Intermediate B (Medium Tour) Freestyles are is open only to permitted only for horses that have competed** competing at Intermediate A, Intermediate B, or Intermediate II levels. **or higher at a previous competition.**

f. FEI Para Dressage tests may be ridden at non-consecutive levels to USDF, USEF, and other FEI tests. **The Consecutive Levels chart does not apply to FEI Para Dressage tests.**

g. Consecutive Levels and Equivalencies.

Intro									
Tr.	Tr.								
	1st	1st							
		2nd	2nd						
			3rd	3rd					
				4th	4th				
					PSG & Devel PSG	PSG & Devel PSG			
						Int I	Int I		
							Int A&B	Int A&B	
								Int II & Devel GP	Int II & Devel GP
									GP

- All FEI Pony Rider and FEI Childrens Tests are equivalent to Second Level.
- All FEI Junior Rider Tests are equivalent to Third Level.
- All FEI Young Rider Tests are equivalent to PSG.
- The USEF Brentina Cup (Young Adult) Test and FEI Grand Prix ~~U25 16-25~~ Test are equivalent to Intermediate II and the Developing Grand Prix.
- The USEF Four-Year-Old Test is equivalent to First Level.
- The FEI Four-Year-Old Test is equivalent to First Level.
- The FEI Five-Year-Old Tests are equivalent to Second Level
- The FEI Six-Year-Old Tests are equivalent to Third Level.
- The FEI Seven-Year-Old Tests are equivalent to Fourth Level.
- ~~The equivalency chart does not apply to FEI Para Dressage tests.~~
- Cross entry in Eventing tests and other Dressage tests is permitted as listed below:
 - Eventing **Starter**, Beginner Novice and Novice tests are equivalent to Training Level.
 - Eventing Training Level, Modified Level, and Preliminary Level tests are equivalent to First Level.
 - Eventing Intermediate Level tests are equivalent to Second Level.
 - Eventing Advanced Level tests are equivalent to Third Level.
- Except for Young Horse tests, all dressage tests listed above shall be considered equivalent to the highest test of the level (e.g. the FEI Pony Rider Team Test is considered equivalent to Second Level Test 3).

3. Rider Age Divisions and Eligibility.

a. Junior/Young Riders: For purposes of competition in the Dressage Division, individuals are eligible as Junior/Young Riders until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 21.

b. Juniors: For purposes of competition in the Dressage Division, *except for FEI Junior and FEI Young Rider tests and classes*, individuals are eligible as Juniors until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 18.

4. For purposes of qualification for and participation in competitions conducted under FEI rules, age groups are as follows:

~~a. Young Riders: Same as in DR119.3;~~

c. FEI Juniors:

i. Individuals are eligible as **FEI Juniors** from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 14 until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 18.

ii. FEI Junior Tests, *including freestyle*, are open only to FEI Juniors. **Ponies may not be ridden in FEI Junior tests or classes.**

d. Young Riders:

i. Individuals are eligible as Young Riders from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 16 until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 21.

ii. FEI Young Rider Tests, *including freestyle*, are open only to Young Riders. **Ponies may not be ridden in FEI Young Rider tests or classes.**

e. Individuals who are eligible as **FEI Juniors** and **FEI Young Riders** may not enter both FEI Junior and FEI Young Rider tests on the same horse in the same competition; however, they may enter both **FEI Junior** and **FEI Young Rider** tests in the same competition on different horses.

f. FEI Pony Riders: Individuals are eligible as Pony Riders from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 12 until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 16. FEI Pony **Rider Tests, including freestyle**, are open only to FEI Pony Riders.

g. FEI Children: Individuals are eligible to participate in competitions and championships for Children from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 12 until the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 14. FEI Tests for Children are open only to riders in this age group.

h. U25 Riders: ~~A person~~ **Individuals** may compete as a U25 Rider 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 five (25).

i. Seniors: Individuals are eligible as Seniors from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 18.

j. Adult and Adult Amateur: Competitors shall compete as Adults from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 22. Individuals possessing current amateur certification are only eligible as Adult Amateurs from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach age 22.

