



Handbook

Version 2024

BRITISH HOBBYHORSE ASSOCIATION

Contents

Code of Conduct	4
Dressage	5
Dressage arenas.....	5
Dressage gaits, movements & their definitions.....	6
Walk.....	6
Trot	6
Canter:.....	6
Movements	7
Canter pirouette:.....	7
Changes of direction	7
Circles/Voltes:	7
Counter canter:	8
Figures of eight:.....	8
Flying change:.....	8
Half Pass:	8
Halt:.....	8
Leg Yielding:	8
Passage.....	9
Piaffe	9
Piaffe pirouette	9
Rein back:	9
Serpentines:	9
Shoulder In:	9
Simple Change:	9
Turn on the forehand:	10
Turn on the haunches:	10
Walk pirouettes:.....	10
Zigzag Half Pass:	10
Competition Rules.....	11
Dressage Scoring.....	11
Riding the wrong test	11

Error of course	12
Elimination	12
Rider's attire	12
Horse's Tack	13

BRITISH HOBBYHORSE ASSOCIATION

Code of Conduct

Anyone taking part in an activity hosted by or affiliated with the British Hobbyhorse Association including, but not limited to riders, show organisers, judges, trainers, or any other volunteer, shall:

- a) Conduct themselves in a manner which does not offend the public.
- b) Behave in any way appropriate to other riders and officials.
- c) Use official channels for any form of complaint, instead of using social media.
- d) Respect the privacy of other riders and their personal data when using social media channels or any other form of publicly available documentation.

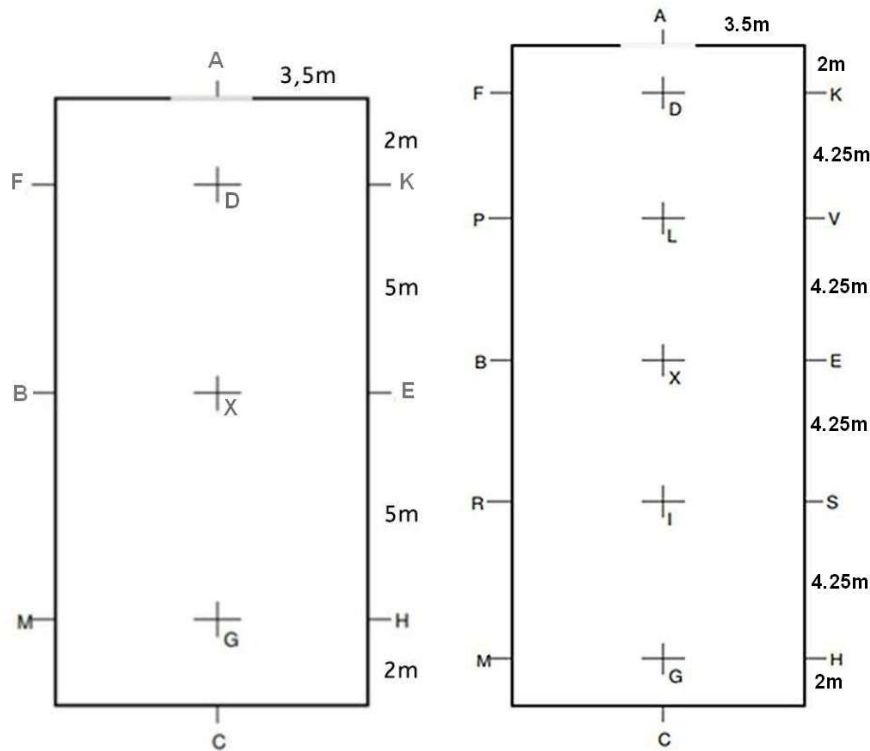
With any type of complaint, please contact:
contact@british-hobbyhorse-association.co.uk

BRITISH HOBBYHORSE ASSOCIATION

Dressage

Dressage arenas

There are two sizes for dressage arenas, the smaller one for lower-level dressage tests and the larger one for higher-level tests. Every dressage test will clearly indicate the type of arena required.



