



MEMORANDUM

To: Potential Applicants for the 2026 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions

Date: May 28, 2025

From: Kristen Brett, Director, Dressage Special Events

Copy: Hallye Griffin
Laura Roberts

Re: Qualifying Dates and Competitions for the 2026 USEF Dressage National Championships for the Young Horse and Developing Horse Divisions

This preliminary information is being provided to assist you with your competition planning and may be subject to change. Please remember that this information is based upon the recommendations of the USEF Dressage Sport Committee and the final qualifying requirements are subject to approval by the USEF Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or an Ad Hoc Selection Group approved by the USEF Board of Directors.

Date and Location: The 2026 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions is scheduled to take place on August 24-30, 2026, at HITS Lamplight Equestrian Center in Wayne, IL.

Qualifying Period: The qualifying period for the 2025 USEF Dressage National Championships for the Young and Developing Horse divisions ("Championships") will begin on January 1, 2026, and end on July 27, 2026.

For the Young Horse divisions (4, 5, 6, and 7-Year-Olds), qualification goes with the horse. Therefore, the athlete may be changed during the qualifying period without impacting on the horse's qualification.

For the Developing Horse Divisions (Prix St. Georges and Grand Prix), qualification is athlete/horse combination based. Therefore, any change to the athlete during the qualifying period will result in a new combination for qualification purposes.

Qualifying Competitions: Qualifying Competitions include national USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions, as well as U.S. and foreign CDI-YH, CDI1*, or CDI2* events. 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 national USEF/NAYC Qualifying Competitions is available on the USEF website [here](#). The 2025 FEI Calendar can be found [here](#) and please note that the 2026 FEI Calendar will not be published on this link until approved by the FEI, no later than December 31, 2025.

For all divisions, scores earned from the 2025 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions cannot be used towards qualifying for the 2026 U.S. Dressage Festival of Champions.

Age Requirements for Athlete and Horse: For the Young Horse divisions, athletes of any age are eligible to compete in the qualifying tests below. However, athletes are eligible to compete in these Championships from the beginning of the calendar in which they reach the age of sixteen (16).



For the Developing Horse divisions, athletes of any age are eligible to compete in the qualifying tests below. However, athletes are eligible to from the beginning of the calendar year in which they reach the age of sixteen (16) for scores to count towards the ranking lists and to compete in these Championships.

Horses must fit into one of the following age categories to earn qualifying scores and to compete at the Young Horse Championships (refer to DR119.10):

- a. Become four (4) years of age in 2026.
- b. Become five (5) years of age in 2026.
- c. Become six (6) years of age in 2026.
- d. Become seven (7) years of age in 2026.

For the Developing Horse Prix St. Georges division, horses must be between the age of seven (7) years old and nine (9) years old in 2026 to earn scores and to compete at the Championships (refer to DR119.10).

For the Developing Horse Grand Prix division, horses must be between the age of eight (8) years old and ten (10) years old in 2026 to earn scores and to compete at the Championships (refer to DR119.10).

Qualifying Tests: Hors de Concours entries are not permitted in USEF/NAYC Qualifying classes. Qualifying tests at national Qualifying Competitions must be judged by a panel of at least two (2) FEI or USEF 'S' judges. For CDI Events, [FEI Dressage Rules](#) apply.

- a. **Four-Year-Old:** Combinations must obtain at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the USEF Dressage Test for Four-Year-Old Horses.
- b. **Five-Year-Old:** Combinations must obtain at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the FEI Five-Year-Old Preliminary Test and at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the FEI Five-Year-Old Final Test.
- c. **Six-Year-Old:** Combinations must obtain at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the FEI Six-Year-Old Preliminary Test and at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the FEI Six-Year-Old Final Test.
- d. **Seven-Year-Old:** Combinations must obtain at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the FEI Seven-Year-Old Preliminary Test and at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the FEI Seven-Year-Old Final Test.
- e. **For the Five-, Six-, and Seven-Year Olds,** combinations are not required to complete their respective Preliminary Test and their respective Final Test at the same Qualifying Competition.
- f. **Developing Horse Prix St. Georges:** Combinations must obtain at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the FEI Prix St. Georges Test and at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the USEF Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test. Combinations are not required to complete the FEI Prix St. Georges Test and the Developing Horse Prix St. Georges Test at the same Qualifying Competition.
- g. **Developing Horse Grand Prix:** Combinations must obtain at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the FEI Intermediate II Test and at least two (2) scores from the current edition of the USEF Developing Horse Grand Prix Test. Combinations are not required to complete the FEI Intermediate II Test and the Developing Horse Grand Prix Test at the same Qualifying Competition.

Questions: If you have any questions regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact the USEF Dressage Department at festival@usef.org.