k. Open: For purposes of competition in the Dressage Division, riders of any age are eligible to compete in an "open" class or division of a class. Riders age 22 and older who do not have current Federation amateur status are only eligible to compete in "open" classes or divisions, or classes with specific restrictions, i.e. by horse's age, etc.

l. Other Divisions based on rider or horse age or experience. Competitions may offer other classes or divisions within classes at any national test level for riders or horses as long as the class or division is clearly defined in the Prize List. **Examples:**

i. Maiden, Novice or Limit Divisions (see DR137)

ii. Horses or riders of specific ages (e.g., Training Level Test of Choice for riders 55 or older)

iii. Riders who have never shown above a certain level (e.g., First Level Test 3 for riders who have never shown above Third Level)

iv. Horses of certain ages or experience levels (e.g., Training Level TOC for horses age 20 or older)

7. The FEI Young Rider Freestyle test is open only to Young Riders.

4. Young Horse Tests.

a. Horses competing in the **USEF Dressage Test for 4-year-old horses and the FEI Dressage Tests for 4-year-old horses and USEF Dressage Test for 4-year-old horses** must be four years old. **These tests are comparable to First Level.**

b. Horses competing in the FEI Dressage Tests for 5-year-old horses must be five years old ~~The FEI Dressage Tests for 5-year-old horses.~~ **These tests** are comparable to Second Level.

c. Horses competing in the FEI Dressage Tests for 6-year-old horses must be six years old ~~The FEI Dressage Tests for 6-year-old horses.~~ **These tests** are comparable to Third Level.

d. Horses competing in the FEI Dressage Tests for 7-year-old horses must be seven years old. **These tests** are comparable to Fourth Level.

e. The horse's age is counted from January 1 of the year of birth to January 1 of the current competition year.

5. *Hors de Concours.*

- a. *An Hors de Concours (H.C.) entry is "outside the competition". Horse/rider combinations may only participate in a class Hors de Concours with the permission of competition management may a horse/rider combination enter a class Hors de Concours. Said permission must be granted prior to the start of the class(es) involved.* Such entries must pay the full entry fee but scores for these entries will not be published or recorded, nor shall they count towards any prizes, placings or year-end awards. ~~Said permission must be granted prior to the start of the class(es) involved.~~
- b. Hors de Concours entries must follow all Federation General and Dressage Division rules that apply to other entries in the same class, except **GR1034** as described below.
- c. Having competed Hors de Concours at a competition, a horse is no longer eligible for further prizes, awards or placings at that competition except in situations of emergency substitutions of judges.
- d. Hors de Concours entries are not permitted in Federation/USDF Championship and NAYC qualifying and championship classes. *See also DR119.6 below.*

6. *Conflicts of Interest.*

- a. A Dressage competition manager or secretary may not serve as judge or compete at their own competition. However, a Dressage competition manager or secretary may ride Hors de Concours if they designate an assistant in charge while they are riding. This does not absolve the manager's or secretary's duties and responsibilities.
- b. A judge may not be an owner of any competing horse, except that horses may be shown Hors de Concours in classes where the owner is not officiating (see GR1304 and GR1039).

7. **Annex B.** Minimum entry requirements for athletes of USA FEI sport nationality entering CDIs can be found in Annex B, which is posted on the USEF website. Athletes of foreign FEI sport nationality (other than USA) should refer to the rules of their National Federation for minimum CDI entry requirements.

8. **Championships Qualifying Criteria.** Published qualifying criteria or selection procedures for U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions, NAYC, and USDF Championships take precedence over other published rules:

9. *Para Dressage Athletes and Riders with a Presidential Modification.*

- a. Riders *Athletes* with a diagnosed permanent disability who require the use of compensatory aids or adaptive equipment must hold a Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate indicating their International (FEI) or their National (Federation) classification status.
- 13-b. Athletes in FEI Para Dressage tests must have a current Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate which indicates their Classification status to be eligible to participate.
- c. A copy of an athlete's Dispensation/Classification Certificate listing all of their allowed compensating aids and adaptive equipment must be included with the rider's entry, with a copy then attached to each of their Dressage *test* sheets for the Judge's reference. ~~A copy must remain with the entry records for review by the Technical Delegate.~~ **A copy must also be given to the Technical Delegate and ring steward(s).**
- 14 d. Riders who do not submit a current Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate or a Federation Presidential Modification letter to the competition secretary cannot compete with any modifications, compensatory aids, or dispensations to the rules in DR Chapter 1. Federation affidavits cannot be used to compete with modifications or compensatory aids when either the Federation Dispensation/Classification Certificate or Presidential Modification is not available.
- e. *See GR154, GR1309 and GR1310 for information on Federation Presidential Modification requirements.*