The judge sits at the letter C, and in a championship, two additional judges will sit in the middle of the long side at letters B and E. Letters on the longitudinal diameter are not marked because this would disturb the rider. The letters on the side of the arena are set up outside the dressage arena.

The surface needs to be safe and suitable for hobbyhorse riders. It's not recommended to use slippery surfaces that have for example gravel on top of it. Suggested platforms are sand, grass and sports flooring. Asphalt is not recommended to use in hobbyhorse sports. Outdoor surfaces must be even/flat.

Dressage gaits, movements & their definitions

Walk: The walk resembles human walk. At least one foot is touching the ground all the time (there is no flight between steps). The stride is the basis of the basic gaits and the most natural movement.

- a) **Medium walk:** A forward walk with moderate lift of the legs. Horse's head must be leveled or slightly above horizontal.
- b) **Collected walk:** Shorter and slower walk steps with a higher knee lift. The horse's head remains more vertical than horizontal.
- c) **Extended walk:** A brisk walk with longer, extended steps with the horse's head closer to being horizontal.
- d) **Free walk:** This is usually mentioned as part of or at the end of dressage competitions and is a stride shown at the pace of the rider's choice with the horse's head below the horizontal.

Trot: The trot resembles human jogging/running. Each step must have a flight in between (neither foot is touching the ground).

- a) **Working trot:** The rider's natural way to jog. Most used in low level dressage classes. Horse's head must be leveled or slightly above horizontal. Working trot should be performed with rhythmical, even steps.
- b) **Collected trot:** Shorter and high steps with the same or slightly slower tempo. Horse's head must be more vertical than horizontal.
- c) **Medium trot:** Medium gaits are similar to working gaits - just a little longer. The step is high and longer than in collected, but shorter than extended. The horse's head should remain above the horizontal position.
- d) **Extended trot:** A long stride that may include a slightly faster tempo. High steps are extended far forward. The horse's head is lower than average, close to horizontal.

Canter: The canter must have a distinct rhythm and flight. It can be performed as is a left or right canter, depending on the leading leg (i.e. left canter = left leg is leading). Rider and horse are expected to perform true canter (left canter in left turns, right canter in right turns) unless asked otherwise.

- a) **Working canter:** The rider's natural way to jog in a three-beat movement. The horse's head must be leveled or slightly above horizontal. The working canter should be performed with rhythmical, energetic steps.
- b) **Collected canter:** Short and higher steps with the same or slightly slower tempo. Horse's head must be more vertical than horizontal.

- c) **Medium canter:** The medium canter is similar to working canter - just a little rounder and longer. The step is longer than in collected, but shorter than extended. The horse's head should remain above the horizontal position.
- d) **Extended canter:** A long stride that may include a slightly faster tempo. The step is round and extends far forward. The horse's head is lower than average, close to horizontal.
- e) **Counter canter:** The rider shows a working canter with a right canter on a left-hand direction, and a left canter on a right-hand direction.

Movements

Please not that all dressage movements are listed in alphabetical order, and not according to their difficulty.

Canter pirouette: A 360-degree movement in which the rider remains in the collected canter. The pirouette starts by gathering the canter almost in place and then moving towards the leading leg. The rider's legs move in two tracks, the leading leg moves in a larger, upward motion and the other leg moves more inside the movement in a smaller circle, with this leg taking most of the weight of the rider's body. The perfect canter pirouette is performed in 5-6 canter strides (a half pirouette in 3-4 canter strides, and a double pirouette in 10-12 canter strides).

Changes of direction: Changes of direction are performed in all gaits and with a variety of movements.

- a) Turns: Turns are performed as tightly angled movements, such as riding through corners or turning 90 degrees in any direction.
- b) Diagonals: changes may be performed on a long or short diagonal across the dressage arena.
- c) Half volte and circles with a change of rein.
- d) Half pirouettes and turns on haunches.
- e) Serpentine loops

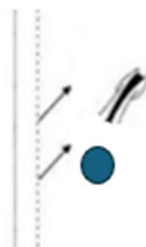
Circles/Voltes: The shape of any circle/volte should be perfectly round without any sharp turns or corners. Anything sized 3.5 m and below is called a volte, and anything larger than 3.5m is called a circle.

