

# CVDA & USEF DRESSAGE RULE HIGHLIGHTS

All CVDA Schooling Shows are run in accordance with USEF Dressage Rules, with the exceptions noted below. Here is a summary of the primary rules. For complete rules, see the USEF rulebook (usef.org).

## Objectives and General Principles

The objective of dressage is the harmonious development of the athleticism and ability of the horse. Dressage should not only make the horse calm, supple, loose and flexible, but also confident, attentive and keen thus achieving an ideal understanding with his rider.

## Participation in Dressage Competitions

- **Age of horse:** No horse may compete in an under-saddle class if it is under 3 years of age at the time of competition.
- **Stallions:** No stallions are allowed to compete at CVDA shows or Development Days.
- **Consecutive levels:** Horses may enter no more than two consecutive levels at one dressage competition with the same rider.
- **Braiding:** Braiding of the horse is completely optional at all CVDA shows.
- **Bridle numbers:** Exhibitors must display their numbers while competing. It is required that the number be displayed on the horse whenever the horse is out of the stall.

## Dress for the Rider

- **Helmets:** At any CVDA event, it is compulsory that all riders mounted at any time or anywhere on the competition/event showgrounds, competing at any level, wear properly fitted protective headgear.
- **Dress Code:** Recommended dress code through 4th Level is a short riding coat of conservative color with tie, choker, or stock tie, breeches or jodhpurs, boots or jodhpur boots. CVDA allows riders to wear half chaps at schooling shows.
- **Waiving of jackets:** In extreme heat/humidity, management can allow competitors to show without jackets and will notify riders. However, exhibitors must wear a regulation hat and solid white or very pale colored long or short sleeve shirt (no sleeveless) without neckwear.
- **Raingear:** Exhibitors are allowed to wear a hat cover and a transparent or conservative color raincoat in inclement weather.
- **Spurs:** Spurs must be metal and with the shank pointing directly back from the center. The arms of the spur must be smooth. If rowels are present, they must freely rotate. This applies whenever mounted on show grounds.
- **Whips:** One whip no longer than 120 cm/47.2 in with lash may be carried in all CVDA classes.

## Equipment for the Horse

- **Saddle:** An English style saddle with stirrups is required at all levels. A Western saddle is required in all Western Dressage classes.
- **Bits:** See the USEF rulebook for approved bits and approved bit material.
- **Other equipment:** No gadgets, ornaments, or leg protection of any kind is allowed in the show ring. Leg protection and some training devices are permitted in the warm up areas. Side reins are allowed only while lungeing and horses must be lunged in assigned warm-up area only. See USEF rulebook for complete rule.

## Execution and Test Judging

- **Ring Stewards:** Ring stewards are there to help keep the show on schedule and to check equipment. You are responsible for knowing your ride time and ring. Please check in with the ring steward for your ring as you enter the warm-up area.
- **Coaching:** For safety reasons, all coaches and trainers must stay on the perimeter of the warm-up area and are not allowed in the warm-up ring itself.
- **Ride times:** No rider is required to ride before their assigned time. If the show is running late, each competitor is responsible to know when they are to ride and remain in close proximity to the ring when their ride time nears.
- **Entering the ring:** Be prepared to enter the ring at your scheduled time or earlier and circle the outside of your assigned ring. Do not enter the arena until the previous competitor is out. Riders are allowed up to 45 seconds to enter the ring to start the test once the judge rings their bell, whistle or horn. Judges and scribes appreciate it if the rider tells them their number as they pass by the judge prior to entering.
- **Having a test reader:** All tests through 4th Level may be read. Western dressage tests may be read. Eventing tests and FEI tests may not be read. Exhibitors should instruct the reader to read each movement only once.
- **Saluting at the entry and finish halt:** When immobile, the unisex salute includes taking both reins in one hand and letting the other arm drop loosely and briefly while inclining the head.
- **Use of voice:** Use of voice in any way whatsoever, including clucking and trilling, is a fault and will result in deduction of 2 points at that movement each time it occurs. Additionally, do not speak to your reader until you are out of the ring.
- **Going off course:** If a rider goes off course, the judge will ring the bell/whistle/horn and designate to the rider where to resume. The reader may not give direction but may start reading again from the point where rider resumes.
- **Lameness:** The judge will eliminate a competitor for marked lameness. The judge's decision is final.
- **Leaving the ring after the test:** Leave the ring on a long rein at the walk. One or both hands on reins are allowed. At all CVDA Schooling Shows the "open gate" policy is in effect, i.e. the part of the ring at "A" will remain open at all times.

## Scale of Marks

Each movement is marked on a scale of 0 to 10. All half marks from 0.5-9.5 may also be used both for movements and collective marks.

- 10 Excellent
- 9 Very Good
- 8 Good
- 7 Fairly Good
- 6 Satisfactory
- 5 Marginal
- 4 Insufficient
- 3 Fairly Bad
- 2 Bad
- 1 Very Bad
- 0 Not Executed

**Errors:** For USDF Intro Level Tests, USEF Training-Fourth Level tests, Western Dressage tests and Eventing tests errors will be penalized by 2 points for the first error and 4 points for the second error. The third error will result in elimination. FEI tests will be penalized by 2 points for the first error. The second error will result in elimination.