DR122.3 Tracking #138-25 Draft #1 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Standard	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

Amend penalties for use of voice in national competitions to be the same as the current FEI rule penalties for use of voice. The USEF rule gives a deduction for each movement where use of voice was identified. The

current FEI rule gives a 2% deduction for use of voice at the end of a test no matter how many times voice was used in a test.

Proposed Change

DR122 Execution and Judging of Tests. Change to read:

3. Voice. The use of the voice or other intentional audio aids in any way whatsoever or clicking the tongue once or repeatedly is a serious fault involving the deduction of ***zero point five percentage points (0.5%) from the final score by each Judge, but these deductions are not cumulative and will not result in Elimination (including for Freestyle tests).*** ~~two marks from those that would otherwise have been awarded for the movement where this occurred. In movements with a coefficient, judges must deduct only one mark so that the final mark, after the coefficient is applied, is deducted by two versus four points.~~

DR133.1 Tracking #139-25 Draft #1 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Standard	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

It is not usually practical to require additional tests for tied riders as it adds too much time to complete the class and conduct the awards ceremony - it is not necessary to break ties for riders placed fourth and below.

Proposed Change

DR133 Dressage Seat Equitation. Change to read:

1. Dressage Seat Equitation classes. May be offered for Juniors, Young Riders, Adult Amateurs and/or Open riders according to the following specifications:

o. When the judge(s) ask for independent tests/patterns (as listed below in DR133.2.i(4)-2.i(5)), riders completing this additional work must be scored and placed higher than riders who did not execute the additional work.

2. Dressage Seat Medal Program

g.3. Two Federation Registered (R) or Senior (S) judges, one of whom must have a Federation Dressage Seat Equitation Designation, will officiate together in each Semi-Finals class, using the same scribes and the same class score sheet.

Three Federation Registered (R) or Senior (S) judges will officiate together, as above, in each Finals class. Judges should evaluate riders separately from different positions in the ring and then all judges must consult together prior to arriving at final scores. ***Riders who complete independent tests/patterns must receive higher final scores and placing than riders who do not ride or complete independent tests/patterns.***

g.5. Tied scores in a Dressage Seat Medal Semi-Final and Final class ***must be broken by all judges consulting together for Champion. Reserve Champion and third placed riders. Ties for remaining places may*** ~~will be broken by all judges consulting together or ties may remain unbroken~~ requiring riders to perform an additional independent test, which will be scored by all judges together. The higher score on the additional independent test will receive the higher placing.

DR203.7 Tracking #140-25 Draft #1 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Standard	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

The list of classes for which geldings of different ages are eligible is incomplete. This change provides clarification regarding class eligibility.

Proposed Change

DR203 Definitions. Change to read:

7. Gelding—A gelded male horse of any age.

a. Geldings age two and under are eligible to compete only in Sport Horse Prospect, Group and Individual Breed classes (IBC).

b. Three year old geldings are eligible to compete only in Sport Horse Prospect, Group, Materiale, Dressage Suitability and IBC classes.

*c. Geldings four years old and older are eligible to compete only in **Four-Year-Old Prospect classes, and** Group, Materiale, Dressage Suitability and **IBC** classes. ~~Four-year-old geldings are also eligible to compete in the Four-Year-Old Prospect classes.~~*

d. Geldings are not eligible to compete in Dressage Breeding Stock In Hand classes.

e. Other in-hand classes for mature geldings are not permitted.

DR208 Tracking #141-25 Draft #1 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Standard	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

Update standards for DSHB in-hand classes. Competitions with DSHB classes are too small to require presence of a veterinarian on the grounds. This rule has not been used in approximately twenty years.