Counter canter: Intentionally moving in the wrong canter (i.e. right canter in left turns, left canter in right turns). The horse is bent towards the leading leg of the canter (counter-bend).

Figures of eight: This figure consists of two voltes or circles of equal size, joined at the centre of the eight. At the centre, the rider keeps straight for 3 steps before changing the direction.

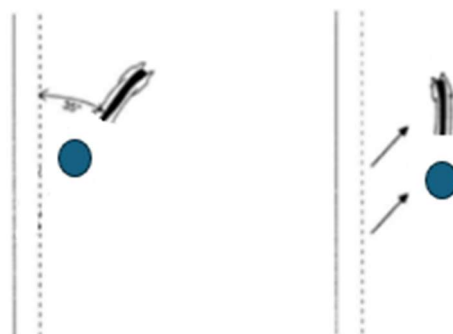
Flying change: The rider changes the leading leg of the canter. The rider jumps into the air to use the other leg as the lead leg when landing. The horse's head is to be bent slightly to the changed lead leg. Flying changes can be performed at a higher level at every step (one-change). **On-tempi-change:** Consecutive flying changes without taking a single canter step in between. **Tempi changes every second / third stride:** The rider and horse ride one / two canter strides between each flying change.

Half Pass: A half pass is performed in collected trot, passage, or collected canter on a diagonal line. The horse is bent slightly to in the direction of travel. The rider's feet are crossing with every step, while the rider remains parallel to the sideline. If performed in collected canter, feet will cross during the flight phase.



Halt: The rider stands motionless with parallel legs in the direction of travel. The weight is distributed equally over both legs. The horse's head is slightly relaxed in a horizontal position.

Leg Yielding: The horse is bent slightly away from the direction of travel. The rider should see here the corner of the horse's eye and nostril, while the feet are crossing over in direction of travel. Leg yielding may be shown on the track with a 35-degree angle to the direction of travel or on a diagonal line while staying parallel line to the long sideline.



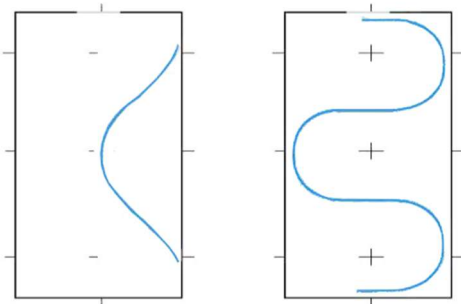
Passage: In the passage, leg is lifted in 90-degree angle from knee up to approximately the same height as hips. The leg then straightens down. Each step has a distinct flight and passage moves forward in slow rhythm. Horse's position is collected.

Piaffe: In the piaffe, one leg is lifted in 90-degree angle from knee up to approximately the same height as hips. The leg then must straighten down. Each step has a distinct flight, and the rider stays in one space without forward movement with 7 to 12 steps, depending on the level of difficulty.

Piaffe pirouette: A piaffe pirouette is performed, just like a canter pirouette, but in a piaffe movement. The ideal number of steps is 7-8. The horse is positioned according to the rotation direction of the pirouette, while the rider is completely straight. The ideal number of steps for half piaffe pirouette is 4, and for a double pirouette 14-16.

Rein back: Horse and rider move backwards in a certain number of steps. The horse's head must not be too high, otherwise the movement will look too stiff. The rider's steps are rhythmical and of equal length.

Serpentines: There are variations of serpentines in dressage tests. A serpentine with several loops touching the long side of the arena consists of half circles connected by a straight line. Serpentine with a loop on the long side of the arena are executed with 1.75m or 3.5m distance from the track.



Shoulder In: This movement is performed in collected trot. The horse is bent slightly towards the inside of the arena with a 30-degree angle, while the rider stays in the direction of travel with the outer shoulder pushed forward.



