



United States Rules for Working Equitation



**United States Rules
for
Working Equitation**

Revision 9.1

12 February 2026



United States Rules for Working Equitation



PREFACE

This document, United States Rules for Working Equitation, is the national rulebook for working equitation in the U.S. It is maintained on the USA Working Equitation website: USAWE.org. In the event of a discrepancy between a printed version and the version residing on the website, the electronic version will take precedence.

This document is revised annually. The revision cycle may be more or less frequent depending on the volume and criticality of the changes. Suggestions for modifications from WE groups, show officials, or individuals involved in the discipline are encouraged. A **Rule Change Proposal** may be submitted up until August 31st of any calendar year; this will enable adequate consideration of all proposed modifications prior to the start of the following competition year on January 1. The **Rule Change Proposal** form is on the USAWE website:

USAWE.org

Questions for the Rules Committee can be sent at any time to: Rules@usawe.org. The Rules Committee will not respond to any questions or discussions on social media.

REVISION SUMMARY

Revision	Date	Change Summary
0	1 Dec 2016	Original Issue
9.1	1 Jan 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Throughout Rules, Negative Mark is now Lower Score ● 1.2, 8.4: Cattle trial may be out of order at non-Championship shows. ● 1.6 g: Masters level is now WAVE Senior. h: Riders who turn 21 may compete as Young Riders during the competition year. i: Riders turning 16 during the competition year may compete as Junior riders. App H ● 1.7 c,d: Moving to lower level. e: Annual Awards. ● 1.8: Sharing a horse. ● 1.91: Leverage bit must have curb strap or curb chain. ● 1.9.2 b: Bell Boots allowed in all trials. ● 1.14.3 6.6, 6.7, 6.9: Judge must score entire performance. ● 2.3: Judge requirements at Regional Championships. ● 3.2, 3.5: Competition numbers. ● 3.12, 7.3: Course design requirements. ● 3.20: Conflict of interest ● 5.6 d: Presentation is now part of the Rider score ● 6.4: Clarifies course design. ● 6.5: Attire for course walk. ● 6.6: Correct bend, correct lead and counter canter. ● 6.6: Table 6.2 Chart of Obstacle corrections. ● 7.3: Speed course design ● 7.6, App B 1: One foot must land on bridge. ● 8.2: Clarifies experienced cow handler. ● 8.4: Team members will be assigned by show management. Riders responsibility to return cow to herd. ● 8.10: Working cattle before trial ● App B 3: Pen must fall down if hit by horse or rider. ● App B 8: Height of poles ● App B 9: Allow for two bells. ● App B 12,13: Increase distance between poles. Allow objects instead of poles. ● App B 14: Clarifies construction and operation of gate. ● App B 15: Width of jump. ● App B 15 c: Gait over jump. ● App B 18 a: Description of bank, b: use of ramp. ● App H WAVE International Working Equitation Regulations and USAWE exceptions.

Revision	Date	Summary of Deletions
9.1	12 Feb 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation is no longer a standalone collective score. See above 5.6 d ● Most references to Level 7, Masters have been removed. Riders at that level, including Senior, Junior and Young riders are governed by WAVE International Working Equitation Regulations, (App H) ● The USAWE Level 7 Dressage test was removed. Refer to App H for that level, Senior. ● Use of hands 1.11, 2nd paragraph was removed.