Proposed Change

~~DR208 Competition Veterinarian. Delete and renumber.~~

~~The competition veterinarian must be available to the judge, if on the premises, and the handler must give permission to the judge and/or veterinarian before either touches the horse. If the veterinarian is not immediately available, or not called upon, the judge's decision as to the serviceable soundness of a horse must be final. For further regulations governing Competition Veterinarian, refer to General Rules, GR1204.5, .6 and .7.~~

DR209.1 Tracking #142-25 Draft #1 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Standard	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

This rule is very outdated and is no longer practiced at DSHB shows.

Proposed Change

DR209 Conduct of Classes. Change to read:

1. In-Hand Classes. Horses being shown individually on the triangle.

a. Following a posted order, entries in each class will approach the judging area one at a time, walk to the apex of the triangle, and await the judge's request to proceed on the triangle. The handler will lead the horse on the perimeter of the triangle at walk and trot, returning to the apex to stand the horse for conformation judging or to repeat any movement at the judge's request. Handlers are permitted to have one assistant if necessary. Repetition of all or any part of the movement on the triangle may be allowed at the judge's request only. At the completion of the judging, the handler will lead the horse away from the judging area. The next will enter the judging area promptly. The judge may elect to judge conformation either before and/or after judging the horse's movement on the triangle.

b. The horse is to be shown in an "open position," i.e. with all four legs of the horse visible to the judge when standing on either side of the horse.

c. ~~After all horses have been shown on the triangle, some or all may be recalled (depending on size, format and schedule of the competition) to be shown in groups at a walk and trot. If horses may be recalled, the prize list or program must state that this procedure will be used.~~

DR211.4 Tracking #143-25 Draft #1 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Standard	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

This rule is outdated and is no longer practiced at DSHB shows. Also, clarification is needed on how ties are broken when two or more judges officiate together and not independently.

Proposed Change

DR211 Judging Procedures. Change to read:

4. Tied scores shall be broken first by referring to the totals of the movement scores. If still tied, the tie may be broken at the judge's discretion, by the use of decimals, or the horses may ~~be examined again (movement only)~~ **remain tied**. If a class is judged by more than one judge, officiating together and not independently, the judges may **must** consult **on the final result** and arrive at one agreed upon placement.

DR121 Tracking #144-25 Draft #1 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Standard	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

The intent of this proposal is to allow only the use of a snaffle bridle at Third Level and below, removing the option to compete in a double bridle until Fourth Level. Under current rules, there is no age limit for horses competing at Third Level, while horses competing at Fourth Level must be a minimum of six years of age. This rule change would prevent the use of the double bridle in competition on horses below the age of six. The change aligns with global equine welfare initiatives and best practices in training and competition.

Proposed Change

DR121 Saddlery and Equipment. Change to read:

Figure 121.3: Permitted bridoon bits. Bridoon bits are used in combination with a curb bit to form a double bridle which

is permitted only at ~~Third~~ **Fourth** Level and above. See also Annex A posted on the Federation website for additional information on permitted and prohibited bits.

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Figure 121.4: Permitted curb bits. Curb bits are used in combination with a bridoon bit to form a double bridle which is permitted only at ~~Third~~ **Fourth** Level and above. See also Annex A posted on the Federation website for additional information on permitted and prohibited bits.

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- j. Bridles allowed in Federation (national) competitions:
1. For Tests at ~~Second~~ **Third** Level and below, FEI Tests for Children, and FEI Pony tests, a plain snaffle bridle is required in warm up and in competition.
 2. For ~~Third and~~ Fourth Level tests a snaffle bridle or double bridle ~~are~~ **is** permitted in the warm up and in competition.
 6. Para Dressage athletes. Riders competing only in FEI Para Dressage tests **or Fourth Level and above** may use either a snaffle bridle or double bridle. Riders competing in both FEI Para Dressage tests and USDF or USEF tests at the same competition at ~~second~~ **Third** level and below, must use a plain snaffle bridle in all tests and warmup for those tests. ~~When competing only at third level or above, a snaffle bridle or double bridle may be used in warm-up and in competition.~~

DR121 Saddlery and Equipment. Change to read:

Figure 121.11. Bridles Allowed in Competitions Under Federation Rules

Competition	Snaffle Bridle	Double Bridle
USEF training, first, and second and third levels	✓	✗
USEF third and fourth levels	✓	✓

DR122.5 Tracking #145-25 Draft #1 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Standard	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

Correct confusing and contradictory language within in DR122.5.