Simple Change: Simple change of leg at the canter is to be shown by riding three steps of walk or trot, then striking back off to the canter with a new lead.

Turn on the forehand: The rider performs a 180-degree movement around the horse's stick as the pivot point. Depending on the direction in the turn, the horse is bent to the left in the turn to the right and right in the turn to the left. The rider's feet move on two tracks during the turn.

Turn on the haunches: The rider performs a 180-degree movement around the horse's stick as the pivot point. The horse is bent slightly in the direction of the turn while the rider stays straight. There should be no less than 3 steps in the turn.

Walk pirouettes: 360 degree walk pirouettes are shown from a collected walk. The horse's head is slightly bent in the direction of the turn while the rider stays straight. The legs should cross.

Zigzag Half Pass: This half pass variation starts on the center line, and the rider changes direction in the half pass position after a specified number of steps. The movement always ends on the center line. When performed in canter, the rider will show a flying change when the direction of travel is changed. In the dressage test, this will be shown in numbers, indicating the number of steps in each direction, for example 2-4-4-2.

Competition Rules

1. The performance may only start with the consent of the judge. The judge will ring a bell or give a start signal, whereupon the rider has 30 seconds to start the test. A clear nod is also sufficient. If a rider starts his test before a clear start signal, this will lead to disqualification.
2. The competitor enters the arena at the letter prescribed in the test.
3. The test starts and ends with greeting the judge. For the greeting, the rider takes the reins in one hand, lets one arm drop down by his/her side and nods to the judge. The judge will return the salute with a nod.
4. Movements must follow one another in the order prescribed for a specific test.
5. Riders are allowed to have their test read aloud for all levels of dressage unless they have entered a Championship class.
6. Riders may not repeat a movement.
7. If a rider makes an error of course, the judge will ring the bell or signalise the rider to pause the performance and restart the test after the last correctly performed movement.
8. After the end salute to the judge, the rider will leave the arena at the point of entry.
9. Freestyle tests have a time limit for every level of dressage. The time is recorded from the move off after the first salute until the final halt. If the time is exceeded by more than 15 seconds, the performance will be stopped, and the rider disqualified.

Dressage Scoring

Judges award marks from 0 to 10 for each movement and collective aspects of the dressage test. Half marks may be used. All marks are added together, and penalties will be deducted. With a panel of more than one judge, the final score/percentage score is calculated by adding up all judges' scores and calculating the percentage for a combined total.

The judge's decision is final.

Riding the wrong test

Any rider performing a wrong test may restart the test but will be penalised for 1 error of course.

Error of course

The judge will ring the bell when a rider omits a movement in the test or takes a wrong turn. The judge may call the rider to the judge's table and explain the error. The rider can continue the test after the last correctly performed movement. Should the judge notice the error of course after the rider has left the arena, he is still obliged to note the error and give penalty points as required.

Each error of course is penalised as follows:

- first error – 2 points
- second error – 4 points
- third error – elimination

Penalty points are deducted from the total points awarded for the performance.

Elimination

A rider is eliminated after three errors of course. Other reasons for an immediate elimination may be:

- rider injury
- equipment failure
- starting the performance without the judge's consent
- not entering the arena within 30 seconds after the judge's signal to start the test
- exceeding the time limit set out for a dressage freestyle
- exiting the arena during the performance
- unsportsmanlike behaviour such as aggression towards the horse, other objects, or other competitors – before, during and after the performance.

Judges will ring the bell three times or stop the performance as a sign of the elimination.

Rider's attire

Riders must wear suitable shoes during the performance. Tidy clothing allowing the judge to see the rider's posture during the test is required.

Riders with long hair should wear their hair in a tidy ponytail or bun.

Horse's Tack

Every horse must wear a bridle suitable for the level of dressage. Double bridles are only required for advanced dressage classes. Dressage tests requiring the use of a double bridle will clearly state this requirement.

Ear bonnets are permitted, as long as they fit the horse and don't interfere with the judging process. Other decorative tack may be allowed as per the show organiser's show program.

BRITISH HOBBYHORSE ASSOCIATION