CONTENTS

<u>Section</u>		<u>Page</u>
PART I. GENERAL RULES		
1.	GENERAL RULES AND INFORMATION	1
1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	WE Trials	1
1.3	Rider Divisions	2
1.4	Horse Divisions	2
1.5	Horse Requirements	3
1.6	Performance Levels	3
1.7	Performance Level Selection and Advancement	5
1.8	Entry Requirements	5
1.9	Tack, Attire, and Equipment Allowances	6
1.9.1	Tack and Attire	6
1.9.2	Equipment Allowances	8
1.10	Outside Assistance	9
1.11	Use of Hands	10
1.12	Salute	10
1.13	Use of Voice	10
1.14	General Grounds for Disqualification/Elimination	10
1.14.1	Definitions	10
1.14.2	Disqualification	10
1.14.3	Elimination	11
PART II. COMPETITION ORGANIZATION/MANAGEMENT		
2.	COMPETITION LEVELS	13
2.1	Schooling Shows	13
2.2	Licensed Shows	13
2.3	Regional Championship Shows	13
3.	OFFICIALS AND SHOW PERSONNEL	15
3.1	Show Manager	15
3.2	Show Secretary	15
3.3	Judge	16
3.4	Technical Delegate	17
3.5	Riders	18
3.6	Trainers and Handlers	18
3.7	Veterinarian	18
3.8	Gate Steward	19
3.9	Paddock Steward	19
3.10	Scribe	20
3.11	Scorers	20

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
3.12 Course Designer	20
3.13 Ground Crew	20
3.14 Timers/Timekeepers	20
3.15 Runners	20
3.16 Announcer	21
3.17 Safety Coordinator	21
3.18 Emergency Medical Personnel	21
3.19 Farrier	21
3.20 Conflict of Interest Restrictions	21
4. GENERAL COMPETITION REQUIREMENTS	24
4.1 Paddock Rules	24
4.2 Entry Order	24
4.3 Veterinary Inspection	25
4.4 Drug Testing	25
4.5 Evidence of Blood	25
4.6 Horse Welfare	25
4.7 Prizes	26
4.8 Scoring and Determining Final Placement	26
4.8.1 Scoring	26
4.8.2 Determining Points	27
4.8.3 Determining Final Placement for Individual Competitors	27
4.8.4 Determining Points and Final Placement for Teams	28
4.8.5 Amendments to Judge's Score Sheets and Non-Award of Points	29
4.8.6 Judging on a Panel	29
4.8.7 Posting Results	29
4.9 Inquiries, Protests, and Appeals	29
4.9.1 Inquiries	29
4.9.2 Protests	30
4.9.3 Appeals	30
4.10 Disciplinary Dispositions and Fines	31
PART III. THE TRIALS	
5. DRESSAGE TRIAL	32
5.1 Objective	32
5.2 Arena	32
5.3 Judge Placement	33
5.4 Tests	33
5.5 Trial Execution	34
5.6 Scoring	37
5.7 Penalties/Grounds for Disqualification	38

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
6. EASE OF HANDLING (EOH) TRIAL	39
6.1 Objective	39
6.2 Arena	39
6.3 Obstacles	39
6.4 Course Design	41
6.5 Walking the Course	42
6.6 Trial Execution	43
6.7 Course Errors	46
6.8 Scoring	47
6.9 Penalties/Grounds for Disqualification	48
7. SPEED TRIAL	50
7.1 Objective	50
7.2 Arena	50
7.3 Course Design	50
7.4 Walking the Course	50
7.5 Trial Execution	51
7.6 Course Errors	52
7.7 Scoring	52
7.8 Obstacle Time Penalties/Bonus Time	52
7.9 Penalties/Grounds for Disqualification	53
7.10 Safety Considerations	54
8. CATTLE TRIAL	55
8.1 Objective	55
8.2 Arena	55
8.3 Cattle	56
8.4 Trial Execution	56
8.5 Penalties	58
8.6 Grounds for Disqualification	58
8.7 Safety Considerations	58
8.8 Scoring	59
8.9 Protests and Re-rides	60
8.10 Show Management	60

APPENDIX A. DRESSAGE TESTS	A-1
APPENDIX B. OBSTACLES	B-1
APPENDIX C. SCORE SHEETS	C-1
APPENDIX D. TACK AND ATTIRE FOR INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS	D-1
APPENDIX E. FEI CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WELFARE OF THE HORSE	E-1
APPENDIX F. PROTEST FORM	F-1
APPENDIX G. USAWE RIDER DIVISION POLICY	G-1
APPENDIX H. USAWE INTERNATIONAL WORKING EQUITATION REGULATIONS and USAWE EXCEPTIONS	H-1

TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1-1 Summary of Performance Level Requirements	4
1-2 Summary of General Disqualifications and Eliminations	12
5-1 Summary of Skills Required for Dressage Tests	36
5-2 Summary of Dressage Penalties and Disqualifications	38
6-1 Obstacle Requirements Summary	40
6-2 Chart of Obstacle Corrections	45
6-3 Summary of EOH Penalties and Disqualifications	49
7-1 Summary of Time Penalties, Time Bonuses, and Disqualifications	54
8-1 Summary of Cattle Trial Penalties and Disqualifications	59

Subject Index

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Section</u>
Advanced level (L6)	1.6f
Amateur division	1.3b
Amateur status	App G
Announcer	3.16
Appeals	4.9.3
Arena	
Dressage	5.2
Ease of Handling	6.2
Speed	7.2
Cattle	8.2
Attire requirements	1.9.1, App D
Blood, evidence of	3.3, 4.5
Cattle	8.3
Cattle trial	1.2d, 8
Championship shows	2.3
Conflict of interest restrictions	3.20
Course Designer	3.12, 3.20h
Course errors	6.7, 7.6
Disciplinary dispositions	4.10
Disqualifications	
Definition	1.14.1a
General disqualifications	1.14.2
Dressage	5.6
Ease of Handling	6.9
Speed	7.8
Cattle	8.6
Dressage trial	1.2a, 5
Dressage tests, purpose	5.3
Dressage tests	App A
Drug testing	4.4
Ease of Handling trial	1.2b, 6
Eliminations	1.14.1b, 1.14.3
Emergency Medical Personnel	3.18
Entry order	4.2
Entry requirements	1.8
Equipment allowances	1.9.2
Farrier	3.19
Gaited horse division	1.4b
Gate Steward	3.9, 3.20f
Ground Crew	3.13

Subject Index

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Section</u>
Handlers	3.6
Hands, use of	1.11
Horse divisions	1.4
Horse requirements	1.5
Horse welfare	4.6, App E
Inquiries	4.9.1
Intermediate levels (L4, L5)	1.6d, 1.6e
Introductory level (L1)	1.6a
Judge	3.3, 3.20b
Judging on a panel	4.8.6
Licensed shows	2.2
Masters level (L7)	1.7g
Novice levels (L2, L3)	1.6b, 1.6c
Obstacle course design	6.4, 7.3
Obstacle course errors	6.8
Obstacle time penalties	7.7
Obstacles	6.3, App B
Open division	1.3c
Outside assistance	1.10, 6.6, 6.9, 7.9, 8.5
Paddock rules	4.1
Paddock Steward	3.8. 3.20e
Penalties	
Dressage	5.6
Ease of Handling	6.9
Speed	7.7, 7.8
Cattle	8.5
Performance levels	1.6,.1.7
Placement	4.8.3, 4.8.4
Points	4.8.2
Prizes	4.7
Protests	4.9.2, 8.9, App F
Regions	2.3
Results, posting	4.8.7
Rider divisions	1.3, AppG
Riders	3.5
Runners	3.15
Safety considerations	7.9, 8.7
Safety Coordinator	3.17
Salute	1.12
Schooling shows	2.1

Subject Index

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Section</u>
Score sheets	4.8.5, App C
Scorer	3.11, 3.20i
Scoring	
Determining final placement	4.8
Dressage	5.5
Ease of Handling	6.7
Speed	7.6
Cattle	8.8
Scribe	3.10, 3.20g
Show Manager	3.1, 3.20a
Show Secretary	3.2
Speed trial	1.2c, 7
Tack requirements	1.9.1
Technical Delegate	3.4, 3.20c
Ties	4.8.3, 4.8.4
Timers	3.14
Trainers	3.6
Trials	1.2
Veterinarian	3.7, 3.20d
Veterinary inspection	4.3
Voice, use of	1.13
Walking the course	6.5, 7.4
Warm-up paddock	4.1
Yellow Card	4.10
Young horse division	1.4a
WAVE Regulations	App H
Youth division	1.3a