Proposed Change

DR122 Execution and Judging of Tests. Change to read.

- 5.e. For ~~FEI Level and~~ USDF Freestyle tests, two points will be deducted for each error, however they are not cumulative and will not result in elimination.
- f. When the competitor makes an “error of the test/execution” (trots rising instead of sitting; ~~at the salute does not take the reins in one hand,~~ etc.) they must be penalized as for an “error of the course”. In principle, a competitor is not allowed to repeat a movement of the test unless the President of the Jury decided on an error of course or error of test/execution (rings the bell). If, however, the rider has started the execution of a movement and attempts to do the same movement again, the judge(s) must consider the first movement shown only and, at the same time penalize for an error of course.
- g. If the Jury has not noted an error the competitor has the benefit of the doubt.
- h. The decision as to whether or not an error of course or error of test/execution has been made will be that of the judge at C. The other judges’ scores will be adapted accordingly upon approval of the judge at C.
- i. The penalty points are deducted on each judge’s sheet from the total points obtained by the competitor.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
FEI Rule Change	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

The FEI has recently determined that only smooth rowels, without projections, are permitted in dressage. This change is recommended for USEF Dressage rules in the interest of horse welfare.

Proposed Change

DR120 Dress. Change to read:

4.1 If spurs are worn, a separate spur must be worn on each boot. The shank must be either curved or straight pointing directly back from the center of the spur when on the rider's boot. If the shank is curved, the spurs must be worn only with the shank directed downwards. However, swan necked spurs are permitted. The inside arm of the spur must be smooth and one or both arms may have *smooth* rubber covers. If rowels are used, they must be blunt/smooth, *rounded* and free to rotate *with no rough or sharp edges (e.g. no daisy rowels or tines of any kind)*. Metal spurs with round hard plastic knobs (metal or plastic) on the shank are permitted ("Impuls" spur) and the knobs may rotate. "Dummy" spurs (without shank) are permitted. Armless spurs are permitted. *See also Annex A posted on Federation website for additional information on permitted and prohibited spurs.*

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Rule Clarification	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

Correct time to match rule change to DR122.5.i. - delayed effective date is 12.1.26

Proposed Change

DR122 Execution and Judging of Tests. Change to read:

7. 1. After the sound of the bell, the competitor should enter the arena at A as soon as possible. Exceeding 45 seconds before entering the arena after the bell has sounded will entail elimination. In the Freestyle, the rider has 45 seconds to signal to start the music *and must enter the ring within 30 seconds of music*; however, exceeding ~~75~~ *ninety (90)* seconds before entering the arena after the bell has sounded will entail elimination. Exception: No competitor can be required to ride prior to their scheduled time except as required in GR830.

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
Rule Clarification	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

Correct time to match rule change to DR122.5.i. - delayed effective date is 12.1.26 .

Proposed Change

DR129 Musical Freestyle Ride. Change to read:

6.e. ~~Under penalty of elimination at the discretion of the judge at “C”, a A~~ rider must enter the arena within 30 seconds of the music starting. The music must cease at the final salute. *See DR122.7.1.*

DR121.3 Tracking #261-25 Draft #1 Approved

Rule Change Type	Effective Date	Proponent
FEI Rule Change	12/1/2026	Dressage
Intent		

Aligns the USEF rules for crownpieces used in Dressage to be in compliance with the FEI rules and FEI Tack App.

Proposed Change

DR121 Saddlery and Equipment. Change to read:

3.a. Crownpiece. The crownpiece of the bridle must lie immediately behind the poll and may extend forward onto the poll, but it may not be fitted to lie on the vertebrae behind the skull (Figure 121.6). The crownpiece may be padded and it may have elastic inserts. ~~Any padding must be smooth and continuous across the poll while on the horse, and rectangular or in the same shape as the crownpiece. Padding may extend no more than 1.5 centimeters beyond the dimensions for the crownpiece as indicated in Figure 121.6.~~ The only material contacting the horse's head must be the leather, ~~or~~ leather-like material, ~~or elastic,~~ of the crownpiece or the additional padding material. Any piece of tack or equipment that impairs the ears to move freely is not permitted.